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INDEX.

Familiar Sketches and Essays.

	Page		Page		Page
Anxiety, on,	657	Christmas-tide,	800	Diamond Mine, Puzzles from a,	310
Art of Living, on the,	17	Dawning, in the,	240	Electricity from Niagara,	177
Autumn, Languering,	591	Deserted,	688	Elf-bolts,	153
'Baria in the Minch,'	778	Dream-land,	512	Fernland,	367
Beyond the Verge,	673	Eldystone Lighthouse, at the,	816	Flax-culture in Scotland,	229
Bonnets, some Notes on,	204	Evening, Until the,	128	Flowers as Entertainers,	303
Bunhill Fields,	633	Far Away,	832	Gall-flies and their Work,	646
Cape Corse, Two Days in,	377	Ghosts,	656	Geology in Practical Use,	486
Catching a Tartar,	495	Gloamin', in the,	48	Greek-fire,	319
Cathedral City, in a,	556	Her Attractions,	80	Holly Tea,	262
'Caxton'-hunting,	250	Hospital, in,	640	Honey-bee of the Future, the,	741
Churchyards, in our,	357	Illness, in,	336	Ice Age Periodic? Is an,	782
Eilean Dhu and its Frequenters,	521	Leaves,	256	Kafta, an Arabian Beverage,	31
Elsinore, a Day in,	641	Little Feet, the,	416	Kitchen-range Boilers,	171
Ely Fen-land, the,	305	Lost Youth,	384	Leathern Wings,	774
Fool for Thought,	145	Love's Sweet Sake, for,	272	Mechanical Powers, Birth of the,	583
Foreign Office, the,	705	Lux in Tenebris,	464	'Mermaid' at the Zoo, the,	799
Home of a Hero, the,	732	Meadow-grass, the,	352	Milk-trees,	566
Hotel Life, the Ethics of,	721	Memories,	784	Mutton Bird on the Furneaux-	
Hoxton, Haunted,	753	Nocturne,	368	Islands, the,	463
Iceland, in,	278	North Pole, Towards the,	432	Myxodema--A New Departure	
Insurance, about,	561	Old Voices,	64	in Medical Treatment,	273
Iron Road, on the,	385	Once More,	224	Nature's Sanitary Agents,	534
Iron-land, in,	570	Our Greater Sun,	208	Negro Coffee,	720
Landmarks of a Literary Life,	801	Peace,	608	Ocean Currents,	422
Limits and Limitations,	497	Probation,	720	Oyster-culture in France,	702
Link with the Past, a,	447	Requiem,	16	Panoramic Photography,	133
Magdalen Islands, among the,	193	Return of Tanç, the,	528	Plovers and their Peculiarities,	353
Market-place, the Romance of the,	218	Sea, to the,	480	Roasting versus Baking,	39
Mendips, Round about the,	481	Sea-voices,	176, 592	Sight in Animals, the Sense of,	373
Minorca, a Trip to,	401	Shadows,	96	Telegraph, How they,	199
Naruta Whirlpool, Through the,	49	She Comes,	624	Wealth from Waste,	209
Old Songs and New Saws,	625	Song of an Old Maid,	288		
Orange River, the,	545	Sonnet,	704		
Oratorio, the First,	689	Spring, to,	144		
Otterburn,	465	Starlight,	112		
Palace, the Story of a,	698	Summer Night in Manika, a,	544		
Patriot's Home and Tomb, a,	587	Tom and I,	448		
Reading, a Few Words about,	225	Tragedy,	736		
Self-defence, some Points of,	241	Transformation, a,	400		
Siamese Pageant, a,	577	Turning the Flowers,	32		
Smallholm Tower,	337	Valley, in the,	576		
Solomon Islands, a Secret of the,	593	Vigil, a,	752		
Southern States, in the,	240	Visitants,	768		
Wealth? What is,	737	Waiting,	320		
White of Selborne's Country, in,	321	What might have been,	496		
Winter Faring,	81	While I Wait,	192		
Woodlands Hoar, the,	64				

Popular Science.

Poetry.

Autumn Days, in,	672	Areas Plate,	224
Blossom-time, in,	304	Arsenic, the Manufacture of,	149
Bunch of Withered Violets, a,	160	Atmosphere, the Higher,	694
Child, to be a,	560	'Aweto,' the,	704
		Birds, Wingless,	718
		Botanical 'Sports,'	214

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS—

Acetic Acid kills the Bacillus,	187
Advertising Plague in Streets, 62;	
in Rural Districts,	829
Aerolite, Analysis of an,	332
Aerophile Balloon,	268
Air, Freezing Liquid,	266
Air, Liquid,	187
Air, Synthesis of,	477
Algerian Dwarf-palm,	477
Aluminium Alloys,	540
Aluminium Pencils and Pipes,	69
Ammonia Vapour as a Disinfectant,	623
Ammonite, a new Explosive,	267
Antarctic Expedition,	542
Antarctic Whale-fishing,	383
Anti-fouling Compound,	61
Ants and Fruit-trees,	189
Arctic Whalers and Open Water,	828
Arrow-poison,	479
Asbestos, Uses of,	308
Australian Butter, Importation of,	298
Australian Fresh Fish and Fruit,	477
Balloon Flying Machine,	746
Bank-notes, Colouring,	478
Barometric Balloons,	60
Bell-casting in Steel,	748
Bimetallic Wire,	124
Birds, Song of,	621
'Bleeding Bread,'	746
Boat, Zimmer's Patent,	188

INDEX.

THE MONTH—continued.

	Page
Boat driven by Hydraulic Propulsion,	820
Boats of Mild Steel,	622
Boric Acid as a Preservative,	541
Bottle-opener, Safety,	748
Boughton's 'Telephotos,'	122
Bouillie Bordelaise,	61
Brin's Oxygen Company,	61
British Association at Nottingham,	683
British Museum, a Shrine in the,	268
'Bullet-proof' Cloth,	267
Bullet-proof Fabric,	334
Burning Coal for Electric Energy,	124
Burning-oils, Dangerous,	62
Camphor Industry of Japan,	61
Canal from Paris to Rouen,	419
Carpet, a Magnificent Persian,	621
Celluloid Film for Photographic Purposes,	267
Champion Chimney-pot,	123
Channel, Crossing the,	541
Channel Coal-workings,	124
Chelsea, the Old Physic Garden at,	820
Chicago, Water-supply of,	397
Chicago Exhibition, Greatness of,	397
— Mass of Coal,	334
— Painting the,	61
— Railway Pro-	
— gress,	622
Chicago Exhibition Tower,	123
Cholera, the Birth-place of,	541
Cholera Bacilli,	541
Chrysanthemum, Cultivation of the,	621
Cipher Type-writing,	123
Circular Saw, Stone-cutting,	830
Cloud-photographs,	399
Coal, Smokeless Combustion of,	694
Coaling Ship,	542
Cobras in Bungalows,	540
Coinage, Counterfeit,	477
Coinage, the New,	124
Collodion, Plates, dry,	622
Colour, Appreciation of,	123
Colour-blindness among North American Indians,	54
Cordelle-Française, Drop-curtain in,	18
Cocerete, Wooden,	61
Croftly Motor for Tramways,	266
Cordite, a new Explosive,	540
Corinth Canal,	684
Corinth Canal, Opening of the,	189
Cotton Cloth, Metallic-tinned,	335
Crinoline, Revival of,	123
Curtains, a new Material for,	621
Cycle, Speed of the,	683
Diamond-mining in Cape Colony,	124
Diseases of Animals transmissible to Man,	820
Dredger, a Gigantic,	267
Dwarfs, Hindu,	830
Dynamite Guns,	189
Eclipse of the Sun,	187, 332
Edison's Phonograph,	478
Eggs, Preservation of Fresh,	390
Egyptian Papyrus,	747
Electric Arc-lights,	267
Electric Carriage in Chicago,	684
Electric Current in London,	622
Electric Lamp Patents,	683
Electric Lighting and Gas, Cost of,	188
Electric Lighting Patents,	334
Electric Railways, Effect of,	188
Electrical Deck Planer,	333
Electro-silvering, Arcas process of,	60
Elephant, African,	59
Enamelled Iron Vessels,	267
Eucalyptus, Growth of the,	623
Factory-girl's Journey, a,	622
Fernando de Noronha,	335
Field-voles, Plagues of,	334
Finger-prints, Identification by,	747
Fire Alarms in Newcastle,	622
Fish Frozen Solid,	830
Flat Fishes, Coloration of,	541
Fluorine, Isolation of,	746
Flying Machine, Phillips's,	478
Fox Detonators,	61
Foxes in London,	61
Frog Farms on the Mississippi,	268
Fuel, Liquid,	694
Fuller's Earth in Keltie Glen,	266
Gas Cylinder Explosion,	828
Gas Heating and Cooking,	829
Gathmann Torpedo,	60
Gesso-work,	898
Glass and Steel-wire Netting,	748

THE MONTH—continued.

	Page
Gold, Extraction of,	542
Hats for Warm Countries,	684
Hop-picker's Ophthalmia,	748
Horses in London,	684
Hot-water Springs, Utilising,	124
Hydrocycle on the Thames,	307
Ice-breaking Steamer,	188
Illustrated Journalism,	683
Incandescent Arc-lamp,	748
Incandescent Gaslight in Photo-	
graphy,	334
Incandescent Lighting,	60, 830
India-rubber Tree, a new,	621
Iron-work, Colouring,	683
Jade in Upper Burma,	333
Japan, Mineral Springs of,	542
Jugglers, Indian,	334
Landslip at Sandgate,	267
Lavender Plant in South Australia,	189
Lead-poisoning from cleaning Bot-	
tles with Shot,	267
Lenses, Hollow,	124
Life-saving Apparatus,	60
Lime into Marble, Converting,	830
Lime-kiln, Briggs's Patent,	829
Magnesium Flash-lamp,	268
Mail-bags, Electric Railway for,	267
Mammoth Cave of Kentucky,	684
Manchester Ship Canal,	747
Microscope Eyepiece Shield,	683
Milk Bottles, Air-tight,	478
Milk Tester, Belgrove's,	479
Musical Characters, Type-writing,	718
Musk-ox,	334
Nansen's Crew,	540
Nansen's Expedition, Food for,	266
Naphthalene as a Timber Pre-	
server,	622
National Gallery, London,	267
New Zealand Mutton,	541
Observatory on Mont Blanc,	123
Oil of Sweet Almonds,	60
Olive-oil in Sicily,	478
Opium-smoking, Defence of,	333
Oxygen Liquid,	187
Paneling, a Cheap,	334
Patent Act, Revised,	123
Patentees, Frauds on,	650
Pathfinder, for Dredging, &c.,	298
Petroleum, Flash-test of,	510
Phile, Ruins in,	268
Phosphorus and White-lead Poison-	
ing,	398
Photo Corrector, Van der Weyde's,	333
Photograph Printing in Colours,	746
Photographic Exhibition,	188
Photographic Salon,	747
Photographs in Colour,	746
Platinum, Employment of,	333
Poisonous Preparations, Advertis-	
ing,	61
Potato Disease,	397
Prunella obconica and the Skin,	623
Prison Construction,	479
Proctor (Richard A.),	747
Railway Carriages, Cooling,	308
Railway Carriages, Heating,	830
Railway Speed, Greatest,	476
Ruin, Artificial,	477
Rainfall during 1893,	747
Reading Lamps in Railway Car-	
riages,	747
Reindeer in Alaska,	189
River-crossing on Lanthorn Bot-	
tles,	477
Rothamsted, Agricultural Experi-	
ments at,	268, 622
Sawdust in Brick-making,	477
Sea Fisheries,	478
Sewage, Metropolitan,	684
Ships, Ventilation of,	60
Ship's Buoy, Adey's Combined,	541
Signalling, Electric,	123
Signalling, Flashing Light for,	397
Silkate of Soda,	541
Silk from Wood-pulp,	890
Silk-culture in Nicolaieff,	62
Skate, Pneumatic Road,	743
Skating-rink, a real Ice,	121
Smoke in Torpedo Warfare,	333
Snake Laboratory,	123
Soap with Dough, Mixing,	747
Soapstone, or Steatite,	540
Solarometer, Beehive's,	307
St John's Gate, Clerkenwell,	542
Storm in New South Wales,	335

THE MONTH—continued.

	Page
Stove Mat, Safe-boiling,	830
Sugar, Burnt, and Mice,	684
Sunlight kills the Bacillus,	187
Swift's Comet, Photographs of,	62
Sword-fish, Power of the,	831
Tea-culture in Johore,	122
Telegraph, Bakewell's,	683
Telegraph in Street Vehicles,	747
Telephone Wires in Storms,	684
Telephonometer,	684
Thermo-electric Stove, a new,	398
Thirsk, Railway Accident at,	188
Tinned Meats, Poisoning from,	188
Tobacco Insect,	478
Tomato non-productive of Cancer,	124
Tractive Power of Electricity and	
Steam,	294
Tram-car, Passenger Horses in,	333
Trileyle, Land and Water,	121
Tuberculous Animals in London,	189
Valzin, a Sweet Substance,	189
Victoria, Raising the Submerged,	621
Visiting Cards, Iron,	334
Volvorb, Fisher's,	478
Wasps, Destroying,	623
Wasps, Stings of,	748
Water, Micro-organisms in,	832
Water and Wind Power,	477
Water-cart, a new Form of,	398
Water-colours, Action of Light on,	623
Water-power,	477
Weather Forecasts,	397
Wheels, Toothed,	511
White-lead, a New,	187
Whitewashing Ceilings,	748
Wild-birds' Eggs,	124
Wool-ashes as a Farm Medicine,	268
Wool-engraving, Decline of,	830
Zoetrope, Photographic,	60

Tales and Other Narratives.

Absent Heart, the, By George	
E. Farquhar,	700
Bessie, By E. Rentoul Esler,	235
Boat-service Adventure, a,	462
Bronze Medallion, the,	763
BURDEN OF ISABEL, the, By	
J. Maclaren Cobban,	
I. The Return of the	
Master,	1
II. Uncle Harry,	19
III. The Black Tulip and	
the Lily of the Valley,	35
IV. The Tame Philosopher,	36
V. Isabel's Letter,	51
VI. Alan Ainsworth,	53
VII. How Ainsworth solved	
his Problem,	67
VIII. At the Great White	
Feast,	83
IX. What came of a Lec-	
ture at the Royal	
Geographical,	99
X. 'The Only Woman in	
the World,'	114
XI. Mr Doughty explains,	130
XII. A Prodigal Father,	146
XIII. Sahib George,	163
XIV. The Fatted Calf,	180
XV. Plans and Prospects,	195
XVI. 'Daniel was preferred	
because an excellent	
spirit was in him,'	210
XVII. The History of a Great	
Suspicion,	227, 243
XVIII. Uncle Harry strikes his	
Tent,	259
XIX. In the Opium Den again,	275
XX. Love Affairs, and Start-	
ling News,	290
XXI. Daniel's Interlude,	307
XXII. The Last of Uncle Harry,	323

INDEX.

vii

	Page		Page		Page
xxiii. What will she do with it?	339	Providence Cottage. By G. B. Burgin,	380	Baking, Roasting <i>versus</i> ,	39
xxiv. George by Land and Sea,	355	POMONA. By the Author of <i>Laddie, Tip Cat, Lil, &c.</i>	513	Bank, our,	394
xxv. Isabel's Progress,	370	The Prologue,	531	Bank-notes, Jottings about,	602
xxvi. The Great Cotton Game,	387	I.	532	Banks Fail, Why,	417
xxvii. 'Confession is good for the Soul,'	403	II.	547	Barber, the Chinese,	527
xxviii. 'The Play's the Thing!'	419	III.	548	'Barra in the Minch,'	778
xxix. Rumours of Evil,	420	IV.	563	Beehive Huts,	598
xxx. Tanderjee receives a cheque, and Daniel finds a Key,	435	V.	565	Birds, Wingless,	718
xxxi. Isabel is waited for,	451	VI.	580	Birth of the Mechanical Powers,	563
xxxii. 'Love the Gift is Love the Debt,'	468	VII.	596	Bloaters and Red Herrings, Yar-mouth,	811
xxxiii. 'Even so!'	483	VIII.	611	Bonnets, some Notes on,	204
xxxiv. The Tame Philosopher in Daniel's Den,	498	IX.	613	Botanical 'Sports,'	214
xxxv. 'He that will be rich'—	519, 536	X.	627	Brazilian Convict Island, a,	335
xxxvi. Three Interviews,	553	XI.	643	Brigands, Three Famous Italian,	529
xxxvii. Suffolk goes into the 'Corner,'	567	XII.	658	British Amazons,	298
xxxviii. In the 'Corner,'	585	XIII.	675	British Soldier and his Chaplain,	475
xxxix. Out of the 'Corner,'	600	XIV.	692	Bronze Age Trumpets,	326
xl. In the bosom of the Family,	617	XV.	707	Bucket-shop? What is a,	454
xli. The Burden rolls away,	630	XVI.	723	Bunhill Fields,	633
xlii. Dissolving Views,	647	XVII.	739	Cape Corse, Two Days in,	377
BY ACCIDENT. By H. F. Abell—	135, 151, 168, 184	XVIII.	754	Carved Ivories,	725
Camera-obscura, the. By J. S. Fletcher,	589, 605	XIX.	770	Catching a Tartar,	495
Cherry-tree, Under the. By Dorothea Gerard,	430, 444	XX.	772	Cathedral City, in a,	556
Christmas at the Ridge House, a,	716	XXI.	786	'Caxton'-hunting,	250
Colonel's Romance, the,	93	XXII.	787	Cedars of Lebanon, the,	390
Daniel the Carter,	685	XXIII.	803	Chain, the New Weldless,	399
Dartmoor Fog, a Tale of a,	251	XXIV.	805	Chain-makers, the Land of the,	289
ELSIE. By John Stafford—	488, 504, 523	XXV.	819	Character-writers, English,	33
Gentleman George. By Reginald Horsley,	173	XXVI.	821	Chat about Whales, a,	542
Golden Bricks, the. By Charles Edwards,	491	XXVII.	821	Chinese Barber, the,	527
Hill of Seven Trees, the. By Reginald Horsley,	347	RED-HOT NEEDLE, the. By H. F. Abell,	280, 296, 312, 328	Christmas-time in Florida,	4
HINT O' HAIRST, the. By Menie Muriel Dowie,	73, 88, 104, 119	SACRED BEETLE, the. By Lamont Gracie,	343, 359, 375, 393	Churchyards, in our,	357
Incident in the Wild West, an,	510	Shawmut Trestle, the. A Western Railroad Sketch. By William Atkinson,	28, 45	City Nancie, Old London,	22
ISABEL DYNARE. By Mrs. Oliphant,	7, 24, 40, 56	South Atlantic Mystery, a,	749	City of Wisconsin, a,	65
JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME. By Thomas St E. Hake—	409, 425, 440, 457, 473	SQUIRE'S DILEMMA, the—	201, 215, 231, 247, 263	Colossal Map, a,	257
Jumper Adams,	316	'Sunajh,'	78	Communication, Strange Messengers and Modes of,	234
Karoo, a Tale of the,	636	Tower of Silence, from the,	269	Concerts, some Early London,	794
Last of the Peplows, the. By G. B. Burgin,	140	Wedding Day, their,	190	Con-tabulary, the Royal Irish,	551
Legend of Niagara, a,	335	Winning of Paddon Manor; the—	796, 813	Convict Island, a Brazilian,	335
LESS THAN KIN. By Mrs. Will C. Hawksley,	759, 776, 791, 808, 825	Wrong Black Bag, the. By Angelo Lewis,	125	Corean Royal Reception, a,	561
Malagasy Ghost-story, a,	571	Miscellaneous Articles of Instruction and Entertainment.		Cornish Tin-mines,	470
MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT, a. By Ernest Favenc,	695, 712, 728, 743	Aborigines of Australia, the,	735	Crater Lake, a Weird,	449
Miss Helen. By Vivian Brooke,	414	Alligators and Crocodiles,	575	Crocodiles, Alligators and,	575
Misunderstanding, a. By Charles Edwards,	284	Amazons, British,	298	Cromer Crabs and their Cousins,	433
Mrs Melrose's Companion. By Richard Warfield,	667	Amenities, some Literary,	460	Cunarders, the New,	293
Murderous Mixture, a. By Geo. Manville Fenn,	13	America, the Italy of,	351	Curious Showers,	526
PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM. By Louis Hamilton,	652, 663, 679	Annals, the Sense of Sight in,	373	Curious Trade, a,	831
Police-man's Story, the,	364	Annals of an Indian Village,	300	Curlew Lore,	282
		Anxiety, on,	657	Currents, Ocean,	422
		Appeal Cases in House of Lords,	769	Dardanelles, the Ancient Bom-bards of the,	108
		Arazas Plate,	224	Daira Sanich, about the,	137
		Army Bakery,	314	Day in Elsinore, a,	641
		Arsenic, the Manufacture of,	149	Deserted Village, a,	113
		Art of Living, on the,	17	Detectives as they are,	15
		Atlantic, the First Steamer to Cross the,	369	Diamond Mine, Puzzles from a,	310
		Atmosphere, the Higher,	694	Dutch Raid on the Medway, the,	182
		Australia, the Aborigines of,	735	Early London Concerts, some,	794
		Autumn, Lingering,	581	Early Steamships, some,	155
		'Aweto,' the,	704	Eastern Seas, Piracy in Far,	681
		Bagpipe, the Highland,	827	Egypt Five Thousand Years Ago,	785
		Bakery, Army,	314	Elcan Dhu and its Frequenters,	521
				Electricity from Niagara. By J. Munro,	177
				Elf-bolts,	153
				Elsinore, a Day in,	641
				Ely Fen-land, the,	805
				English Character-writers,	33
				Entertainers, Flowers as,	303
				Ethics of Food!! the,	111
				Ethics of Hotel Life, the,	721
				Experts in Handwriting,	767
				Explosion of Kitchen-range Boilers, the,	171
				Extinction, on,	623
				Extradition,	129
				Facts about Marine Surveying, some,	342
				Faithful Traitor, a,	655
				Fen-land, the Ely,	305
				Ferland,	367

INDEX.

	Page		Page		Page
Fiction, some Villains of, and their Fates,	517	Manchester Ship Canal, the,	817	Romance of the Market-place, tho,	218
Flavourings, on certain,	490	Manitoba, With Her Majesty's Mails in,	730	Round about the Mendips,	481
Flax-culture in Scotland,	229	Manufacture of Arsenic, the,	149	Royal Navy, How to join the,	501
Florida, Christmas-time in,	4	Map, a Colossal,	257	Russian Riddles,	479
Flowers as Entertainers,	303	Marie Antoinette,	822	Safed,	220
Fly Country, tho,	806	Marine Stokers,	101	Sailing-ships, Modern,	710
Food!! the Ethics of,	111	Marine surveying, some Facts about,	342	Sanitary Agents, Nature's,	534
Food for Thought,	145	Market-place, the Romance of the,	218	Scents,	27
Foreign Office, tho,	705	Mechanical Powers, Birth of the,	583	Scotland, Flax-culture in,	229
Fortunes in Voices,	665	Medway, the Dutch Raid on the,	182	Seal-hunting on the Pacific Coast,	538
Furneaux Islands, the Mutton Bird on the,	165	Mendelssohn in Scotland,	361	'Secret Service' in War, Outpost Duty and,	650
Gall-flies and their Work,	646	Mendips, Round about the,	481	Selborne—in White's Country,	321
Genius of Leonardo da Vinci,	443	'Mermaid' at the Zoo, the,	799	Self-defence, some Points of,	241
Geology in Practical Use,	486	Messengers and Modes of Communication, Strange,	234	Sentry-go!	607
German Folklore,	47	Milk-trees,	566	Servian Customs, Old,	537
Gordon, General—The Home of a Hero,	732	Minorea, a Trip to,	401	Setting Sun, the Land of the,	222
Greek-fire,	319	Modern Sailing-ships,	710	Ship Canal, the Manchester,	817
Hampden—a Patriot's Home and Tomb,	587	Moonlight Surprise-party, a,	62	Showers, Curious,	526
Hampstead Heath Treasure-trove,	71	Mosses in Literature,	427	Siamese Pageant, a,	577
Handwriting, Experts in,	767	Mutton Bird on the Furneaux Islands, the,	165	Sight in Animals, the Sense of,	373
Handwriting, Illustrious,	671	Myxodema—A New Departure in Medical Treatment,	273	Silver Question, the,	614
Hermut Nation, a,	677	Names, Pronouncing,	288	Slave-ship, the Old,	538
Highland Bagpipe, the,	827	Naruta Whirlpool, Through the,	49	Snailholm Tower,	337
Hints for Housekeepers,	345	Nature's Sanitary Agents,	531	Snakes, some Superstitions about,	325
History of Nugget-finding,	511	Naval Insurance Fund, the Proposed,	757	Solomon Islands, a Secret of the,	593
Holly Tea,	262	Navy, How to join the Royal,	501	Southern States, in the,	240
Home of a Hero, the,	732	Negro Coffee,	729	Spain, in Wild,	609
Honey-bee of the Future, the,	741	Nest-building, Extraordinary,	255	Starved!	158
Hospital Stories, some,	206	New Cunarders, the,	293	Steamer to cross the Atlantic, the First,	369
Hotel Life, the Ethics of,	721	New Zealand Peculiarities, some,	506	Steamships, some Early,	155
House of Lords, Appeal Cases in,	769	Niagara, Electricity from,	177	Stokers, Marine,	891
Housekeepers, Hints for,	345	Notes on Bonnets, some,	264	Story of a Palace, the,	698
Hoxton, Haunted,	753	Nugget-finding, the History of,	511	Stoves, Ovens and,	86
Huts, Beehive,	598	Ocean Currents,	422	Street Superstitions,	571
Ice Age Periodic? Is an,	782	Old London City Names,	22	Surprise-party, a Moonlight,	62
Iceland, in,	278	Old Servian Customs,	537	Table, on the,	161
Illustrious Handwriting,	671	Old Songs and New Saws,	625	Tartar, Catching a,	495
Indian Village, a Page from the Annals of an,	300	Orange River, the,	545	Tattered Volumes,	715
Insurance, about,	561	Oratorio, the First,	689	Ten, Holly,	262
Insurance Fund, the Proposed Naval,	757	Otterburn,	465	Tea, Johore,	629
Irish Constabulary, the Royal,	551	Our Bank,	394	Telegraph, How they,	199
Iron Road, on the,	385	Outpost Duty and 'Secret Service' in War,	650	Thought, Food for,	145
Iron-land, in,	570	Ovens and Stoves,	86	Tin-mines, Cornish,	470
Italian Brigands, Three Famous,	529	Oyster-culture in France,	702	Trades-union Tramps,	661
Italy of America, the,	351	Palace, the Story of a,	698	Traitor, a Faithful,	655
Ivories, Carved,	725	Palestine, the Jews in,	97	Trans Siberian Railway, the,	437
Jews in Palestine, the,	97	Panoramic Photography,	133	Treasure-trove, Hampstead Heath,	71
Johore Tea,	629	Parliamentary Manners and Humours,	10	Verge, Beyond the,	673
Jottings about Bank-notes,	602	Patent, How to take out a,	406	Village, a Deserted,	113
Kafta, an Arabian Beverage,	31	Patriot's Home and Tomb, a,	587	Villains of Fiction, and their Fates, some,	517
Kitchen-range Boilers, the Explosion of,	171	Pearl-shell Industry, a new Phase of the,	382	Voices, Fortunes in,	665
Land of the Chain-makers, the,	289	Photography, Panoramic,	133	Volumes, Tattered,	715
Land of the Setting Sun, the,	222	Pilchards, about,	54	Waist-girdles, on,	383
Landmarks of a Literary Life,	801	Pimento,	789	Walking-sticks,	330
Leathern Wings,	774	Piracy in Far Eastern Seas,	681	Wealth? What is,	737
Lebanon, the Cedars of,	390	Plovers and their Peculiarities,	353	Wealth from Waste,	209
Left-handed Folk,	43	Poems on Poems,	91	Weird Crater Lake, a,	449
Leonardo da Vinci, the Genius of,	443	Pronouncing Names,	288	Weldless Chain, the New,	309
Limits and Limitations,	497	Purveyance,	508	Whales, a Chat about,	542
Link with the Past, a,	447	Puzzles from a Diamond Mine,	310	White of Selborne's Country, in,	321
Literary Amenities, some,	460	Reading, a Few Words about,	225	Whitehall—the Story of a Palace,	689
Literary Life, Landmarks of a,	801	Reclaiming the Zuider Zee,	245	Wild Spain, in,	609
Live-meat Trade, the Imported,	412	'Redemptioners,' the,	525	Wingless Birds,	718
Living, on the Art of,	17	Riddles, Russian,	479	Wings, Leathern,	774
Love-Philtras,	76	Roasting versus Baking,	39	Winter Faring,	81
Magdalen Islands, Among the,	193			Wisconsin, a City of,	65
				Woodlands Hoar, the,	64
				Yarmouth Bloaters and Red Herrings,	811
				Zuider Zee, Reclaiming the,	245

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THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN,

AUTHOR OF 'MASTER OF HIS FATE;' 'A SOLDIER AND A GENTLEMAN,' &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE RETURN OF THE MASTER.

To the aesthetically minded, Southern Lancashire is the most provoking and irritating region within the coasts of Great Britain. It constantly suggests that there might have been unrivalled opportunities for delight in the picturesque and the beautiful, had they not been hewn away, trampled on, or covered up by the remorseless genius of modern Lancashire industry. Here, for instance, is a glen which Nature intended to be as romantic as any in the north, with birch-clothed sides, a clear and frolicsome trout-stream, and turf as soft and scented as the mead of Asphodel. Nature's intention, however, has been thwarted, and before us are merely a convenient hollow and convenient water for dye-works: the skyline is cut by a tall smoking chimney; the upper end of the glen is blocked by a pile of building and a dirty dam; the birches are stunted and blighted by smoke and the gases of filthy chemicals; the stream is choked by ashes and other refuse, and is shrunk to an ashamed and noisome dribble; and the mead of Asphodel is turned into a broad ex-der-track for mill-hands and coal-carts. That is a communion and saddening sight in Southern Lancashire. Yet are there others where it is pleasant and cheering to see that, under proper and kindly control, the genius of modern industry may have room and verge enough without committing outrage of a wanton kind upon dear Mother Nature. Not very far from the glen (or clough) already indicated there is another—or *idea*, a few years ago—where Nature had not been outraged, but only tamed a little. There also were chimney-shafts and buildings and a dam; but the chimneys were

notably tall, so that smoke and acrid vapours were carried far above the glen; the buildings were half-hid by healthy and stalwart elms, and smothered with ivy and flowering creepers; and the dam looked like a natural lake, its wholesome waters being uninhabited by fish and water-fowl, and by the homely duck and the stately swan, and its shady banks overgrown with flags and meadow-sweet. There the stream was clear, and frolicked gaily along at its own sweet will, flashing over pebbles and circumventing obstructive boulders, or boldly dashing over them. There, too, the turf was turf, green and sweet, where children romped of an afternoon, lads and lasses walked of an evening, and fairies even danced o' nights to the amazement of the prick-eared, half-tame rabbits. And the kindly arranger and controller of all this was George Suffield, cotton-spinner and calico-printer, and Member of Parliament.

On a certain night late in May, Mr Suffield was walking along the brink of the glen on a foot-path that led from the station. He was returning from a sedulous attention to the legislation of the country to enjoy the brief vacation of Whitsuntide in the bosom of his family. It was very late—almost midnight, indeed—but a full moon illumined all the scene with a pale mystic light—the clough, the park beyond it, with the Hall, towards which its master was making his way, and the village before him with its neat cottages and gardens, and its church standing white in the moonlight with its tower and its tapering spire. Suffield walked like a man well pleased with himself and his kind, bearing his

bulging Gladstone bag, as he did his years, lightly. He was a man of sixty or more, but he was what is called 'well preserved.' His hair and beard were grizzled, that is to say; but, while tall and strongly built, he was straight and ruddy, and he showed a fine, careless, open front to the world. Whether the influence of the moon or the neighbourhood of the fairies of the clough had touched him, he was in a light and vacant mood. He did not whistle as he went 'for want of thought;' but he hummed little catches to himself, and quoted to himself random scraps from his random reading. The tower of the church which he had built caught his roving eye, and he quoted—not too correctly—

They built up the tower of Jumley-Jee.
They built it up to a goodly height
At eleven o'clock on a Thursday night.

'Why Thursday night?' he asked himself, with a low chuckle of enjoyment of the absurdity of the thing. 'And why on earth at eleven o'clock? Ah, well; I suppose it was just meant to make you laugh; and it does.'

Thus he walked leisurely along, enjoying the soft night-air, enjoying the moonlight, enjoying the fair rich scene spread before him, and enjoying above all the sense that he had become the possessor and controller of all he saw by his own effort. He came of an obscure but sturdy and honest stock. His father had been a farmer and weaver, 'back o' th' White Moss,' in the easy old days before Lancashire industry had become so enormous, congested, and reckless. His parents had given him a sound body and a shrewd head, a large heart and a small education, and by the help of God and of a resolute purpose—and, it must be added, of a good wife, whom he adored—he had done the rest himself. Note him well; for he was of a generation that is fast passing away, a generation whose sons seem to lack much of the old Lancashire 'grit,' and the cheery and intrepid energy that set England in the front of the commerce and the humanity of the world.

As he continued his placid way, suddenly there came from the clough beneath him, and, it seemed to him, from a spot not far off, the squeak of a scared or captured rabbit, and close upon it a soothing and satisfied 'Wir-roo!'

'A poacher! The rascal!' exclaimed Suffield to himself.

Without a moment's hesitation, he set down his bag and slipped over the brow of the clough. He had but turned a hillock when, in the shade of two or three birches, he saw a creature in white—man or woman, he could not tell which—kneeling on the ground and holding a struggling rabbit by the ears.

'Put that beast down!' cried Suffield.

'Ow!' exclaimed the creature, at once dropping the rabbit, which bounded away and disappeared in a hole.

'And who the dickens are you to come poaching here?' demanded Suffield. 'Stand up and show yourself.'

The creature in white stood up, and came softly forward into the full moonlight. Suffield was amused to see the creature resolve itself into a black man with very bright eyes and white

teeth, and wearing a big white turban, a kind of white blouse with an ample red sash, and trousers of some dark material. The black man made a profound obeisance with his black hands crossed upon his white breast.

'Respectable sir,' he murmured in a very soft voice. He said no more, but bowed still lower and slowly shook his head, as if to deprecate the white man's anger.

'Where on earth do you come from?' said Suffield. 'Art a boggart?' he demanded, lapsing into dialect, 'or a kind o' demon fro' th' pit?'

'Respectable sir; no,' answered the black man. 'To speak with regards to your terms, I am not a demon, etcetera. I am Daniel—at your kind, respectable services.'

'What?' laughed Suffield, with a pleasant reminiscence in his mind of the judge in *Pickwick*. 'Daniel Nathaniel, or Nathaniel Daniel?'

'Respectable sir, no,' answered Daniel; 'I am Daniel Trichinopoly. The same time I must say I am servant, dressing-boy, and cook, and have answered to several others' capacity as clerk, store-keeper, etcetera, etcetera to a gentleman staying at the great Hall, namely, the Sahib Raynor.'

'Oh, ah!' exclaimed Suffield. 'You're Mr Raynor's black servant. But why couldn't you say that in so many words?'

'Respectable sir,' answered Daniel, 'I am regret to say that I have said it in so many words as I was able.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, with a laugh, 'I make no doubt you have.—Well, Daniel, your master has arrived then. When did he come? A-day?'

'Respectable sir,' answered Daniel, still with mellifluous precision, 'if care should be taken to be true the Sahib Raynor arrived the day before to-day.'

'But you haven't told me, Daniel, how you came to be snaring my rabbits. The rabbits are mine, you know: I am Mr Suffield.'

'Ah, respectable sir, you are indeed the Sahib Suffield! Large and splendid sir, I kiss your hem;' and he was about to carry his salutation into effect.

'No, no, man; don't do that,' said Suffield hurriedly; for he had the English shame of homage of that grovelling sort. 'Stand up and tell me why you were snaring my rabbits: we call it poaching.'

'Poaching!' Daniel accepted the word with a supple bow. 'Now I must say I am taking myself a walk in the scenery, and I am thinking nicely of the moon of India; the same time my sharp eye see a little wild beast run, and I am say to myself: "The little wild beast is made to catch and cook. I am intention to catch and cook and curry him for my master, the Sahib Raynor, etcetera." With regards, large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, with another humble obeisance, 'I hope I am forgive for my own experience. I am just come the day before to-day, and I am still not learned in the manners, customs, ways, etcetera.'

'But, Daniel,' said Suffield, very much interested and amused, 'I thought a Hindu, or a Buddhist—I don't know which you are—was forbidden by his religion to catch and kill any beast.'

'Large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, in an energy of resentment, 'with regard to above I am not Hindu, I am not Buddhist: I am Christian like my master!'

'H'm, ha,' said Suffield, struck by the reply; 'you've had me there. I suppose that is answer enough—that you are Christian—like your master. You've learned your Christian lesson well. And, now, you're going back to my house, I suppose, Daniel. Let us walk on together.'

'Large and splendid sir,' said Daniel, making another obeisance with his dingy hands crossed on his white breast, 'I will be highly thankful.'

'God made man upright,' said Suffield to himself, 'but he will bow and wriggle.'

So they climbed out of the clough and returned to find Mr Suffield's bag, which Daniel insisted on carrying; and thus they went on their way through the village, past the works, round the head of the clough, across the stream by a pretty rustic bridge, and into the park properly so called. The park was extensive, and the house—Holdsworth Hall—stood on a gentle eminence about half a mile from the works and the village. Mr Suffield and his strange companion therefore had plenty of time to become acquainted with each other. Suffield was one of those of whom Sir Walter Scott approved, who act, consciously or unconsciously, on the great Roman writer's rule—'nilhil humani a me alienum puto'—who are familiar and sympathetic, that is to say, with all sorts and conditions of men, and who think no human creature too humble, too stupid, too ignorant, or too foreign to teach them something. From the dusky Daniel—who, closer at hand and in the fuller light, was seen to be not black, but rather brown or coffee-coloured—he learned, what he already knew fairly well, that cotton-spinning and weaving and calico-printing were rapidly becoming great industries about Bombay; moreover, that Daniel himself when a very young man had worked in a cotton mill, and that he had a longing to become better acquainted with cotton-manufacture in general, because he believed—had he not evidence at his elbow in support of his belief?—that that way splendour and fortune lay. It was a memorable conversation, though, like most things memorable, it became so only in the light of subsequent events—events which appertain to this story.

'It's late; you'd better come in this way,' said Suffield, when they had reached the great Hall door. 'Some of the family up, I see: there's light in the dining-room.'

He knocked and rang a loud peal, and a young gentleman in evening dress and a sleepy-looking elderly servant in knee-breeches came to open the door together. Both appeared a little surprised to see the strange companion the master of the house had got.

'Oh, Trichy,' said the young man, *passim*, 'you're out late.'

'Yea, Sahib George,' grinned Daniel—he had clearly got into the way already of regarding 'Sahib' George as an amusing person—'I appear to be.'

'Well, father,' said George, grasping the paternal hand, 'you've come home at last.'

'Yea, lad,' said Suffield; 'and right glad I am to be out o' that big, roaring London.—And how's things?'

'All right, dad.'

It was good to see the looks of affection and confidence that passed between father and son.

'And how's Tummas?' called Suffield after the elderly man-servant, who was retiring in Daniel's company.

'Pretty bobbish, mester,' answered Tummas, 'as the sayin' is.'

'That's all right,' said Suffield. Then in a low voice he remarked to his son: 'He was going away, looking rather disappointed. He thought, I suppose, I had forgotten him, poor owd Tummas! Is your mother up?'

'No,' answered George—'mother has gone to bed.'

'And Uncle Harry?'

'He has gone to bed too,' said George. 'The rest of us have been to the theatre.'

'Oh, it's father!' cried a charming young lady, jumping up and running to Suffield the moment he showed himself in the dining-room.

'Yes, my lass,' said he, taking her in his arms—she was small and slight, though shapely—it is fatter.—And here's Cousin Isabel too.'

A tall, dark, and strikingly handsome young lady, who had stood waiting with a smile for her turn to be saluted, now came forward. 'I'm here again, you see, uncle,' said she when she had kissed him.

'You can't come too often, my lass,' said Suffield. 'The only mistake you make, as I've told you before, is not to stay here altogether.'

'It's kind of you to say that, uncle, even though you have said it before. But you know I'm an old maid!'

'An old maid?' exclaimed Suffield's daughter, clasping her round the waist. 'Hear her, father! Hear her, George!—An old maid at four-and-twenty!'

'Still, my dear,' said Cousin Isabel, 'like the old gentleman in the play, I protest in the face of Europe that in essence if not in actual fact I am an old maid. I have my own queer, solitary ways that I should not like to give up.'

'Well,' said Suffield, 'you must be fonder o' other people's brats than I should be, Isabel, to spend all your days teaching one lot after another—one down t' other come on.'

'Don't you speak of teaching, uncle,' laughed Isabel, 'rather as if it were fighting?'

'I know I'd rather do the fighting myself.—Have you had supper? I think I'll just have a mouthful.'

He sat down to eat and drink, and the others sat about him.

'Well,' said Suffield, 'tell me what you saw at the theatre. Was it in the play to-night, Isabel, that the old gentleman protested in the face of Europe? I like that saying; "protested in the face of Europe," I dare say, when he was standing in his own back-kitchen.'

'Something like that, uncle,' answered Isabel. 'But it was not in the play to-night; it's in a French play.'

'Oh, ah,' said her uncle; 'a French play: Frenchies say that kind o' thing. What was the play, then, to-night?'

George answered his father in some detail. It was notable that he had not spoken till then, that while Cousin Isabel had been excusing herself, he had appeared uneasy, not to say impatient

and hurt, and that he had cast on her several appealing looks, of which she had remained either unconscious or regardless. About the quality of the play and the players the young people did not agree. Both play and players were London successes—a fact which seemed to subdue what critical judgment the easy and good-natured George possessed: like most of the younger generation, he believed in all things metropolitan; he had his coats, his hats, and his boots made in London; his favourite reading was the London papers; and he was constantly ‘running up to town.’ His sister, Euphemia, did not even affect to be critical; she bubbled over with direct, unthinking enthusiasm, and thought everything she had seen—especially the dresses—‘quite too lovely.’ Cousin Isabel, on the other hand, was not only critical, but—it seemed to the others—irreverent and revolutionary. She not only called the play a vulgar travesty of a noble story, but laughed at the silly sentimentalism and the mean and jerky elocution with which the parts had been rendered; moreover, she declared that, if such things continued to be generally admired and praised, the theatre would be as little worth going to as a ‘penny reading.’ These opinions unutterably disturbed the three Suffields, whose only doubt hitherto had been that the theatre was not morally beyond reproach. And yet they could not ignore or despise what she said; for, apart from the fact that all three were fond of her, they all believed in her cleverness and her judgment, and in her prescriptive right to be severely critical of all things: was she not—though of their family—a teacher in a celebrated Ladies’ College in London, and by that token a kind of animate encyclopædia of knowledge?

‘Ah, well,’ said the benign Suffield, summing up and closing the discussion, ‘you’re beyond me, Isabel. You strike a high note that I can’t reach—a very high note indeed. But tell me—did any of you see Ainsworth there?’

‘Of course,’ answered the brother and sister together; ‘he was there for the paper.’

‘That’s all right,’ said their father. ‘He’ll settle it for us. We’ll see what he says about it in the morning’s paper.’

‘He won’t go against the verdict of London,’ said George.

‘Oh, won’t he?’ said his father. ‘Perhaps he won’t and perhaps he will; but it won’t depend on what he cares for what they say or what they think in London. I doubt very much if there’s any writer on the London papers cleverer than himself, or as clever. He has a fine head on him, has Alan; he’s half Scots and half Lancashire, and he’ll go far.—You remember Ainsworth—don’t you, Isabel? He’s dramatic critic and all the rest of it for the *Gazette*.’

‘Oh yes,’ said Isabel, ‘I remember Mr Ainsworth.’

‘Well, now,’ said her uncle, looking at his watch, ‘it’s time we all went to bed.’

When the girls withdrew, he and George went round to see that all doors and shutters were secured, and then ascending to their rooms, they said ‘good-night’ at the top of the stairs. But on his way to his own room Suffield observed that the door of the great spare room stood open, where, he imagined, Uncle Harry, the ‘Sahib’ Raynor, was put up. He looked into the room,

and discovered that the bed, though tumbled, was empty. In perplexity and alarm, he called his son softly.

‘This is Uncle Harry’s room, isn’t it?’ he asked.

George answered that it was; and he, too, looked in to make sure that Uncle Harry was not playing them a prank; but neither in bed, nor under it, nor in wardrobe or cupboard, could Uncle Harry be found.

‘What the dickens can have become of him?’ said Suffield. ‘Perhaps your mother will know.’ He entered his wife’s room, and soon returned relieved and chuckling. ‘What do you think?’ he said to his son. ‘Your mother tells me he’s camping out! He has been so many years used to sleeping out o’ doors, that he can’t be comfortable in a proper bed and a proper bedroom, and he begged your mother to let him take a blanket out into the park! He’s a caution; but I’ll find him i’ th’ morning.’

CHRISTMAS-TIME IN FLORIDA.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

As a Briton unused to an excess of vermin and black faces, Jacksonville impressed me most for the enormity of its spiders, its nightly visitations of mosquitoes, and its negro population. There was also the sand. It is one of the sunniest places in the world. A walk of a couple of miles in any direction was no joke; and even in December the noonday sun was not a thing to face with impunity.

I found the city remarkably full of people. The newspapers told in their own sweet way about the extraordinary immigration of delicate Northerners and impecunious Britons into the State. The former were here for the winter, and in my opinion they were not too wise to come to a part of the world which sometimes showed a variation of fifty degrees of temperature in a single day. As for the latter, of course they were after orange groves, fruit farms, and that sort of thing. Without wishing to decry Florida as a field for honest labour and the investment of money, I can’t help saying that it is far from being the gold mine it was fancied to be. Orange trees are not robust: a frost plays sad havoc with a crop. Save oranges and garden produce, Florida has next to nothing to offer the worker as a reward for his work. In addition to invalids and immigrants, a British aristocrat or two were here for the shooting. The darkies were profoundly aggrieved to find that these gentlemen differed physically not at all from themselves, save in colour. They expected a lord to be of a more exalted order in human nature.

Our house backed upon the great St John’s River, which is such a valuable thoroughfare for the State. Nightly we heard the bellowing of its steamers in the midst of the unpleasant fog of a subtropical kind which veiled it from the sight of the stars. This mist fell upon it soon after the variegated hues of sunset had coloured the sky, and did not lift of a morning until the sun was hot and dazzling in the heavens. It was enchanting to see the cypress and oak on the other bank of the river break through the mist; but the mist itself is sheer poison to certain

constitutions. One understands why the Florida doctors forbid their patients—and even men who are not ill—to stir out of doors after dark, and to be abroad until the day has well advanced. Such injunctions are a notable bar to the enjoyment of life in a strange country.

It was due to the damp of the river that our outbuildings were of the rottenest description, though only a few years old. And no doubt these circumstances favoured our spiders. Of all ghoulish monsters, I wish to see none more odious than the colonies of these spiders that occupied all the available corners of the sheds. Thick-bodied and hairy, with agile hairy legs, it was enough to frighten a timid person to see one of them suddenly scamper in his direction. But our black domestic merely laughed at them, and put her large flat feet upon them when they gave her the chance. She was a merry, irresponsible young person, like most of her kind, and thought nothing of hanging our pyjamas on the prickly pear-tree in the garden, when she wished to air the things. It is easier to hint at than describe the consequences of such a crime. The needles of the pear-tree stuck into us in a hundred places simultaneously.

Of course one does not expect mosquitoes even in Florida in mid-winter—at least in an uncomfortable number. No matter; there they were. Only when a cold snap came and dropped the thermometer to thirty-three degrees or so were our nights quite free from them. At other times their melodious trumpeting sounded in the dark hours and tempted to madness. Many of the visitors to the Southern State carried about with them most uncomely faces, due to the earnest workmanship of these little darlings. You could always at the post-office of a morning—when the 'queue' of strangers waiting for their letters was sometimes thirty or forty feet long—pick out a few individuals who were a sight to distress their parents. On the other hand, the darkies and the primrose-complexioned natives showed no signs of this kind of affliction.

Jacksonville was lively enough after the provincial American fashion. That is to say, it abounded with land-prospectors and land-sellers, who could lie without an effort in the most picturesque fashion; all its hotels and lodging-houses were well occupied; quack doctors paraded the streets with their appanages of sham Indians in sham-Indian war-paint; and after dark the different bar-rooms were noisy. The steamers, too, which arrived and left were crowded to excess. Sleeping accommodation of the orthodox kind on board was only for the fortunate few, and meals were going all day long for the relays who waited for them. One or two of the churches, moreover, had visits from preachers of European fame, and in one of them the soloist in the Te Deum anthem was a young lady with a notorious voice, of which she made the most as she stood on the altar steps facing the congregation, music-copy in hand. Of high-class secular music and other entertainments there was, however, an absolute dearth. Fiddles and concertinas in the bar-rooms—where about ten thousand different drinks at ten cents apiece might be obtained—did not recommend themselves particularly. Perhaps the medical advice about shunning the night-air had something to do with this.

Certainly, except in the main street of the city, if you were out after dark, you seemed to have the world much to yourself.

To form some idea of the State and its development, we travelled for three weeks in it. For the mere novelty's sake this was worth doing. But there was much of extreme interest in the physiognomy of the country, whether as untroubled forest or attractive orange groves, and, to me at least, the settlers also were quite engrossing. We travelled by river steamboat, railway, the inevitable buggy, which bounds over a tree-trunk without capsizing you, and by trading-snack in the Gulf of Mexico. And when we were back again in Jacksonville, having in the meantime become landed proprietors with all the attendant responsibilities, we felt well able to tell all and sundry our opinion of the State.

Nothing was more surprising than the number of Britons upon whom we chanced in out-of-the-way settlements. Sometimes they had their wives with them; more often they were young men working tooth and nail to establish a homestead and income that should enable them to send to the old country for a bride. It was rare in the extreme to find any one who was not hopeful and more than hopeful about his future. Even old men here babbled amazingly about their plans as they led us over their estates and showed us orchards and sugar-plantations which a year or two back were mere pine forest or insalubrious swamp.

One night a lake steamer put us ashore in a spot that gave promise of affording very poor accommodation, if any. The lake was a third-rate water-way, and the steamer was a toy steamer, chartered for the mails and nothing else. However, ashore we went under guidance, and walked for half an hour through a forest, the tall trees of which with their gigantic undergrowth—an unusual feature for Florida—quite hid the stars from us, though these were also well concealed by the omnipresent evil mist. We were received at length in a certain store, feasted in a picturesque fashion on venison and duck—the deer had been shot that afternoon, and hung against the wall—and then put to bed in an outhouse. I cannot say much for the tranquillity of our slumbers. The shed was populous with rats, which raced even over the bed; and there was an owl in the room, which bothered our nerves considerably until we understood it. As this was also one of the 'cold-snap' days, we had a frigid night of it in this well-ventilated bed-chamber. Nevertheless, the morning found us fresh enough, and eager to see what we could of this district.

One of the first scenes that met our eyes after breakfast, when we had driven for a while through an astounding area of orange groves—every tree laden with fruit—did credit to our homeland. We came upon a tiny lake. Near it was a wooden shed, whence the whirl of machinery sounded, and towards which a couple of span of mules were dragging pine-logs to be sliced into timber. The presiding spirits of this scene were a stout middle-aged man and his son—a fine, hale young fellow; and glad enough were they to stop for a while and gossip with us. They were a couple of Yorkshiremen, a few months only in Florida. And in that time they

had established a trio of orange groves, which promised exceedingly well, built a villa of the usual kind with four rooms, fixed a saw-mill, stocked the little lake hard by with carp, and conceived a few score schemes for their speedy and substantial enrichment. They took us to their house, and regaled us on pork and beans at noon, showed us their poor little sandy garden and their multitudinous poultry, and also showed us, in a packing-case, a piano which had come south from New York in readiness for the arrival from England of the wife and daughters of the elder man. In Yorkshire, these worthy fellows had been common carpenters. In less than a year in Florida they had become settlers of the best class, and enlarged their minds amazingly in the necessary exercise of a number of faculties that in England had lain dormant, or nearly so. But the native instinct was strong in them still; for ere we left them—sounding Florida's praises to the last—they tried with painful earnestness to sell us a horse, and in default of a horse, a shot-gun that 'for turkey was absolutely impossible to beat.'

Green pine forests sweet to smell, with the blue sky overhead; pestilential swamps, with snakes slinking among the logs, and the roots of the cypresses standing quaintly in the water; broad reaches and miles square of tall saw-grass, which would have made us 'tattered and torn' had we tried to cross them; lily lakes, with the snouts of alligators taking the air on the surface, or more often on their banks, dense with varied vegetation; acres upon acres of fascinating orange groves; and here and there a pretty coterie of white clean-looking bungalows, with green shutters, and a knot of extremely tanned gentlemen in scanty raiment to each coterie of houses such are the conventional sights of inland Florida. The romance of the country is of Nature alone; for though the Spaniards in the sixteenth century gave the State a tincture of modern history, this applies only to a very small part of it. To my mind, at any rate, there was more of the romance of history in the little graveyard to each little village, with the simple inscriptions on the simple wooden crosses, and the thickly intertwined thorn hedges to keep the wild hogs from profaning the enclosures. Now and again we came upon a lady dressed as if she were going to a meet in Leicestershire. Her horse was either with her or not far off; and her husband was within a day's ride of her. There was no mistaking the Briton in her; and one of these settlers told us how she enjoyed the freedom of the life, even though socially it was 'shocking.' But upon the whole the British lady does not seem to thrive here so well as her husband or brothers. The thornfaced graveyards told us this much, and we got enough verbal confirmation of the fact.

We happened to be in one of these remote settlements on a day eventful in the history of the village itself. The oldest inhabitant, in fact the founder of the place, lay dead in his house; and his funeral was to take place in the afternoon. On all sides of the village the pine forest extended. Pine forest and blue sky made up the outlook beyond the houses. The day was enchanting, and I never saw so many different varieties of butterflies in an hour as

here while lounging on the village green with all the male population, waiting for the appearance of the mortuary car. This latter duly came towards us at length. It was the deceased man's own cart, which had carried many a case of his oranges to the nearest place of shipment; and the man's own coloured servant held the horse's head, sobbing without restraint while he walked. All the village and divers outlying settlers were present; and the church, a white-faced pine-panelled building with a belfry, upon which a great gray buzzard had perched, as if to see the procession, was filled with people. The clergyman was an old man, and—they told us—a very intimate friend of the dead man's. Be that as it may, he could hardly go through the service, and the very audible weeping of the congregation seemed to add to his emotion. The climax came, however, when the coffin was unscrewed again before the altar, and nearly every member of the congregation filed past to look once more upon the dead face of the father of the village. The clergyman covered his eyes with his handkerchief, and no one seemed willing to try to control his grief. I was never present at a more moving scene. Its concluding features were comparatively simple. 'We all followed the old man to the cemetery in the forest, and there he was laid to rest deep in the whitish sand. And ten minutes afterwards the mourners had reminded each other that a duty is owed to the living as well as the dead. The perfume of their cigars as they strolled back to the village was wafted over the newly-made mound and carried far into the forest. But the old clergyman returned to his house by himself, with bent sorrowful head; nor did he smoke like his fellow-men.'

This village was in many respects a typical Florida settlement. It was in daily expectation of that curious American characteristic known as a 'boom.' It advertised its charms and pecuniary attractions for capitalists in the newspapers of Jacksonville and New York; and its wide-awake citizens closed about the stranger at their hotel, as if they were determined he should not leave them till he had bought a hundred or two acres of their land. The hotel keeper was of course in collusion with the citizens. The consequence was that we were bothered almost out of our few wits by the pertinacity of our visitors. At breakfast and dinner we were surrounded by gentlemen with land to sell, and they much interfered with our appetite. We could not even stroll into the hotel garden to pick our dessert from the trees—a privilege readily allowed—without an escort, and the oranges served as a text for new orations about the peculiar fitness of the surroundings for orange groves or aught else.

Christmas Day came upon us while we were thus wandering in the Florida wilds. It seemed as unlike Christmas weather as it well could be. We anchored for the festival at the city of Tampa on the Gulf coast. Somehow, I do not think with impartial respect of this city of Tampa, important and rather pretty place though it is. That is because it laid me up with an attack of dysentery, however, and so the fact need not stand to Tampa's discredit. Of all white places, commend me to this. Its sand is quite

preposterous, and far into the forest the ruts which indicate its highways towards other towns were almost deep enough for the interment of a body.

A thermometer at eighty-five degrees seemed inconsistent with plum-pudding and roast turkey. Still, we remembered the home traditions, and so did the host of our hotel. And afterwards we reposed in hammocks hung between the orange trees of the orchard, and smoked cigars, while wondering what England would think if it could suddenly on this 25th of December exchange skies with Florida. In the evening we strolled towards the quay to see the coral and gold and pale purple of the heavens in their brief twilight afterglow. The air was heavy with the perfume of orange and lemon flowers, and soft and caressing to a marvel. Sounds of revelry reached us from the shanties of the coloured people, who abound in Tampa, and who love all holiday pretexts. And a pair of small black urchins preceded us jocosely down the yielding street with a sugar-cane between them, each chewing at his own end. When we caught the youngsters, for the jest's sake we asked them what they meant by such conduct. 'It's Chris'mus, sarr,' replied the bolder of the two. Then down went the sun over the still silvery surface of the Bay, and for a few moments Tampa and its forest setting stood out in strong relief, until the mist began to steal over all things, including the opaline sky above us.

When we were again in Jacksonville, our opinion of Florida was almost exalted enough to match that of the land-agents themselves. Subsequent experiences, however, have duly moderated our enthusiasm. It is, after all, a country like other countries—with advantages and defects that equitably dovetail in each other.

ISABEL DYSART.*

By Mrs OLIPHANT.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'You will have to make up your mind, my bonnie woman. Lads like you will not hang on for ever at the pleasure of a—bit slip of a creature like you.'

'You were going to call me a worse name,' cried Isabel.

'Well: I was maybe going to call you a little flirt of a thing that delighted in mischief, and in turning older folk round her little finger.'

'Whatever I do, I cannot turn you round my little finger, mother! You just sit there and smile, and hear everybody speak, and do what you've settled to do. I would sooner try to draw Edinburgh Castle down from the rock than to change your mind; and what do I care for Uncle John or Aunt Mary—or—or a few lads, if you make me say it: when you just sit smiling there like Arthur's Seat and never mind!'

'Well, my dear, you are grand with your

similes; but the Castle Rock and Arthur's Seat are curious images for me.'

Mrs Dysart looked out of the seat in the window which she always occupied, upon the objects of which she spoke. It was a small square window, placed in a deep little recess in the thick wall, filled with greenish glass in small panes: and the prospect visible from it was no less than the distant city of Edinburgh—the Castle rock standing up upright through the mist, and the great Salisbury Crags, and the softer slope of Arthur's Seat clear to the east, in misty sunshine. These salient points were by so much the most important things in the landscape and world, that they continually came into the talk, as they were always in the vision, of the people about. The room inhabited by these two people was an old-fashioned, low-roofed room with five windows, from two or three of which this matchless view was to be seen. One of the others looked straight into a great ash, a sort of forest in itself; and the last was over a bright, old-fashioned garden full of flowers and light. The walls were covered with the abundant growth of a jargonelle pear-tree, upon which the pears had lately hung thick, ripe, and beautiful to behold. The flowers in the garden were chiefly dahlias, brilliant though unattractive; but this was partially made up for by the beds of mignonne, in its full autumnal flower, filling the whole atmosphere with a mild sweetness. The house was all old-fashioned, and so was the mistress of it, sitting in what was considered in those days an easy-chair, with stiff arms and a high seat, which gave her a dignity of which our low and luxurious seats are destitute. She had her feet upon a footstool, and a work-table open at her side with all the implements of her sewing arranged in blue silk compartments. Her dress was of black silk, not high to the throat, but closing over a spotless handkerchief of white net; and she wore a long white muslin apron reaching almost to the bottom of her gown. Her white cap was tied by white ribbons under her chin. There could not have been a more pleasing picture of a mother; but this garb, though so pretty in itself, made her perhaps look older than a woman of her years should have looked. Our mothers were certainly older in those days than the mothers of girls of twenty are now.

Isabel, however, was more than twenty by a few years. She had remained unmarried much beyond the tradition of her family, 'till it was just a scandal,' her aunt said. She was so far before her age that the mischance of being too well off, too happy at home, which interferes so much with marriages nowadays, showed itself already in this young woman, so advanced for her period; though, indeed, there was perhaps another obstacle in the fact that Isabel was the youngest—the only one left at home—and that when she finally made up her mind to leave her

mother's house, Wallyford would be but a solitary place and Mrs Dysart a dweller alone. I do not mean to assert for a moment that this fact would have prevented Isabel's marriage had she made up her mind; for Mrs Dysart was not only a woman of great resolution, but of indomitable pride, and would no more have permitted a daughter's sacrifice than she would have allowed herself to stand in need of being taken care of. 'Me! to keep my bairn out of her natural life!' she would have said. There was a great deal of philosophy in the well-braced-up and independent mind of a woman of the better class of rural respectability—having no pretension, however, to be of a county family or superior to her neighbours—in those days: and a strong stand for what was natural and lawful and of good report. If her heart sometimes sank to think what her lonely days and lonely house would be when Isabel was gone, yet no cloud was ever visible upon her comely forehead on this account. It was the course of Nature. The last thing in the world which she would have accepted or agreed to was that Isabel should not marry. That was inevitable; as for herself, she would make up her mind to it as mothers have had to do since the world began.

'My dear, it's easy to speak of the lads and of doing what you like with them, at present. I'll not say for the minister. He's so superior to you, Bell, that he will just say, "It's her way, poor lassie," and give in to you however camstairy you may be; but yon doctor-lad is a dour fellow. I would not like, for my part, to take it upon me to oppose him'—

'Superior to me!' cried Isabel; 'that's not the way to make me take to him; mother—though I know you were always in his favour. Superior! I would like to see the man'—

'That would say that? He'll not say it, my dear; but he's a man that is above the common clashes and little ways of thinking. He would not even feel it; he would say to himself, "Poor bit thing; she has her nerves and so forth;" or, "She's more sensitive than I am;" or'—

'I know you were always in his favour, mother,' said Isabel stiffly. 'A minister! That goes above everything with some folk. And you never could put up with poor Willie Torrence.'

'Put up with him!' said Mrs Dysart. 'I can put up with just anything. Have I not put up with your sister Jeanie's man, that makes me grind my teeth every word he speaks?—Oh yes, I'll put up with him! but how you are to do it, yourself'—

'We'll see about that,' said Isabel, flushed and rebellious. Opposition made her instinctively turn in the forbidden direction, which Mrs Dysart was too wise a woman not to know. But our wisdom does not always guide our actions: or perhaps, indeed, she meant to move her child to a decision whatever it might be—thinking that better than the uncertainty in which, so far as Isabel herself was concerned, there was a vague pleasure. 'The little cutty was fond of having all the lads in the parish after her,' her Aunt Mary said. It is to be hoped that there were more 'lads' (which is a word that ought to be pronounced, as everybody knows, with a very broad vowel—not exactly 'laud,' as it is written by the ignorant Southron, but something inclin-

ing thereto) in the parish of Tranent than the young minister and the young doctor; and perhaps it was scarcely respectful to call a 'placed minister'—not a young probationer, to whom the title is specially appropriate—a lad. But Nature will be Nature even when the gravest title is put before a young man's name. Bishops even and Reverend Doctors make love and marry, and lay themselves open to undignified appellations sometimes—and the Reverend Mr Murray was a young man in fact as well as in sentiment. And he was a handsome young man, much more so than Torrence, the young doctor, whose qualities were as different as possible from those of the mild Murray—a sharp, quick-witted, practical-minded, yet, in his grim way, enthusiastic medicine man, eager in everything that concerned his profession, and sure, everybody said, to rise in it.

That, perhaps, was one thing which attracted Isabel. She, too, was full of spirit and ambition, not content to settle down quietly and tend the sheep in the quiet parish in which she had been born, if there was a prospect of something more stirring and exciting outside in the bigger world. The stir of the atmosphere about Torrence, the new wonders of science and discovery of which he spoke, and even his contempt for the stagnation of the rural world about, had a charm for this inexperienced girl. And yet there were things that jarred. It is rare when there is not something that jars between a young man and a young woman thus hesitating before the decision. While the tide has not yet completely carried away their lingering feet, the steps always keep starting from each other more or less, here and there. The man has his own side of this question, which, to do him justice, he does not, either by himself or his exponents, much dwell upon; but the girl's little starts and pauses, her moments of alarm and uncertainty, the quick impression of a moment against, as well as the impulse towards, the man who is her fate, are often very apparent and very interesting. Isabel was in this condition now. The tide was drawing her on sometimes with a very swift impulsion, swifter than she was at all aware of: but now and then there came a sudden start and stop.

Willie Torrence had been her playfellow when they were children, and she had been accustomed to his constant society all her life. She had a hundred recollections of him through all his boyhood, not all of them favourable; sometimes there would leap into her mind a sudden picture of something he had said or done years ago—something, nothing—a look, a gesture which would cause one of these starts aside—though, indeed, he had just been as other boys, and Isabel had always liked him. Nothing like this ever occurred in respect to young Mr Murray, who was good, and *nice*, and handsome, and far more respectful, even reverential, of the woman in her than Torrence—so respectful, indeed, that Isabel, knowing she was not Miranda or Rosalind, was sometimes a little humbled, but much oftener, I am afraid, amused by his persistent imputation of all their splendours and delights to a little country girl by no means accustomed to such poetical adoration. Torrence's light call to 'Bell,' whom he had so addressed when she was a baby, was often more congenial to her than the 'Miss

Isabel, with the accent on the first syllable of her name, which the minister uttered as if it were the name of a Queen: and yet—

'I wish,' said Mrs Dysart, 'if you have nothing else to do, that you would go down to your uncle, Isabel, and see if there's any more news about these dreadful things in Edinburgh. It is the day for the *Courant*, and he will be very full of it. I am not a person for murders and such awful stories: but Lord bless us, a thing that is just a danger and a horror to us all'—

'What should we have to do with it in a quiet country place?' said Isabel: but she said it simply out of contradiction, with the natural instinct of a healthy girl. For as a matter of fact, she had herself been very much more nervous about the bit of road which lay under the shadow of the old house of Wallyford, a great old roofless and ruinous mansion within a stone's throw of the little Wallyford of to-day—since the dreadful news had come from Edinburgh of the murders of Burke and Hare, which scared the whole country-side far more than any crime of a more usual kind could have done. It was such a horror and a mystery as might well disturb the imagination. And it was a bad time altogether for the popular fancy. Stories of resurrection men and of desecrated graves were rife, and chilled the mind with horror, and the dreadful revelation of mysterious murders, how many and by what means accomplished no one could yet tell, gave a sombre excitement to the public, which had not the incessant reports we have now to satisfy its curiosity and subdue its terrors. A weekly paper was the most that any one had to bring him information of what went on from day to day, and even that was a luxury which but few allowed themselves for their own enjoyment alone. 'A look at the *Courant*,' or a share with three or four others in the *Scotsman*, according to the politics of the reader, was all that most people allowed themselves. Uncle John, as an old navy man, was staunch for Church and State, and took the *Courant*, while the *Scotsman* was Mrs Dysart's paper. She had a kind of surreptitious advantage in consequence, getting as it were two sets of news.

The house of Wallyford was an old-fashioned two-storied house, with a rounded projection on one side for the ample staircase, which was lit by a large long window: a cosy kitchen downstairs, with a red brick floor, through which the family went and came, leaving the front door for great occasions, was occupied by one large and powerful maid-servant, who performed all the work of the house, and was capable of as much again, even though the caps and kerchiefs of the Mistress were, as Janet said, very 'fyky,' and took a great deal of ironing.

'You'll be gaun out, Miss Isabell,' said Jenny—with the accent on the last syllable—which was a self-evident observation.

'Yes, I am going out,' said Isabel; 'and Jenny, you'll mind to take my mother her cup of tea.'

'The Mistress'll no want while I'm to the fore,' said Jenny with a glance of indignation. Five-o'clock tea did not exist formally in these primitive days, but 'a cup of tea' has always been an institution.—'And you'll be hame yourself in good time?' Jenny added, coming out to the door to look after her young mistress. 'The

days are just creeping in dreadful, and the road's lonesome in the dark.'

'To this Isabel vouchsafed no reply. The road was not lonesome to her, who knew every step of it, if it was not perhaps just that bit already referred to where the great ruined house of Wallyford stood out with its roofless gables against the sky, casting a shadow which was blacker than anything Isabel knew. It was a bright October afternoon, and the sun was still high, over Edinburgh Castle, shining red through the misty atmosphere and smoke which gave its name to Old Reekie. The trees were almost as bright in their garments of many colours as the sky—save those big ashes which still retained their green, and added to the shadows round the old house. Isabel went briskly along towards Musselburgh in her short-waisted, long-skirted pelisse of dark blue cloth, a slim figure with the lightest step in the world skimming over the long road. She was turning over her own little problem in her mind—which, indeed, was no little problem to her, but concerned her whole life—when she set out: but the air and the freshness of the ruddy afternoon, lighted up by the glory of the trees, all red and golden, and the warmth of the sun, which threw a long shadow in front of her as she went towards Musselburgh, and the distant gleam of the bay before, its great waters glowing and heaving in the ruddy westering light—soon blew away everything save that nameless exhilaration of youth which movement and exercise and air bring back, whatever preoccupation may have momentarily driven it away. Isabel had forgotten all about Burke and Hare, and indeed had ceased entirely to think of Willie Torrence and the Rev. James Murray, for some time before she arrived at the door of her uncle John, who lived in a cosy little house surrounded by a shrubbery, on the way to the sea.

Uncle John was an old sailor, not holding any very high grade in the navy, but dignified in his retirement by the title of Captain; and his wife, a pretty little round-faced woman, fond of pink ribbons in her cap and everything that was cheerful. The old skipper took his walk to Fisherrow every morning to the pier and harbour, to give his opinion upon the weather and hear what boats were out, and the fish that had been caught, and anything that might have happened to the *Lively Peggy* or the *Bonnie Jean*, or any other of the little red-sailed, heavy-timbered fleet. But that duty accomplished, without which it was doubtful whether the little port and the proper sequence of good and bad weather could have been duly regulated, established himself for the rest of the day in his dining-room, he on one side of the fire, and his wife on the other, not ill pleased to hear a visitor at the door. It was a high day when it was the day for the newspaper, into which he plunged the moment his early dinner was over, while she sat patient, yet excited, waiting for the pieces of news which he read aloud. People thought it rather grand and decidedly extravagant of Captain John to take in the *Courant* for his own reading, instead of thriftily sharing the price with two or three neighbours: but then, to be sure, he and his wife had no children, no sons to set out in the world, which made a great difference: and they were very good about lending it in the end of the week.

The newspaper day was the only day when this good couple did not care for visitors, and it was with an exclamation of relief that Aunt Mary cried out, 'Eh, it's just Isabel,' when the door opened, making the girl 'Come in to the fire,' with a delighted welcome. 'Ye'll no disturb your uncle in his reading; and I have just an uncommon fine seedcake, new cut, to keep you going,' she whispered, setting Isabel down on a chair close to her uncle, who patted her arm affectionately, by way of greeting, as he went on. There was nothing unusual in this welcome to Isabel, who accepted the slice of cake with a smile, and did her best to bring down her mind to Uncle John's reading, which was emphatic if not very steady, since the good man had a way of losing his place.

'You're a great interruption to the reading,' said the old gentleman, when this happened, patting Isabel again with his large soft hand. 'You little thing, you put everything out of her head. She was breathless a moment since to hear of Burke and Hare—and now she's forgotten everything but a piece for Isabel.'

'It's an awful story,' said Aunt Mary, sitting down again. 'It's gruesome to hear of such things.'

'Such things! There's been nothing like it in my time,' said Uncle John. 'And these doctors—I cannot think but they're just as bad as the murderers themselves.' He brought down his fist upon the table with a subdued exclamation, which was not adapted for publication. 'I'd swing them up to the yardarm alongside of the butchers themselves,' he cried.

'Oh John!' cried Aunt Mary; 'well-educated, clever men!'

'And all the worse for that,' said the sea-captain—then he resumed his reading; and Isabel, too, fell under the fascination of the terrible tale. Besides, was not that what she had come for, to take the fresh news to her mother? What with the reading, and what with the commentaries upon it, the twilight had begun to fall before she sprang up and declared she must run home. 'Before it gets dark. I'll be frightened to pass the old house,' cried the girl.

This was the reason why she was so late on the road, which indeed was lonesome in the dark, though so familiar. Isabel hurried on with her heart beating, and a sensation of fright quite unusual to her. I remember, many years later, how almost every child in Scotland trembled for the possibility of something pouncing upon it out of every dark corner, a dreadful hand upon its mouth. To hear of that traffic in death when it had just happened was certainly more appalling still. She hurried along, trying to think of something else, until there rose before her the great old house of Wallyford, its roofless gables relieved against a sky still blue in the lingering evening light, but casting shadows of inky darkness on the road which wound under its walls. What a place for a horrible wretch to start out to seize unseen the hapless victim! To be sure, these men were in prison; they could do no more harm—but; to be sure, there never were any villains like that about our countryside! to be sure—

But just as she came to the edge of the shadow,

something did dart out upon Isabel. She gave a great cry of horror, and fled, but was caught by a strong arm. And then there rang a loud laugh into her ears. 'Did you think I was going to Burke you, Bell?'

But the shock was too much for the girl. 'Oh Willie Torrence, Willie Torrence, how dare you frighten me so?' she cried, and burst into wild tears. In his arms! it made her furious afterwards to remember—but at the moment she had no power of escape from that bold kiss with which he took advantage of the panic he had caused.

PARLIAMENTARY MANNERS AND HUMOURS.

A BYGONE Speaker publicly observed upon a notable occasion from his chair of state that the House of Commons is 'no school for manners.' In more recent times the same qualified reproach may occur to the minds of outsiders, who occasionally read newspaper reports of parliamentary scenes and episodes more lively than courteous. The popular representative assembly, nevertheless, expects all its members to obey a code of etiquette which, whilst it allows them a good deal of latitude in some respects, yet regulates even minute points of behaviour with an exacting rigour unknown to the general public. There is no written law on the subject—no book to instruct novices in the traditional customs of the legislative chamber. New members of the new Parliament and their friends, as well as other readers, may therefore be interested in a brief account of some of the ceremonial conditions imposed upon her household by the 'Mother of Parliaments.'

One of the first peculiarities to strike a visitor is the freedom which permits members to keep on their hats during the progress of public business. But this liberty has its limits. A member may not wear his hat as he enters or leaves the House, or when he stands at the bar, although he may put it on as soon as he takes his seat. If a colleague engages in conversation with him, he uncovers his head, and so must he of course when he rises to address the House. Another requirement is that a member must only make a speech from one of the accustomed seats, never from the entrance, the bar, or the gangway. The same rule is observed when he rises to order in the course of debate; but if he raises a point of order concerning a division which has been already called, he must keep his seat and speak with his hat on. Even the Speaker in such cases does not rise when he interposes with his ruling, so that the proceedings assume a somewhat easy-going conversational character. On one occasion of the kind, the late Professor Fawcett, who then sat below the gangway, was unable, being blind, to find his own hat quickly enough. He overcame the emergency, however, by borrowing the well-known soft cap of his neighbour, Mr Joseph Cowen, which, although it neither fitted nor suited him, yet served the purpose of the moment. The effect was ludicrous, but not more so than at another similar crisis when Mr Gladstone hastily borrowed the hat of another occupant of the front Opposition bench, and found it so much too small

for him that he had to hold it on until the point in dispute was settled.

Although members are naturally expected to rise when delivering a speech, exceptions are made in favour of any who from sickness or infirmity are unable to stand. This allowance had of course to be always made in the peculiar case of the late Mr Kavanagh, an Irish member who, although without arms or legs, yet proved himself thoroughly capable, when carried to his place, of performing all the duties of a legislator. Members are constantly either coming or going in the course of debate, and, as common politeness would suggest, none may pass between the Speaker and the gentleman who is addressing the House. Any infraction of this or the other rules is promptly challenged on all sides by loud cries of 'Order,' amid which the possibly unintentional offender hurries away, more or less abashed, to avoid more serious consequences. In addition to these rules, from which even silent members are not exempt—and many have been in the House of Commons for years without making a speech—there are other points to be kept in mind by those who from time to time join in the debates. For instance, the reading of a prepared written speech is not allowed in either House, although frequent reference may be made to copious notes. It is true that extracts from other documents may be openly read, but this permission does not apply to extracts from printed reports of speeches made in the same session. Here we detect a curious survival of the old idea that the publication of parliamentary debates is a breach of privilege. The rule has of late years been relaxed to the extent of permitting members to read from any book or even from newspaper reports of speeches in former sessions. Although it is considered highly improper to sit reading a newspaper in the House, and although technically the reporters in nightly attendance are strangers, present only on sufferance, every legislator fully recognises the power of the press, and special facilities are of course afforded for reporting the debates. Whilst freedom of speech is claimed and exercised in what has been called the grand inquest of the nation, jealous care is taken that it does not degenerate into license. It is forbidden to introduce the Queen's name in debate to influence the decisions of either House, Her Majesty being constitutionally placed above and outside the warfare of political parties. Nor may any speaker in either House make direct allusion to the other branch of the legislature; he must simply refer to it vaguely as 'another place.' This rule is founded on the notion that the doings of one House are unknown to the members of the other House, except where formally communicated; but it has also been explained by an eminent authority as designed to guard against recrimination and offensive language or frivolous retort between members of two distinct bodies. In the House of Lords every member is referred to only by his rank—as 'the noble Marquis'—or by his office—as 'the right reverend prelate.' Members of the House of Commons, unlike the peers, may not address each other or the House at large in public debate, but only the Speaker, as the chosen representative of all; and they may not refer to each other by name, but by the constituencies they represent or the office they hold.

Special care is taken to prevent as far as possible any unseemly or personal altercation amongst themselves on the part of the members of either House. If unbecoming language is used, the Speaker has large powers of reproof, and even of punishment; but it requires some familiarity with parliamentary usage to know when the bounds of propriety are overstepped. Fine distinctions are sometimes drawn as to what is permissible. Thus, it is not considered decorous to declare in debate that an opponent's words are false; nevertheless, you may emphatically deny the truth of them. In like manner you may, if a member, contemptuously declare your indifference to statements coming from 'such a quarter,' but not from 'such a man'—the latter form of words being considered too personal. If a member disregards the authority of the Chair, or, abusing the rules of the House, wilfully obstructs its business, he may be punished in ordinary cases by a week's suspension for the first offence, two weeks for the second, and a month for the third. This does not exempt the excluded member from serving on any private Bill Committees to which he had previously been appointed. Nor does it deprive the House of the power of proceeding against the offender, if so advised, more severely, in accordance with ancient usages.

The Speaker, after having called attention to the misconduct of any member who persists in irrelevance, or tedious repetition either of his own arguments or those used by other members in debate, may direct him to discontinue his speech. In like manner the closure may be moved if the whole debate is being obviously carried by any number of members to undue length for the purpose of wasting time. The general body of members, whilst usually forbearing, are not themselves backward on occasion in indicating their impatience of tiresome reiteration. One effective way of stopping notorious bores is by coughs, conversation, cat-calls, farm-yard sounds, and loud cries of 'Vide.' Indignant at some such interruption, Daniel O'Connell once declared that he was not to be put down by 'beastly bellowing,' and on another occasion Burke announced that he would not be silenced by 'such yelping.' The Speaker or Chairman of Committees may order a member whose behaviour is disorderly to withdraw himself for the remainder of that day's sitting. The Speaker may also 'name' such member, and then ask the House formally to pronounce upon his conduct. To name any one means that he has so conducted himself as to cease for the time to be worthy of being treated as a representative member. The gravity of this distinction has not always been duly appreciated. Fox relates an amusing case in point. During debates it was the custom of Speaker Onslow, when any member was guilty of irregularity, to call out, 'Take care, or I'll name you.' On one occasion, in April 1804, a defiant member, not much alarmed by the customary threat, asked coolly, 'And suppose you do name me, what will be the consequences?' 'The consequences!' replied the Speaker, 'God knows.'

Speaker Abbott had a clearer view of the matter. In his time a member, entering the House after dinner in too merry a mood, made

some disparaging remarks about its Chairman, and, it is said, actually called upon him for a song. The Speaker thereupon 'named' the offender, and handed him over to the custody of the serjeant-at-arms. Next day the flippant prisoner, now a sad and sober man, was brought to the bar, solemnly rebuked for his levity, and then discharged, after paying the customary fees on his release.

Any new member when first introduced to be sworn has to be escorted from the bar by two parliamentary friends of older standing, one on each side of him. At a given signal, the three advance slowly towards the Clerk's table, where the oath is administered, and the roll signed by the newcomer. In their progress up the floor of the House, they must bow three times to the Speaker. A like obeisance has to be made on other occasions, as when the Usher of the Black Rod comes in stately procession to summon the attendance of Her Majesty's faithful Commons to the House of Lords, for the purpose either of listening to the Queen's Speech at the commencement of the session, or to hear a formal intimation, in old Norman-French, of the royal assent to Bills which have passed both Houses. So carefully is the people's chamber guarded against the intrusion even of lordly or royal emissaries, that the door of the House is always shut and bolted on the approach of Black Rod. It is not until he has knocked three times that the door is opened for his admission—a ceremonial denoting that the House reserves to itself the right to refuse entrance to any stranger.

Whilst these quaint trivialities indicate that the House of Commons is extremely jealous of any encroachment from outside upon its honour and dignity, there have been times when members themselves have flagrantly violated the respect it claims. For instance, in a debate in 1774, Mr Howard, M.P., alluding to proceedings connected with Mr Wilkes' election, said he agreed with that able lawyer, Sir Fletcher Norton, who had declared that he valued the resolution of the House of Commons no more than the resolution of a set of drunken porters. Again, during a debate in 1782 on Mr Pitt's motion for a reform in Parliament, Sir Charles Turner said he considered the House of Commons as a parcel of thieves who had stolen an estate, and were afraid of letting any person look into the title-deeds, through fear of losing it again.

In these early days, when legislators were apparently less accustomed to control their tempers, it is not surprising that one of the rules of the House—still enforced—was that neither spurs nor swords should be worn by members in attendance. But this prudent ordinance was sometimes resisted, as by one Earl of Ormonde, who in the Upper House told the Usher of the Black Rod, who had reminded him of the rule, that he should have no sword of his, except through his (the Usher's) body!

Although it is often assumed that the art of obstruction are a modern growth, parliamentary records show that in old times they were practised on even such a trifling pretext as the question of candles. The House is now lighted by electricity, but before the times of gas, lamps and candles had of course to be used. Candles, how-

ever, were not at first allowed to be brought in without a motion regularly made and seconded for that purpose, and an order of the House pursuant thereto. Sometimes the question was debated until it became so dark that the members scarcely saw one another; indeed, this became a favourite way of delaying the business before the House. In order to check the evil, it was at last determined, in 1717, that the serjeant-at-arms have candles brought in when necessary without any express and formal order for that purpose.

Considering the strict propriety with which the business of Parliament is now, as a rule, conducted, it may shock many persons to learn that there was a time when the House of Commons had many of the characteristics of a taproom. History records that members, when in attendance, used occasionally to indulge themselves in the use of the fragrant weed; but a standing order, about the middle of the seventeenth century, decreed that 'no member must presume to smoke tobacco in the gallery or at the table of the House.' Spacious smoking-rooms are now provided, and also ample facilities for obtaining either dinners or other refreshment. There was a time when members ate nuts and oranges in the House, but now they are not allowed to partake of what are called tangible refreshments within the legislative chamber. The only exception is a glass of water, more or less qualified, to refresh any member thirsty or exhausted during the delivery of a speech.

More diligent than in its unreformed days, the House of Commons now scruples to adjourn on account of Derby day; but in early times it indulged in a holiday upon occasions which modern readers must consider still more strangely inadequate. Horace Walpole mentions in his *Memoirs* that in March 1751 the House adjourned to attend at Drury Lane Theatre, where *Othello* was to be acted by a Mr Delaval and his family. Again, in February 1781, a Bill introduced by Mr Burke with reference to the Civil List was read a first time; but the second reading was deferred to that day fortnight, 'because the 21st was to be a feast-day, and the 22d was the benefit of Madame Vestris, the favourite French dancer at the Opera.' Even when in session, the House was much given to amuse itself with petty or frivolous incidents, as is shown by some singular entries preserved in the official records. Under date May 1604, it is noted that a jackdaw flew in at the window. This was considered ominous, and apparently it proved a bad omen for the Bill in debate, as the measure was soon afterwards rejected. Again, we are told by the veracious *State Chronicle* that in May 1614 'a dog came into the House, a strange spaniel, mouse-coloured.' About one hundred and seventy years later, it is recorded that another canine intruder entered the House, taking his seat before the Speaker and all the Government. Not content to remain a silent spectator, the dog joined in the proceedings by barking loudly. Lord North, then Prime Minister, was speaking, and jocularly appealed to the Speaker, saying, 'Sir, I am interrupted by a new member.' The dog, unabashed, did not take the hint, but resumed his barking, whereupon the good-humoured Premier kept up the joke, protesting that 'the new member had no right to

speak twice in the same debate.' In much more recent times almost equally trifling episodes have been known to 'relieve mightily' the tedium of political contention.

A MURDEROUS MIXTURE.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

'You silly boy! You never seem to recollect that I was twenty years old—a woman grown—when you were born.' She never lets me forget it. But it was no fault of mine that she was the first and I was the last of our family, and I do protest against Adelgitha at fifty-five treating-me at five-and-thirty as if I was still the little boy she used to pet and amuse.

Between ourselves—strictly mind—Del is a great trial to me. For the last ten years, during which period I have been a clerk in the Local Government office, and the tenant of a charming cottage at Lambstead, she has kept house for me, and beginning largely, in my belief, this has gradually year by year fined down very small, till now, when I have no hope whatever of any eligible *parti* coming to ask my consent to his union with my sister Adelgitha.

Well, there are not husbands enough for all of them; so I make the best of it; though, still between ourselves—for I would not have her know a word of it on any account—it has kept me single, and made me devote the love within my breast to flowers, over which it has glowed like sunshine, and no doubt been the active principle in my success with prize paucies at so many shows.

I resisted her at first, but I had to give in. For Del said it was horribly selfish of me to monopolise the garden; and, to quiet her, I purchased a pretty greenhouse, had it erected; and it immediately became a temple in which she was the presiding goddess—a sort of elderly Flora. But I had the stoking to do; and I plead guilty to having stoked the greenhouse fire in a most undignified way, and said things that will not bear repetition in print. Still, I stoked, and have gone on stoking year after year.

'Never mind,' I said to myself; 'it pleases her;' and I held my tongue, being rewarded with the announcement that I had been 'very good'; and Del went on gardening in her way, I in mine.

So I stoked; found her in pocket-money to buy fresh plants and necessaries, down to the long brass squirt which would always send water where it was not wanted.

'Anything for a quiet life,' I used to say; and all was peace as long as Adelgitha simmered gently in her conservatory: but when she boiled over out of it, and into my garden, I grew wroth.

Like Russian usurpations, it began by degrees, and the insertion of the thin end of the wedge. How could I object to her poking snails out of the ivy with the point of her parasol, picking them up with an old pair of German-silver sugar tongs, and flinging them to me to crush? Or how could I forbid her giving a plant here or a flower there a teaspoonful of Nourisher? Neither could I complain about her filling a tin pepper-box with fine dry salt for the benefit of the slugs, and administering the same with deli-

cate impartiality in a dust-shower over their backs. I knew it would not last.

But, unfortunately, Del did not grow tired of my garden. The desire waxed; and she became so meddlesome and interfering, that I felt something must be done, and I reiterated the words, 'Something must be done,' one day when I returned from my office and found her busy tying up, with roffia grass, flowers which I preferred to see grow wild. There she was, with a necklace of the grass about her neck, and her scissors in her hand, tying and snipping away, what time Mrs Badger's two beautiful Persian cats sat on the wall this side, and Triggs' Sebright bantams sat on the wall on the other—all great enemies of mine, by the way—all watching intently the doings of one whom they evidently considered to be an intruder upon their domain.

I said nothing, but I thought a great deal; and after dinner, when I had had my modest half-bottle of Bulgarian claret, I made up my mind to open fire, and put a stop to what was a piece of feminine aggression not to be borne.

But I bore it. Poor little woman! she was so bright and chirpy and bird-like, that I had not the heart to speak.

'She has not many pleasures,' I said to myself; 'and these are the days of women's progress. Let me suffer and be strong.'

I rejoiced afterwards that I had not spoken, for the day of retribution was at hand.

It was about two months later, when I had become so wroth with keeping down my feelings and suffering in silence, that I had neglected my garden on the plea of being out of sorts, and had found that I had been really shouldered out of it. The young ducks had grown big and fat on the slugs, and the two Persian cats had been over a great deal, and had evidently had evening parties there, and invited neighbouring cats. Triggs' bantams had been examining the flower-beds, too, a great deal; but the most conspicuous feature of neglect was the dotting all over of the gravel walks with tiny patches of grass and weed; for it was long since I had made my back ache by picking them out by the help of a worn-down cheese-knife.

I remember this special evening so well, for as I was walking gloomily up and down the garden, smoking a long square Manila, given to me by my old friend the Major, Del joined me with a shawl over her head, took my arm, and hung there, prattling about how she had improved the garden lately; while I—there! I say it proudly, as being greatly to my credit—I did not say one wicked word aloud. What took place internally is my business, not the world's.

I smoked on in silence, and poor Del prattled, ending at last by announcing that now everything else was done, she intended to attack the weedy walks.

It was growing dark and damp by that time, and we went in; while, as Del went up-stairs to put away her shawl and tidy her hair, I threw the stump of my cigar into the fireplace and exclaimed in true melodramatic style, 'Haha!'

'Plee sir, Mr Triggs' maid's just left this note,' said our little attendant; and as soon as the gas was lit, I opened and read:

NEXT DOOR, *July 6th.*

DEAR SCRIBE—I peeped over the wall to-night at my ten ducks. They look prime. Green peas

are crying to be picked, so shell out. I shall send a man for them on Thursday night when they are roosting. Their lodging is on the cold ground.—Old song. Keep the fattest pair for yourself, with the compliments of yours truly. 'Dill, Dill, Dill, will you come and be killed?' 'Nother old song.—Yours most neighbourly, T. TRIGGS.

GEORGE SCRIBE, Esq.

P.S.—My compliments to your sister.

P.P.S.—I wish you'd buy my bantams. Their eggs are too small. We want size, so I am thinking of keeping Spaniards.

'Triggs is going to send for the ducks on Thursday evening, Del,' I said when my sister came down.

'Is he? Oh, I'm very glad, dear. Don't have any more nasty things about the garden. I mean to keep it very tidy now.'

'Why don't you say my garden?' I muttered sourly; but of course she did not hear.

That was Tuesday night.

The next night, when I came home, Del met me in the little hall. 'Oh, I'm so glad you've got back, dear,' she said tearfully; 'I do so hate to see things suffer.'

'Eh? What's the matter?'

'Those ducks, George; I can't make them out!'

'Not stolen?'

'Oh no, dear. This afternoon Mr Triggs sent in his man to catch a pair of them to kill and cook at once; for he said company was coming unexpectedly, and he hoped you'd excuse it; but master had given you warning.'

'Yes,' I said contemptuously; 'but surely, my dear Del, you are not going to make a fuss about two ducks being fetched away to be killed. He did not kill them here, did he?'

'Oh no, dear. I don't mean that, of course.' I don't like things one has petted being killed. If one were so particular, one could eat hardly anything. What I meant was the other ducks. For Triggs' man had to hunt them about and drive them a good deal before he could catch the two fattest.'

'Triggs said I was to have the two fattest,' I said.

'Yes, dear; so he did; but the man said he wanted two good ones, and he caught them nearly all before he was satisfied and took the pair away; and he laughed and said that hunting things made them tender—a wretch!'

'Well, is that all?' I said growlingly, for I wanted my dinner.

'No, dear. I want you to come and look at them; they have been so strange ever since.'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, they've been walking round and round and trying to tuck their heads under their wings, and tumbling over on to their backs, and then paddling with their feet, as if they were swimming upside down.—Look, dear; they are doing it now.'

I looked out of the window, and there, sure enough, was one of the ducks on its back in the middle of the lawn going on in the most insane way. A few melancholy quacks came from the old dog-kennel, at the bottom of the garden, in which they roosted; but I thought no more

about the matter till I had dined, when I said suddenly: 'The poor ducks must have had an attack of vertigo consequent upon being hunted. They were too fat to run. You fed them too well, dear. Gave them Indian corn meal every night, didn't you?'

'Yes, dear; they were so fond of it.'

'Ah, well, we are to have a pair. Cook 'em on Friday. You won't mind eating them?'

'Oh no, dear; I think not,' she said hesitatingly; and that night, according to my regular custom, I went to bed little dreaming of what was in store.

Oh Adelgitha! Adelgitha!

But wait. I will command my feelings, for I did recover the control of my proper domain.

It was breakfast-time the next morning, and I was late, and had not finished shaving—I always shave my chin—when, raising my eyes, I saw distinctly Broadley's fox terrier leap upon our dog kennel, and then jump on to the wall with something in his mouth. The next moment he had leaped down and was gone.

'I'll put wire-netting up,' I said to myself; and naturally enough, I thought I ought to do so on Triggs' side, where I could see his silver-spangled Sebright bantams sitting in a row on the wall with their feathers up, as if it was cold, though the sun shone brightly.

I hurried down, and found my sister making the tea.

'Let me see,' I said, taking my seat and opening the paper. 'Don't let Triggs' man have those ducks before I come back this evening. We've fattened them, and I mean to have the next best pair.'

'Very well, dear,' said Del, shutting down the teapot lid with a sharp pat.

'How are they this morning?'

'I haven't been down the garden, dear.—Ah, that's right, Mary; put them before your master.'

'If you pleee, sir,' said the maid breathlessly, 'Mrs Badger's compliments, and would you step in directly?'

'Eh?' I exclaimed. 'What for?'

'I don't know sir; only I'm afraid there's something wrofg.'

'Bless my soul!' I exclaimed nervously, 'why has she sent for me? I can't go.'

'Plee sir, I don't know.'

'But you had better go, George, dear. It would be so unneighbourly not to go,' said my sister.

I felt it would be; and took my hat and went in to find Mrs Badger in an agony of tears, sobbing wildly as she sat on the floor of her little drawing-room with the stiffened bodies of her two Persian cats in her lap.

'Oh, Mr Scribe,' she sobbed—'oh, Mr Scribe, can't you save my poor darlings' lives?'

I looked at the cats with disgust, and shook my head. 'They are both dead, madam, and cold.'

'Yes, yes,' she sobbed wildly, 'so cold; and I've had hot bottles to them, and wrapped them in flannel; but it's all no good. Oh, my heart is broken! The wicked, wicked things.'

'Has somebody poisoned them?'

'No, no; it's the wicked foreign nature in them. They would steal, too, do all I would to feed them up and teach them better. I didn't know till two o'clock this morning, when I heard

them crying in the breakfast room, and then I came down, and Jane heard them, and came too. Oh, there was such a scene! Jane told me when last she had seen them—she had not liked to tell me before—she saw them each bring back one of your ducks and carry it into the wood-shed; and by the time she got down to try and save them, their heads were eaten off.

'Good heavens!' I exclaimed, for I felt that my fat pair had gone again.

'And it's a judgment on them!' sobbed the poor woman. 'I might have saved them if I had known; but it was not to be. Dead, dead, both of them; and oh, poor dears, poor dears, what gluttony! Of indigestion.'

I grunted.

'But tell me, Mr Scribe, you are so clever and so kind, what shall I do? My poor pets! What shall I do?'

'Well, madam,' I said, 'if I were you, I should have them stuffed!'

'Yes, of course,' she cried joyously; 'I knew you would advise me well. I will.'

I left her weeping, and hurried back to my breakfast; but I was not to eat it in peace. Before I had done, Major Broadley came round in a passion such as a fierce East Indian liverless officer knows how to pump up when thwarted. He insisted on seeing me directly, and shook his cane in my face.

'You scoundrel!' he roared—'you confounded civilian scoundrel! you have always been a nuisance to the neighbourhood.'

'Major Broadley!' I exclaimed.

'Oh, confound your indignation, sir!' he roared. 'You found fault with my dog, sir, for coming over into your wretched tea-garden place, where you have been a perfect pest with your ducks and bantams and Persian cats.'

'Major Broadley!' I exclaimed.

'Silence, sir! And so now, out of your malignant spite, you must lay your vile dead ducks in my dog's way and tempt him with them. The poor brute was in a way; but mark my words, sir—if that dog dies, I'll have the law of you, I will! I will! There!'

He struck the table with his cane, and bounced out of the house; and as soon as I could gather my wits together, I rushed out into the garden, where the wind of my passage seemed to overset two of Triggs' bantams, which fell off the wall on to the path like balls of feathers, and did not move.

'What is the matter?' I cried as I ran on and passed a dead half-eaten quacker in a bed of zinnias; while in the dog kennel lay four more ducks—I think two were drakes, for they had curly tail feathers—dead.

I walked back into the house. 'Del,' I cried, 'the ducks must have been poisoned. Mrs Badger's cats, the Major's dog, have been eating them, and the bantams pecking them. They're all dying or dead. What can it mean?'

Adelgitha sank back in an easy-chair, looking white and scared.

'Do you know anything about it?—Speak, woman!' I roared.

'I—I—I don't—I think—I— Oh George, dear, do you think it was that stuff?'

'What stuff, woman?'

'That—that—that weed-destroyer.'

'Duck-destroyer, you mean. What did you give the poor things?'

'I—I did not give them anything.'

'But the ducks, the cats, the bantams—Hark!' I cried, as a horrible yell came from over the bottom wall; 'the dog is dead.'

'Oh George, could it have been?'

'Speak! What have you done?'

For a few moments she could not speak; then, in faltering tones: 'I saw it advertised—Hypo-demic chemical acid—quarter of a pound to two gallons of hot water—to water the gravel paths—to kill the weeds.'

'But that could not kill the ducks!' I cried contemptuously.

'But it killed the worms, George; they came crawling up out of the sides by hundreds, and the ducks gobbled them up in the most dreadful way.'

'Adelgitha!' I exclaimed, 'I'm a ruined man.—Ah!' I yelled in the most awful tone as I dashed out of the back window, flew at and scrambled over the wall, and knocked down four dying bantams in my flight. For a horrid thought had struck me. Triggs had sent for two ducks the previous day, and he had visitors, and his family must be lying in the agonies of death.

I rushed into his house all unannounced. It was into an empty room. 'Too late!' I groaned, and ran down-stairs to the breakfast-room, where the whole family were assembled, and a servant stood with her back to me.

She turned round with a dish in her hand.

'Saved! saved!' I yelled, and snatched a pair of freshly-trussed ducks from the dish and fled, pursued by Triggs, who caught me as I was going over the wall.

'I say, old man,' he cried, 'are you mad?'

'Not quite,' I panted. 'Then you did not eat these last night?'

'Don't seem as if we're to eat 'em to-night,' he cried. 'Comp'ny didn't come. You can have 'em. The others'll do for me.'

'Poisoned!' I cried—'poisoned!' And as soon as I could get my breath, I explained all—to the Major too, for his dog was dead.

Adelgitha keeps to her conservatory now.

DETECTIVES AS THEY ARE.

By an Inspector.

THE lynx-eyed Detective of fiction has had more than his share of notoriety; his confrère in real life has never been able to lay claim to fame as lasting, for he is neither so clever nor so dull. He is not so clever, because he has to battle against the stern realities of a commonplace existence, that leave him no option but to grapple with them as they come; the difficulties which he has to overcome must be met with stern logical reasoning, and, however highly trained he may be, he is liable to fail whilst instinct plays no part in his life. He is not so dull; for whereas his very dullness in fiction is essential to delay the unravelling of the crime, and hold in suspense the ever-increasing interest and mystification of the reader, in real life it would be fatal to him, and put an effectual stop to his career.

The lynx-eyed detective and his want of ubiquity are venerable subjects now, and though

the Press as a matter of principle *must* grumble sometimes, it cannot be denied that it can be, and in many instances is, of very great value to the police. The British public is not easily pleased. John Bull pays high rates and taxes, and thinks the police ought by this time to have reached 'a state of efficiency bordering upon perfection; that is perhaps why, it being his national privilege to grumble and 'write to the papers,' he does occasionally rush into print when a crime is committed, and days lapse into weeks before the offender is caught and made to pay the penalty of his deed.

But when the criminal is apprehended and brought to the bar of justice, the Press, for the edification of the masses, records in full the evidence of the witnesses, the oratorical triumphs of Messrs So and So for the prosecution and the defence, and the summing up of the learned judge. Two or three lines only are devoted to the evidence of the detective who arrested the prisoner; the case ends, and all is forgotten.

There is in all this one point which the public in nine cases out of ten misses altogether—namely that the apparently insignificant evidence of the police officer is often that upon which the successful issue of the case depends. He may have spent days and nights over it, and without his untiring efforts the prisoner might never have been convicted. This applies more especially to cases of assault and robbery, and offences which are usually perpetrated in a low and disreputable neighbourhood; for these are cases in which evidence is most difficult to obtain, owing to the fact that witnesses know full well that to testify against prisoners of this class is a proceeding not unfrequently attended with positive danger to themselves. As a rule, people have, but a hazy idea of the difficulties and obstacles that beset a detective's path. There are those whose childlike faith in his infallibility is only equalled by their absolute inability to assist him in any shape or form; and those whose unbelief in his capabilities is second only to the celerity with which they flee to him when they want his help and advice.

A detective's duties are necessarily multitudinous, and, as such, demand the display of tact, energy, and perseverance. The fact that a police officer must possess tact and judgment, and that a simple act on his part may be construed into a question of unwarrantable interference, is at once made apparent when it is stated that it has been held in a court of law to be sufficient cause for an action for false imprisonment if a detective stops a man in the street and asks to be shown the contents of his bag, because by so doing the officer has, though for a single instant only, arrested the man's progress through the streets, and thereby deprived him of his liberty. It may here, be stated *en passant* that on the Continent, and notably in Germany, the police are not either collectively or individually liable to any action for false imprisonment.

It may, of course, be urged that to allow the police to arrest any one upon the barest suspicion is to put in their hands a power likely to sap the very foundations of an institution so dear to English hearts—the liberty of the subject; but it must be remembered that on the Continent there is no such thing as the liberty of the

subject, and that an explanation may be found in the framing of their laws, which presume a prisoner guilty until he proves himself innocent. English detectives have therefore to display equal smartness under less favourable circumstances; and the law which in England shuts a prisoner's mouth, allows the police magistrate abroad to question the accused as to the crime with which he is charged. If the unfortunate man 'changes colour,' and, terrified by the (perhaps) unfounded accusation, becomes confused and unable to remember what he did on a certain day, it tells against him, and he may be kept under lock and key for an indefinite period. The promotion of a French *juge d'instruction* depending to a great extent upon the ability with which he conducts a criminal investigation, and the speed with which he brings home to the prisoner the accusation brought against him, it is conceivable that in the hands of an unscrupulous man the knowledge of this might lead to considerable abuse.

A detective as a rule sees but the shady side of life. Its quarrels, its jealousies, its great passions, and its crimes are more or less familiar phases in his career. A magistrate sitting in his court has no doubt great chances of obtaining a clear insight into the mysteries of the human heart; but in his court a certain amount of decorum and quietness always prevails; it may therefore be said that to no man is a finer opportunity given to form a true judgment of the weaknesses of human nature than to the inspector in charge of the detective department of a large city. Prisoners and witnesses alike are brought to his office, where he investigates the cases. The writer has seen them in their different moods, from the calm bearing of the man of good position accused of forgery, to the insolent devil-may-care attitude of the pickpocket; from the sullen, defiant scowl of the wife-beater to the abject terror of the murderer.

Tales of woe and misery are poured into his ear, tales of sin and crime in all their naked truth and shame, and there, unfettered by the restriction imposed upon them by the far-reaching influence of a court of law, the accusation is spoken, by some with warmth, by others with a passionate virilictive outburst of anger; while the prisoner defends or justifies himself with the subtle ingenuity of an old offender; sometimes, alas! with the hopelessness of despair.

REQUIEM.

LET her rest; the weary night
Never brought her dreams like this;
Let her sleep; the morning light
Shall not wake her from her bliss.
Glad was she to end the fight;
Death bath conquered with a kiss.

Tired eyes need watch no more;
Flagging feet, the race is run;
Hands that heavy burdens bore,
Set them down, the day is done;
Heart, be still—through anguish sore,
Everlasting peace is won.

MARY MACLEOD.

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ON THE ART OF LIVING.

To make our lives pass with tolerable ease—to set ourselves an object, or to have that object set before us by others, and to strain every nerve to accomplish it—to follow virtue that we may gain happiness—to strive after wisdom, riches, fame, and knowledge, that we may be respected, or admired, or envied—thus to fret our little hour upon the stage of existence is the lot of man; and the scene shifts so quickly that our course of life may be ended before we think we have gone half way. Do as we may, there is no getting through life without crosses—either our own, or the crosses that others unthinkingly lay upon us—or the crosses we shift on to our own shoulders to ease a comrade, for a while, in the hot and dusty strife, in which the survival is not always to the fittest, any more than the race is always to the swift or the battle to the strong.

Some there are who, knowing that fighting is their part in life, sing triumphantly as they play it; courageous, undaunted, pretty sure to rise from the ranks, unless their career is cut short by a random bullet. Others, maddened at the sights and sounds around them, hurry from the press, and, as there is no discharge in this battle, make a violent ending for themselves, crying 'Adsum' before the muster-roll is called. But necessity teaches patience as well as invention, and a scene which to an outsider seems productive only of misery, is found on a nearer view to be capable, if not of producing, at least of being co-existent with happiness. For instance, a room filled with the din of no fewer than fifteen steam-looms all at work, even though those are engaged in the fabrication of the most exquisite silken tapestries, of varied patterns and brilliant colours, hardly seems a place for happiness. The noise, the close atmosphere, the persistent toil hour after hour, week after week, year by year, that paled the visages of the workers or dimmed their eyes, left them a not inconsiderable amount of honest pride in the fact that no one could get work at this mill whose characters were not

excellent; so that they had a good solid foundation of self-respect to support them.

In another room—a room full of girls, mistily visible through a mote-filled atmosphere, working at the first stage of rope and cable making in an Imperial dockyard, we found, we must confess, more difficulty in reconciling the possibility of their mode of life being compatible with any degree of well-being. Although they laughed and joked roughly amongst themselves, and we were thankful they could laugh in such an atmosphere, it was piteous laughter, especially when our conductor told us, on our remarking on their youthfulness: 'Oh, no old folks could stand it, nor middle-aged even; nor these won't either, not for long.'

But why flesh and blood should be so cheap and ventilation so dear, is not what we are now considering. While we were examining the wonderful productions of those fifteen steam looms our thoughts wandered involuntarily to those who, by 'turning an easy wheel,' set those looms in motion. The users of silken damask and rich tapestry, are they in any likelihood happier than the makers? It is true that poor Peggy hawking roses about the street may get to hate the scent of roses; but we believe it to be no less true that these same gorgeously-coloured hangings and flowered tapestries and rose-strewn brocades may become as hateful to the users, from association of them with ideas of weariness and disgust at the ennui of life, as ever real roses were to poor Peggy. For the makers have this one great undeniable advantage over the users of articles of luxury: they lead too busy a life to become the victims of hypochondria. Of the self-devouring egotism that comes at last to regard a convulsion of Nature as a portent directed against his Imperial self, the son of toil knows little or nothing. It is reserved for a Czar to grow melancholy with the conviction that his end is approaching, because a river that had overflowed its banks the year he was born repeated the overflow seven-and-forty years later. Pity there was not some homely Hotspur at hand to tell the Imperial

egotist that the waters of the Neva would have risen precisely to the same height at the self-same hour if 'his mother's cat had kittened' merely. Yet the probability is that had any one attempted to reason thus with the hypochondriac, his common-sense would have been kicked out of doors as treason. When once a man's fancy gets astride his reason, the first proselyte he makes is—himself; and when that is done, the difficulty is over.

Yet bad as are some of the effects of egotism, 'self-love,' says the greatest of all English teachers—'self-love is not so vile a sin as self-neglect.' Who that has ever watched the facile descent from one point of degradation to another of him who was once, possibly, a scholar and a gentleman, but who by self-neglect has reached the bottom of that fatal slope, can deny the truth of Shakespeare's assertion? Or who, recognising in the degraded, disreputable loafer of to-day—never too proud to hold out his hand to you for a tip 'for the sake of old times,' or to vilify you as soon as your back is turned—who, we say, recognising in this debosched beggar the splendid, joyous lad of genius of twenty years ago, the pride of his school and college, the glory of his father's and mother's hearts, would not agree indeed that self-love is, after all, not so vile a sin as self-neglect, and that the root and foundation of the art of living is self-respect?

It has been said that there is somewhere in the harmony of human understandings a peculiar string, which in several individuals is in exactly the same tuning, so that, when this string is struck in their presence, the unanimity ensuing is perfectly wonderful. This may be so; indeed, the workings of enthusiasm, for instance, give us some cause to believe in the truth of the assertion. Yet it is scarcely necessary for an harmonic chord to be struck to bring about a certain amount of unanimity in human beings. It is so much easier to do as others do, think as they think—if possible—live as they live, dress as they dress, and—again, if possible—talk as they talk, than to take the trouble and pains to think or act or in anyway carve out the art of living for ourselves. Thus, many, as soon as a question or opinion is mooted in their presence, proceed, not to consider it on its merits or demerits, but refer it instantly in their own minds to the person in their circle of whom they stand most in awe—their own particular Mrs Grundy. And having settled what her opinion would be—that is, having settled their own opinion of what her opinion would be—they stick fast at the conclusion thus arrived at, with an immovable conviction that it is a counsel of perfection. Yet this going through life upon other folks' notions is something like a nation employing mercenaries to fight its battles, as if they had neither head nor hands of their own.

Far from such indolent complacency as this are those folks who, from a certain tincture of malice in their minds, are fond of furnishing every bright idea with its reverse. Opposition is the breath of their nostrils. In their presence, to say a thing is to have it gainsaid, not on

its merits, but purely from the innate contrariety of which their characters are composed. Why some are complacent and others contrary—some amiable and others the reverse, is only to be explained by the fact that it is their nature; just as it is in the nature of swans to sing, and pigs to yell, and foxes to be silent in the pangs of death. But, then, to human beings is given the privilege of modifying their natures. They may draw wisdom from books—if they be so minded; but then they must not treat them as some men do lords—learn their titles exactly, and then brag of their acquaintance. Nor must it be forgotten that action itself gives insight; while we hesitate and doubt, we lose the power to do more than doubt and hesitate. Action alone can bring us to the stand-point whence we may perceive how to act wisely. We do not say successfully; the success of an idea, a thought, an invention, depends greatly on its being opportune—suited to time, place, and people. It is not so much the strong hand, so to speak, that gives the great turn, as the lucky adoption of a proper season that will launch successfully a new invention and give popularity to a novel idea. The unlucky Frenchman in Louis XIV.'s reign who pestered the head of the Marine Department with the preposterous idea that vessels could be propelled by steam, was promptly placed in an asylum, and left there to meditate on his own inopportune inventiveness.

In the drama of life the two prime motives appear to be love or hate. Yet hatred has been said to be but love denied. In the society of one who is heartily disliked there is a certain excitation of the faculties akin to pleasure. The mind is keenly roused and interested; it notes every word and look of the object of its animosity, pondering repartees, and eagerly embracing every opportunity of measuring swords with its, perhaps, unconscious adversary. (For the Dr Fells owe no small portion of their unpopularity to the fact of their self-satisfied obtuseness.) A mind thus stimulated insensibly enjoys the stirring of its faculties; its sense of its own vitality is intensified, and, so curiously are we compounded, that not only will love denied turn to hatred, but dislike will sometimes change to love. This consideration perhaps induced the Frenchman to declare that it was best to begin married life with a little aversion.

To bring ourselves into harmony with our environments is the secret of the art of living. We may have to reckon with an ill fortune which mars our best points, or a good fortune that shapes our rough-hewn ends for us—but whether fortune smiles or frowns, our part is still the same—to work steadily on, happy in this, if in nothing else, that it is the privilege of labour to make labour light. We must beware, too, of petting our inclinations; for they are like children, of whom the favourite is apt to become spoiled by indulgence, or else early removed—the latter the far lighter punishment. We are saved, says the Greek proverb, by making the future present to us—in other words, the man whose imagination is strong and his judgment sound, is not likely to compound for present ease by laying a foundation for future pains. The true ultimate end of the art of living, as well as of all ethics, is to bring us

peace—rest to our souls and bodies; but it must be remembered that without exertion there can be no real rest, and that slothful ease or studied self-indulgence is not peace.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER II.—UNCLE HARRY.

VERY early next morning Mr Suffield himself opened his Hall door and inhaled the fresh morning air with a loud and satisfied 'Ah!' He left the Hall door open—to have all things belonging to him open was characteristic of the excellent man—and sauntered away through the park, with his hands in his pockets, whistling softly to himself, and cocking now and then a half-observant eye on the trees and the rooks, that cocked wholly observant eyes on him and cawed, but sat still, as if they also knew all about his openness and hospitality. He sauntered on, and still on, steadily, as if he had a fixed end in view, though he rambled a good deal from a straight line. 'Now, where the dickens has he put himself up?' he said aloud. He looked all around, surveying bit by bit every hollow and every clutap of trees in his purview. At length something caught his eye a tolerable way off. 'Ah,' said he cheerfully—regardless of grammar—that must be him.' He quickened his pace, and made directly for the object he had descried. As he neared it, he could make it out to be a kind of small tent pitched under a great beech. 'Hah!' he exclaimed to himself. 'That's how he does it.' When he got quite near, he tramped round to examine the disposition of the erection, grunting good-naturedly as he remarked each point, 'Hum! Ha-ha!' He had noted that the ridge-pole of the tent was an almost bare arm of the beech which stuck out at right angles at about the height of a man; that the tent itself was a piece of sailcloth stretched over the bare bough, and pegged to the ground at the interval of a yard or so; and that one end was closed by a triangular flap of cloth, while the other was open, and had evidently had a small fire of dried twigs burning against it. He had noted these things, when he perceived that a corner of the flap was gently raised, showing a face and the shining barrel of a rifle.

'Holloo, Harry!' cried Suffield with a laugh. 'Hold hard! And save your powder!'

There then came from the tent a chuckle of laughter, followed by a little, wiry-looking man in a complete suit of flannels. A rather remarkable and authoritative little man he seemed, with the dense hair of head and beard close-clipped, and gray and stiff as a badger's, and clear gray eyes keen as a needle. He said not a word, but yawned and stretched his arms.

'Going to have a pot-shot at me, were you?' said Suffield.

'I think,' said the little man, 'I was dreaming I was in the jungles I've come from; and the tramping of your feet and your grunting—you were grunting, you know—made me think of an elephant, or some other wild creature.'

'That's all right, Harry. It's just the kind

o' thing you'd ha' said five-and-twenty years ago.—But what sort of sleep have you had?'

'Capital. The sleep, George, of the natural man, constant, light, and refreshing.'

'Well, Harry,' said Suffield, 'I'd a deal rather you than me. I'm unnatural man enough to prefer a bed, and a four-poster in a good big room, with no draughts about. Of course, this sort of thing, the green grass, the open air, "Hail, smiling morn!" and all that, I daresay, suits you—it may suit you in fine weather, at least—but I'd have thought you'd had so much of it in your time, lad; that you'd appreciate the comfort of a regular bed in a proper bedroom. Howsoever, there you are, and here I am, and of course you're free to do as you like. I only heard late last night that you had taken up your traps and camped out. I didn't get home till very late, and the wife was in bed; but she told me that you had found your bed too soft'—

'Abominably soft,' said the other: 'I wallowed in softness.'

'I daresay you did, lad: our beds are all the finest feather-beds, stuffed by the hands of my own blessed mother, and she didn't spare the feathers, I can tell you. Yes; the wife said you had found the bed soft, and the room stuffy, even wi' th' windows wide open, and so you had just taken up your bed and walked.'

He paused in his talk to observe his brother-in-law, who had struck his tent, and was rolling it up.

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'you're pretty comfortable after all: a blanket, a carpet, and a pillow. But what about catching rheumatism, my lad?'

'Underneath my carpet, you see'—he showed him—'is a mackintosh sheet.'

'Ah,' said the interested Suffield, taking up and handling the pillow, 'a kind o' india-rubber bladder, eh? Good idea that, my lad: keeps your head cool.'

'Which, you will perhaps say, George, is not unnecessary.'

'Nay, nay, lad,' said George; 'that's understood: no need to say it.'

'I'm proud of this pillow, though,' said the other, with a laugh. 'It not only keeps my brain cool, but it keeps my mouth cool too. It's just a pillow now; but it can be a water-bottle on occasion, and many a time it has served me as that.'

'That's economical, lad, certainly,' said Suffield. 'And have you a double use for all your traps?'

'For most of them,' answered the other. 'This little Persian carpet, now, I use also as a saddle-cloth.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'but your little tent—what about it?'

'There, now,' said Harry, 'what other use do you think I put it to?'

'Can't guess,' said Suffield; 'unless you make your bearers or servants carry it over you like a canopy.'

'I make a sail of it,' said the other with a nod of pride. 'You know I carry with me on my journeys a boat in sections; well, there I have a sail ready to rig up when I can.'

'Pon my word, Harry,' said Suffield, 'you're just the same ingenious young rascal as used to fry bacon and boil potatoes and make toffee in the same saucepan at school!'

'And, 'pon my word, George,' exclaimed Harry, 'you're just the same fat, talkative old rascal as used to sit by and criticise my cooking, and then help to eat it!'

At that they both laughed, while the tent-dweller finished packing away his traps. 'I suppose,' said he, 'I can leave them here?'

'Oh, to be sure,' said Suffield. 'There's to be a treat in the park to-day for my hands and the childer; but that don't matter: they'll interfere wi' nought. Set them aguin' the tree, lad—except your blanket; perhaps we'd best carry that in, in case it should rain.'

They sauntered away back towards the house together, Suffield taking his old school-fellow's arm, and insisting on carrying his blanket.

'And how,' asked the old school-fellow, 'do you get on with your work-people in these days of strikes and of Jack in general being as good as his master?'

'I've no trouble,' answered Suffield. 'I treat my people well, and they treat me well. I reckon them more than mere machines to keep my works going, and they reckon me a good master.'

'Ah,' said the other, 'you want to rule with sugar-sticks.'

'I don't want to rule at all, my lad,' said Suffield; 'but if I must rule, I'd rather do it wi' sugar-sticks than wi' cat-o'-nine-tails.'

'Ah, it won't do, George.'

'Well, Harry,' said Suffield, 'we won't discuss it: our point o' view's different. You've been used to black fellows: I've been used to Englishmen.—By the way, I came across your black servant last night. There's a deal of human nature in him for a black man. He had caught a rabbit, which, he said, he meant to curry for you.'

'I daresay. He *can* curry.'

'I rather like him: an amusing creature.'

'Oh,' said Harry, 'he can curry favour too.'

'Harry, my lad,' said Suffield, 'that's an old trick of yours—punning. You stick to your old habits.'

'About the only things old that I do stick to—except old friends, George.'

'That's as it should be, Harry.—But come now. Tell me about yourself. Have you done pretty well out there?—what wi' ruby mines and white elephants and all that sort o' game?'

'Oh yes, pretty well,' answered the other, shooting a keen glance at Suffield's face. The glance could not fail to assure him that there was nothing in the inquiry but kindly interest, and he repeated less sharply than before; 'Yes; oh yes, pretty well.'

'And you're come home now to settle down—I can't say in your own house—but in your own tent, I hope?'

'Perhaps, perhaps. I can't say yet.'

'Ah, now, Harry, I want to talk to you,' continued Suffield, 'about Isabel Raynor, your niece—and my niece, of course, too—your poor brother John's daughter. You've seen her, of course?'

'Oh yes; I've seen her.'

'And a handsome, clever girl she is,' said Suffield.

'Is she?' said Uncle Harry, as if he were little interested in the matter.

'Is she?' echoed Suffield. 'Why, lad, don't

you know a handsome woman when you see her, and a clever woman when you talk to her?'

'I'm no judge of women, George. They're not in my line.'

'I see what you would be at, Harry,' said Suffield seriously, after a meditative pause. 'But I had no idea you could keep that feeling up so long. "Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath," my lad; but many and many a sun have you let go down. It's not right, Harry; it's wicked, lad, and you'll rue it yet. Howsoever, you'll come right in the end, I reckon. I believe your heart's in the right place; and you'll like the girl if you give yourself the chance.'

'I noticed,' said Uncle Harry, 'that your son seems to have given himself a good chance in that way: he appears to like his cousin rather more than mere cousinship demands.'

'Yes,' said Suffield simply; 'George thinks a deal of Isabel, and is, I believe, fond of her. A man's best fortune, or his worst, is his wife. I have no doubt which Isabel would be, and I'd like George to have her. But somehow they don't seem to hit it off: she doesn't cotton to him.'

"Cotton," George, is a good word to use in the connection.'

'I know what you mean, Harry,' said Suffield. 'But this is not a time for joking. I tell you I think about Isabel a great deal. I don't like to know she's working hard at school-keeping, and living in lonely lodgings in London, when we've more than we know what to do with. It's not good for a woman any more than for a man to live alone. I've begged her till my mouth was dry wi' begging to come and stay with us; but, "no," she won't, thank me all the same. Now, if she'd only take on wi' George'—

"Cotton," corrected Uncle Harry with a mischievous smile.

—'and set up house wi' him,' continued the excellent Suffield, as if he had not heard the interruption, 'I should be happy about her.'

'Well, George,' said Uncle Harry, 'she ought to do a good deal for you: you've done a great deal for her; though I am prepared to admit that gratitude for kindness is the last return a man should expect.'

'Gratitude, my lad! I get more of it than I can do with from folk. But gratitude I neither require nor need from Isabel. I've done no more for her than I've done for th' rabbits in th' clough yonder. I've given them the chance of fending for themselves without going in terror of their lives; and that's all I ever did for Isabel. If she'd take to George—and he's not a bad lad at all—I'd take it, not as gratitude, but as a favour, as a kind of condescension on her part; for she's handsome and clever, as I said before, and as good a girl as can be.'

'But,' asked Uncle Harry, 'would your wife, my admirable sister, be satisfied? Hasn't she a greater ambition for her son than that?'

'Oh, you've noticed that already, have you? Yes, Joanna is chockfull of ambitions for all of us—for me, too, bless her!'

'Well, after all,' said the uncle, 'I don't myself approve of cousins marrying.'

'Not if they're both perfectly healthy? Howsoever, Harry, that just brings me to my point: since it don't seem likely that Isabel will take to

George, don't you think you might—well, do your duty by her?

'And what, George,' asked the uncle quietly, 'does a good man like you think my duty?'

'Well, it's hard to say; but forget what's past, my lad. Do something for the girl: ask her to keep house for you or summat?'

'I don't intend at present, George, to set up house, even if you turn me out.'

'Turn you out! You've turned yourself out, and taken the key of the park.'

'Well, then, my dear George,' said Uncle Harry, stopping and laying his hand on his brother-in-law's arm, 'we'll not discuss it any more at present. You're a good man, George; but give me a little time to find where I am.—Now, I'm going to have a dip in your stream. The water is pure enough, I suppose?'

'Pure enough to-day to drink if you like.'

'By the way,' said Uncle Harry, 'why are the mills not started yet? It's past six a long while.'

'Mills started! You forget it's Whitsuntide. We're idle for a week.'

They were now on the brink of the glen, which was separated from the park by a low oak paling, with a convenient stile at the point where they had arrived. While Uncle Harry descended into the glen for his morning dip, Mr Suffield sat on the stile and meditated. His meditation took the form of reminiscence of his own and Harry Raynor's youth—a memorial excursion on which the few words they had exchanged about Isabel had set him off. 'Poor old Harry!' he murmured, glancing after his brother-in-law. He gradually raised his eyes and let his mental vision travel over the glen and the clean and cosy village he had built; over the sombre hills beyond, which divided from the great county of Yorkshire, and across which now poured the morning sunlight, warm and golden; away still on over moor and dale, town and river, till the sea was reached. He recalled a certain holiday-time in his exuberant and energetic youth when he casually met on the glistening sands between the cliffs and the gentle summer sea his two old school-fellows, John and Harry Raynor, accompanied by their sister Joanna—tall and handsome, as Isabel now was—and by Joanna's school-friend, Mary Weatherly. How he remembered, as though it were yesterday, that his heart leaped when he set eyes on Joanna, and he exclaimed confidently to himself: 'That's the girl that I shall marry!' He walked on with Joanna, on and on over the shining sands, and let the brothers Raynor have Mary Weatherly between them. Mary's position that day was symptomatic and suggestive of what was to follow: she was divided between the two brothers: she liked both, but she had to choose one, and she first chose Harry. But even then John—as he was in honour bound to do—did not cease to think of her. He still plied her with his attentions and importunities, and being in some ways—in manners and speech, especially—more attractive than Harry, he weaned the girl's perplexed affections from his brother. The sad and dishonourable end came when Harry was away accomplishing with herculean energy a task that was to expedite the time of his marriage; that was the season chosen by John to overcome the last scruples of his brother's

affianced wife. He married her in haste and secrecy, and carried her off to London, where the pair had occasion to repent at leisure. Harry was wounded to the quick, and his life was diverted into a new channel. He went away to do business in India, whence his restlessness and recklessness had driven him to be a traveller of the old kind—explorer and merchant, that is, in one—in the little-known and dangerous States that lie between India and China. He had entered Tibet, when it was thought that death only would be the portion of any stranger who showed his face in that exclusive table-land; and he had almost penetrated the secret of the Lamas, and knew more about Esoteric Buddhism and its Mahatmas and Chelas than any other European. He had escaped from the hands and guards of a ruthless Khan of Chinese Tartary, and had crossed without mishap from Calcutta to Tonkin when Upper Burma and the Shan States were scarcely adventured upon. He had spent five-and-twenty years in that dangerous and unusual kind of life—years during which his brother John had disappeared from knowledge in the seething abyss of London—his wife having died, and his daughter being surrendered to the care of his sister, Mrs Suffield—years during which Suffield had become a wealthy manufacturer. Harry Raynor, too, had won wealth—wealth and fame—and now he had returned to his own people to end his days, if so be that his restless soul would permit him to be so much like other men.

So many things had happened to George Suffield since he had married Joanna Raynor—the years had been so filled with business and pleasure, with duties and cares, private and public—that he was amazed and perplexed to discover that Uncle Harry had not forgotten the loss of twenty-five years ago, that his wound was not yet healed, or that, if it were healed, it was only covered with a cicatrice, which throbbed painfully to the slightest touch. He did not consider that probably Uncle Harry's years of travel and adventure were but a long parenthesis of merely bodily and mental experience, and that now when he had returned to his native land he had resumed the feeling of his life where he had dropped it.

Uncle Harry soon returned, fresh and rosy, from his dip in the cold stream, and Suffield, inwardly ejaculating 'Poor old Harry!' took his arm, and was marched briskly towards the house. In the garden they saw the tall, dark, and stately Isabel walking lovingly with the small, fair, and clinging Euphemia.

'I can't think,' said Suffield, considering his daughter from afar, 'who my girl takes after: I'm big, and so's her mother.'

'Perhaps,' said Uncle Harry, 'she takes after her great-grandmother.'

Suffield looked at him and laughed, regarding the suggestion as a joke, and said, 'On which side?'

'I don't know,' said Uncle Harry seriously; for he had made a study of the small matters of heredity. 'But you often find curious instances of atavism, or harking back to remote ancestors.'

'You may hark back a long while,' said Suffield, 'before they'll speak.'

'You don't seem to understand, George,' said

Uncle Harry. 'I mean this kind of thing: I, for instance, am very like, I believe, in appearance and disposition to my great-grandfather, who was as great a rover by sea as I have been by land. As for you, George, I believe you are like nobody but yourself; you are unique; you are, in your own way, the kind of man, like Shakespeare or Milton, that's born once in a thousand years for the admiration and delight of the world.'

'That's a high kind of pedestal you'd like me to mount, Harry,' said Suffield; 'but I'm not such a fool. Seems to me you want some solid food in you to keep you from flights of fancy. I must hurry breakfast up when we get in.'

Tummas answered his summons at the Hall door, and a matron of imperial presence met him on his entrance. She had the front of Jifno, an eye kindly but shrewd, and a nose and chin that denoted such firmness of character as might have been suspected to be obstinacy, had the suspicion not been subdued by the soft curves of the mouth. This was Mrs Suffield.

'Goodness gracious, George!' she exclaimed when she saw him, 'look at your feet! Why didn't you put on your goloshes?'

'Oh, ah; yes,' he said, looking down at his boots; 'they are a little damp, Joan. But I'll take no harm.'

'Damp!' exclaimed his wife. 'They're sopping wet! You must take them off at once!'

'Well, now,' said Suffield, laughing, 'look at Harry's boots. Hadn't he better take his off too?'

'Oh, Harry,' said Harry's sister, presenting her cheek to be kissed, 'may do as he likes. A man that would rather sleep on the damp cold ground than in a dry warm bed, must take the responsibility of his own feet and of his own health in general.'

'There's for you, Harry!' exclaimed Suffield with a laugh of something like enjoyment. 'That's how I'm always ordered and disposed of! You'd better come and change your things.'

'Don't be long,' said Mrs Suffield. 'We are going to have breakfast early: we have a busy day before us.'

SOME MORE OLD LONDON CITY NAMES.

In a former paper (January 22, 1887) we dealt with the exceedingly interesting historical and antiquarian associations which are linked with some of the well-known street and other names of London City, and we purpose in this to pursue the subject a little further; for London is changing so rapidly, and the old landmarks are disappearing so quietly, that ere long very little but the name will remain of many a monument with which the present generation is familiar enough, but which it too often passes unheeding.

The main point of the previous paper was to prove by the evidence of mere names how important and magnificent an ecclesiastical centre old London was; we will begin this by showing by the same sort of evidence how eminently aristocratic a capital, as distinguished from a commercial capital, London has been until even a comparatively recent date. And by London, it should be understood we mean principally the

City proper, and from that circuit shall only stray occasionally. Strange as it may seem to the Londoner of to-day, the most aristocratic streets in old London were Upper Thames Street and Aldersgate Street, until the course of fashion, like the course of empire, took its way westward, and the 'quality' reared their palaces along the Strand of the Thames. Of the ancient houses of Upper Thames Street hardly a relic in the shape of a name remains; but Suffolk Lane commemorates the town residence of the Dukes of Suffolk; and to this day there may be seen, close to the lordly new pile of commercial chambers known as Suffolk House, a very perfectly preserved room of the old mansion, now used as a carpenter's shop, and some six feet below the level of the modern pavement, built of huge blocks of stone, and with a groined roof. In Aldersgate, however, one or two of the old houses actually remain, although, from a sentimental point of view, put to terribly base uses. These are Lauderdale House and Shaftesbury House.

Close to Aldersgate is the grimy, unattractive region called Little Britain, and it is hard to realise, as we wander hereabouts, accompanied by the shades of Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Prince Rupert, Dr Johnson, and a score of others whose names are famous in the scientific, literary, and dramatic annals of England, that here was the Palace set apart for the reception of the Princes of Brittany, just as Scotland Yard received the Kings of Scotland, and the Savoy the Princes of that country. Warwick Lane, with its mural effigy of the great King-maker, marks the Warwick Palace. In Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, was the episcopal residence of the Bishops of that diocese; as was Ely Place the stately domain of the Bishops of Ely. In Great Winchester Street stood the Palace of the Winchester prelates; and in a still more incongruous locality, cheek by jowl with Bishopsgate Street, stood the residence of the Devonshire family, still commemorated in the name 'Devonshire Square.'

Whilst in aristocratic company, we may make a journey beyond the boundaries of the City proper, and point to the nomenclature of the Strand tributaries on the riverside as a proof of the almost unequalled conservatism of London in matters pertaining to its old inhabitants. Here we have the Norfolk, Essex, Somerset, and Northumberland Palaces commemorated; whilst to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, five streets were given, each bearing as name one of the words of his title—even the little 'of' being represented until within the last twenty years by an alley.

But there was another aristocracy in London City even more powerful and often quite as wealthy as that which was linked with well-known titles—the aristocracy of those merchant princes who not only made London the commercial capital of the world, but who loved their City well enough to reside in its midst, to beautify it, to build its churches and to endow its charities. For substantial memorials of these fine old fellows we have but to enter the City churches; but our business in this paper is with the conservance of their names. Basinghall Street commemorates a Basing who was Lord Mayor so long back as the reign of Henry III. Lawrence Pountney Lane, Gresham Street—

formerly Ladd Lane—Coleman Street, Crosby Square, Finch Lane, Throgmorton Street, Hatton Garden, and others remind us to-day of the great Londoners of old. Here and there we find their old houses immortalised by a retention of the old name, but only one famous house now remains comparatively perfect—that of the Crosbys in Bishopsgate Street, used as a dining-place, for Sir Paul Pindar's mansion, lower down, was levelled last year, its fine old façade being removed to the South Kensington Museum. In the same street, however, as in Aldgate, in Hatton Garden, in Great St Helens, and in Austin Friars, there may yet be seen fine old citizen dwellings not yet robbed of their panelling, their carved balustrades, and their painted ceilings, although now utilised as offices and shops. Dashwood House, Old Broad Street, remained until about twenty years back.

London was never, since the days of the Romans, an essentially military centre, yet in the name London Wall we are taken back to days, by no means remote, when the City gates were locked at a certain hour of the night, the draw-bridges raised, and the moat kept full of water. Strange to say, the only relics of London Wall now above ground are of the most ancient date—that is to say, of the second Roman city which sprang up over the ashes of the first little settlement, destroyed in that terrible campaign of Boadicea. We had the curiosity some time back to trace London Wall throughout its circuit. We were rewarded with seven glimpses of it. The first was the foundation of a bastion in St Martin's Court, Ludgate Hill, since destroyed, after an infinite amount of labour, which sufficiently testified to its magnificent construction. The next fragment was in the churchyard of St Botolph's, Aldersgate Street (still extant under the gardener's shed). Then came the fine old bastion in the burial-ground of St Giles's, Cripplegate; then the good piece with traces of Edwardian battlements in the churchyard of St Alphage, London Wall; then two fragments in cellars of houses in the Minories; and finally, the magnificent bit, twenty feet high and as many in length, close to the Tower, behind the original Tower Station of the Inner Circle Railway.

The name of Barbican recalls the usual outlying post which commanded the first approach to the fortified city of old days. Aldermanbury Postern speaks for itself; whilst Shoreditch and Houndsditch commemorate the old City moat.

Of the two great castles which shared with the Tower the command of the City—Baynard's Castle and Mountfichet, the name of the former alone exists. We dealt with sufficient minuteness in the previous paper on the street nomenclature of London, but one or two yet remain which carry us back to the earliest days of the City.

Standing in the narrow track of London Watling Street, it is hard for us to realise that the waves of vast change which have swept over London should have left this street unchanged in name, and, we imagine, very little in pronunciation, since it was laid down by the Roman legionaries eighteen centuries ago. Still harder is it to associate it with the Watling Street along which we have tramped over the wild fells of Northumberland, across the Carter, as far as the good old Scottish town of 'Jeddart'; or with that

narrow straight bit of road which runs under the shadow of the Shropshire Wrekin past the ruins of the 'White City' of Uriconium, or, in another direction, with that wind-swept track of Barham Downs between Canterbury and Dover.

Stoney Street in Southwark is the continuation of Watling Street, meeting the ancient *trajectus* or ferry from Dowgate, and retaining its ancient name with the slight omission of the final *y* as far in the country as between Billingshurst and Chichester in Sussex. Yet one more digression from London City. With regard to another road—probably more ancient than either Watling or Stoney Streets—the authorities have not dealt kindly, as is their wont. York Road, which runs past the King's Cross Station, was known until late in the present century by the name it had borne during uncounted centuries—Maiden Lane. This was the original packhorse route between London and the North; and as Maiden Lanes, Maiden Ways, and Maiden Castles abound throughout England, it is probable that the word meant 'made' in contradistinction to a natural track or a mere earthen fortification.

Closely associated with London streets are London inns. Of course, the heyday of the London inns has long since passed; yet it is a remarkable fact that hardly a single one of the famous old inns of the City has so utterly disappeared as not to leave even its name behind. We make this assertion after very careful investigation, after much comparison between old and modern maps, and much consultation of old road-books and guide-books. In a very few cases the inns themselves exist. In a larger number there are still hotels or taverns on the exact sites of the old inns. In a larger number still, the yards, modernised of course, exist; and in the largest number of cases the names of the inns still cling to passages, alleys, and courts.

The only two inns which, whilst retaining their old features of two centuries back, show no signs of decay or faded prosperity are the 'Old Bell' in Holborn and the 'George' in Borough High Street. In these, galleries and courtyards are still perfect as of yore, and from the annual coatings of paint on them, are evidently the objects of affectionate and reverential regard.

Close to the 'George' in the Borough is a nest of old inns, all retaining more or less their ancient features, but all showing more or less signs of approaching dissolution. The old 'White Hart,' famous to the present generation as being the place where Mr Pickwick discovered that sharp-set jewel Mr Samuel Weller, was pulled down two years ago. The old 'Queen's Head,' still retaining almost unchanged its original features, is in the last stage of decay. Past the 'George' come the 'Half Moon,' the 'Catharine Wheel,' and the 'Nag's Head'—old-fashioned enough, but bereft of their picturesque features. Lastly, the 'Tabard,' saddest spectacle of all, for it is but a gin palace of the most approved modern type. All the others are still inns, meaning by the word that they have a regular *clientèle* of customers, principally connected with the hop-trade, who eat and sleep in them; whilst their courtyards are still busy and animated as of yore, although with a different class of traffic, the mailcoach being supplanted by the carrier's cart, and the postchaise by the railway van.

Examination of the alleys and passages which abound in the Borough hereabouts show by the evidence of nomenclature that in the old days of the road almost every other house in this neighbourhood must have been an inn, or was in some way associated with the traffic of this great road to the Kentish coast.

Of modern taverns built on the sites of old inns and bearing the old names, the City of London is full, and the work of destruction has been carried on chiefly during the past twenty years. There are many men who may still call themselves young who can remember the old 'Green Dragon,' the 'Four Swans,' the 'One Swan,' and the 'Catharine Wheel' in Bishopsgate Street, the original 'Saracen's Head' on Snow Hill, the 'Belle Sauvage' on Ludgate Hill, the 'Flower Pot' in Gracechurch Street, the 'Magpie and Stump,' Newgate, and the famous 'Bricklayers' Arms' in the Borough, an inn at which probably more famous guests have alighted than at any other inn in the country, as a framed and glazed list in the bar testifies. Most of these retain their old names, and are still houses of public entertainment, the exceptions being the 'Flower Pot,' the 'Belle Sauvage,' and the 'Magpie and Stump,' the last-named being known as the 'Viaduct Tavern.'

Of the old inn-yards still retaining their original names, but either entirely modernised and used as thoroughfares, or used as dépôts by carriers, the name is legion. The once famous 'Swan with Two Necks,' and the 'Castle Inn' in Laid Lane, the 'Bolt in Tun,' Fleet Street, the 'Castle and Falcon,' Aldersgate, the 'Green Man,' are instances of the latter. Lombard Street, Bishopsgate, and Moorgate are full of the former. Generally, they even retain their old configuration—the narrow passage under an archway leading to a large open space, just as we may see in the old Borough inns. Sometimes they are but passages and alleys connecting one street with another, as is generally the case in Moorgate Street.

Perhaps in the latter instances we may be wrong to infer that every fanciful name, such as Mermaid Court, Little Bell Alley, or Crosskeys Passage, denotes the existence in old days of an inn on the site, for the name might have been derived from a neighbouring shop-sign at an age when every shop had its sign.

We cannot refrain from lingering a while amongst the inn names of old London, because these institutions were so typical of phases of London life which have disappeared for ever. All sorts and conditions of men patronised them, from my lord the ambassador, who would sleep a night at the 'Bricklayers' Arms' in order that he might appear in suitable attire at court the next day, to the highwayman for whom the road had been made too hot, and who would find in a Bishopsgate or Borough inn a safe retreat from public notice. They were the cradles of our drama; they were the centres of local animation and bustle; and their landlords were, as a rule, notable men. A collection of the various relics of old days still kept at some of the oldest inns, such as punch-bowls, black-jacks, curious glasses, coins, tokens, and snuff-boxes, would be vastly interesting; and it is as surprising as it is gratifying to find how much intelligent interest is

taken by the landlords of the present day in the histories and associations of the houses they own.

From the inns to the taverns is but a step; but of the old London taverns and coffee-houses which played so important a part in the social life of the past, even the names have for the most part been swept away. The fire of 1748 in Cornhill destroyed half-a-dozen famous places of assembly, the names of which are very frequently met with in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and other periodicals of the 'Club' period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and amongst them the 'Rainbow,' 'Garraway's,' 'Jonathan's,' and the 'Jerusalem.' The successors of 'Garraway's' and the 'Jerusalem' existed until within quite recent years; indeed, there is still a 'Jerusalem,' although it is no longer a place of public entertainment. The 'Jamaica,' however, still remains very much in its present guise of a chophouse as it was when a coffee-house; and in Pope's Head Alley—a name which commemorates the site of a famous tavern which flourished here from the days of Henry VI. to the end of the last century—there is an ideal little old-world chophouse known as 'Baker's.'

Of the famous Fleet Street taverns, one alone retains its ancient appearance—the 'Old Cheshire Cheese' in Wine Office Court; and the change into this dim, dusky, old place from the roar and bustle of 'Brain Street' is like a backward march of a hundred years. The famous old 'Cock' has gone, although the gilded bird still struts over the door of its successor on the other side of the street; so has the 'Devil,' whilst a new and ornate 'Mitre' occupies the site of the old coffee-house which shared with the 'Cheshire Cheese' and the 'Devil' the patronage of Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Garrick, and Burke. The sign of the 'Salutation' still appears in Newgate Street, but it hangs over a high-class modern restaurant. The old 'Chapter House Tavern' in St Paul's Churchyard was pulled down but a year or two ago; and we learn that the 'Johnson's Head Tavern,' hard by St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, is doomed.

So the old order of things giveth way to the new, and in the case of coffee-houses and taverns rarely leaves a memorial behind in the shape even of a name. Still, we are thankful that by the aid of modern London City names we are enabled to walk with so much exactitude in the steps of our forefathers, and that by their light we can read so many interesting and stirring pages in the history of old London.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER II.

ISABEL ran up-stairs to her own room in the dark, leaving him to make his way to the cheerful dining-room, where Mrs Dysart sat wondering why her child should be so long of coming, and feeling a great relief when the sound of the opening door and Jenny's voice with its cry of, 'Eh, but you're late, Miss Isabell; and the Mistress waiting for her tea!' announced her return—though it was accompanied by the bass voice of Willie Torrence with its usual

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laugh and banter. 'She might have thought I was not caring' to see that man to-night,' Mrs Dysart said to herself with a little indignation, feeling that Isabel made a very bad return for her warning in thus flaunting her lover at the first opportunity in her mother's face. But Isabel flew up-stairs with her face all smarting and glowing in the dark, and shut her door, and flung herself into a chair, half sobbing with the thump of her heart against her breast. She was angry and frightened and indignant, and yet full of awe, feeling as if some mysterious bond had been drawn between herself and Torrence by that kiss, which made her countenance flame with shame and horrified alarm. She had not, oh, not by a very long way! made up her mind that she would accept Torrence if he offered himself to her. She had not arrived at any such resolution as yet: but she felt as if he had bound her, secured her against her will, made a link between them which it would be deeper shame still to break, now that he had kissed her, a thing which nothing short of a troth-plight could justify. She held her hand upon the place, to hide it, even though it was dark and nobody could see; then, as she recovered her breath a little, sprang up again and bathed and bathed it to take away the stain. Isabel's little chamber occupied the opposite corner of the house to the drawing-room, with two greenish windows in two deep recesses, looking towards the sea, which was not visible, but only showed a clearness in the distance through the openings of the trees. She had no light but the faint glimmer from the evening skies and one little star, which shone through a pane, and was reflected in an old-fashioned long mirror upon the opposite wall. Though it was not nearly a century ago, Isabel had no means of making a light, such as are so familiar to us that we cannot realise what people did before they were invented. There were no matches in those days. She threw off her pelisse in the dark, not seeing, though she felt, how her cheek burned between the shame and the cold water, and how impossible it would ever be to rub out the spot which had been made upon it; and then very reluctantly smoothed her hair and took a clean handkerchief, smelling of lavender, from her drawers, and went down, still in the dark, pressing the fresh cambric upon the burning spot. When she went into the dining-room, her eyes dazzled by the light of the candles, and her hair still a little ruffled—for it was apt to curl by nature, and the water she had flung about her face had got upon it and aggravated this tendency—and found her mother calmly seated there and talking to Willie Torrence, who looked up at her as she came in, with perfect composure, yet a twinkle in his eye, from the side of the fire—Isabel felt as if she were the guilty person, keeping behind backs to hide her secret and terrified to catch her mother's eye.

'You are very late, Isabel,' Mrs Dysart said. 'I was beginning to think of sending out Jenny with the lantern; for that's a very dreary bit of the road by old Wallyford House, and I know you don't like to pass it in the dark.'

'It was just there I met Miss Bell,' said Torrence; 'so she was all safe. None of your ghosts will come near a doctor, nor yet a tramp—and they're the only dangers here.'

'There's no telling what the dangers are,' said Mrs. Dysart dryly.—'Will you just ring the bell, my dear, and tell Jenny to bring ben the tea? Dr Torrence will take some with us: she can bring another cup: and the scones have been ready this half-hour past.—Bless me, bairn,' she cried, as Isabel came within the centre of the light, which proceeded from two candles, set in heavy tall silver candlesticks in the middle of the table, with a snuffer-tray between them, 'what's the matter with your cheek? It's as red as fire, and a spot upon it as if it had been stung.'

'It was the midges,' said Isabel, not daring to lift up her eyes.

'The midges. It's too cold for midges now. It's more like the sting of some stupefied bee, booming against you in the dark. Let me see it. You must get some of my goulard water to bathe the inflammation away.'

'It's nothing,' said Isabel, turning her back. 'It's just the cold water that did it. It's nothing—it's nothing! Oh, mother, if you would just let me be!'

Here happily came the interruption of Jenny bringing in, upon a large tray, the pile of hot scones wrapped in a napkin, the urn full of water just on the boil, the silver teapot and tea-caddy. The table was already laid with a glistening, snow-white tablecloth, and many crystal dishes of jams and preserves, and the cups and the saucers arranged at the opposite end of the table. Isabel was very glad to be busy, lighting the lamp under the urn, and preparing to 'mask' the tea. It gave her a little pause to compose herself beyond her mother's scrutiny, and the wicked glances which Willie Torrence, she knew, was casting upon her from the side of the fire. Meanwhile, the conversation that had been interrupted at her entrance was resumed.

'It's an awsome thing,' said Mrs Dysart, 'to think of the poor relics of humanity being made a traffic of, even if it were nothing worse. They tell me the light at Inveresk churchyard is to be seen all through the night, and the men sitting with their guns. It's a terrible thing for you doctors to encourage; and you might have known what it would lead to. Oh, but I cannot think, though you will probably scoff at me, that the doctors are not much to blame.'

'And how do you expect we are to cure you of all your ailments, if we do not know the structure of your bodies,' said Torrence, 'and how every bone and muscle lies?'

'Indeed, I have no expectations of the sort,' said Mrs Dysart with a heightened colour. This lady blushed to think that any man should know how her bones and muscles were put together. It was very indelicate, she thought, especially before a young thing, sitting there at the end of the table, whom this man professed to be in love with—if a doctor, thinking like that, could ever be in love!

'Well, I know you're no believer in doctors. You think it's a finer thing to cobble the soul than the body,' he said with his loud laugh.

'And that's scarcely a pretty speech to make to a lady,' said Mrs Dysart, offended; but she felt that to quarrel with a man, whom, after all, her daughter might marry, was not judicious—and she was grand at putting up with people

when it was necessary—witness Jeanie's man! 'Is there no other way that you can make your studies but that horrible way?' she said.

And he laughed again. 'Unless there were windows in the living subject that you could see through,' he said. 'I allow that might be a better way.'

'And so,' said Mrs Dysart severely, 'you throw the doors open to murder—that you may find out the secrets of your awful, awful trade.'

'Come, come,' he said; 'after all, not to say yourself, for you're bigoted, but Miss Bell now, if she were ill—you would soon send man and horse, by day or night, to get old Bogle maybe out of his comfortable bed, to see what was wrong and put it right.'

'Old Bogle, as you call him—he's just a very respectable man of my own age—has more experience than your whole College of Physicians put together. But it's no out of the grave he gets it, nor yet from murdered men,' said Mrs Dysart solemnly. She was full of the prejudices of her time, carried to a height of fanaticism by the occurrences with which at that moment every echo rang.

'Well, he's not much of a man, I know,' said Torrence; 'but I've every reason to believe he went through his classes like the rest. Don't take away an honest man's character, Mrs Dysart: though he's old-fashioned, I'm well aware—and I, for one, would not trust Miss Bell's life, if there was a question of that, in his hands.'

At this the mother, suddenly seeing a vision of Isabel, her youngest, the only one remaining that was wholly hers, in the charge of an untrustworthy doctor—who was an old wife, as she knew in her secret heart—and perhaps swimming for her life with no better succour at hand, gasped and was silent, not knowing what other word to say.

At this, Isabel's voice suddenly rose from the other end of the table, where she sat shielded by the urn and teapot, the hot spot in her cheek gradually cooling down. 'Uncle John says that the doctors must have known these poor folk came by their death in no just way.'

'Eh, what's this?' cried Mrs Dysart. 'Uncle John!' she repeated with an intonation which was not quite respectful. She did not think her brother-in-law was a Solomon. 'It is just like him,' she said indignantly. 'I am no great lover of doctors, as you all know; but to think of a set of men, with an education and all the advantages, conniving at a crime! No, no; you'll not tell me that.'

'I'm glad you do us justice so far,' said the young doctor. But he was a little subdued in tone. 'It is just one of the things that the vulgar are sure to say.'

Isabel recovered her spirit in the face of opposition, a wholesome and natural effect. 'I don't know who you call the vulgar,' she cried, 'but I think it was quite reasonable what Uncle John said. All your learning is to make you see in a moment what has happened. When I told Dr Bogle, whom you think so little of, that I have a headache, he says: "Yes, it's from so-and-so, and so-and-so." And if you that are so much cleverer cannot tell when a poor person has been murdered, murdered! oh, that's not possible,' Isabel said.

'Miss Bell,' said Torrence, 'was so frightened with me appearing out of the shadows, she thought it was Burke himself, and was for off, like an arrow flying from me, till I came up with her, and—showed her it was me.'

Oh, to taunt her with it! to triumph over her on the strength of it—such a hateful, hateful insult! But Isabel's courage was taken from her, and she retreated, choking with anger and shame, behind the urn once more.

'But it is very reasonable what she says,' said her mother, reflecting. 'It's more reasonable than most things that come from John Dysart's muckle mouth.—Oh! I'm not blaming you, Willie, that had nothing to do with it; but a man that is at the top of the tree, and knows the human frame as I know my stocking that I'm knitting: Lord help us! that's far the worst I've heard yet. It just makes the blood run cold in your veins; they must have known! How could they help but know, Willie Torrence, I ask you? Oh, man, man, what a dreadful thought! Them that are bred up and nourished and trained upon phreese all their days! and get a grand character from it, and so much thought of—how could they help but know? When there's dreadful deeds done of that kind, a doctor's always called at the triffl to tell what it's been; and will you tell me that they couldn't see it here?'

'Well, Mrs Dysart, if they were called to a trial and had their attention attracted to it, of course they would know.'

'Their attention attracted! to cold-blooded horrible murder!'

'How can I convince you,' said the young doctor, 'that unless your attention was called to it, that's not the thing you would remark? Science is a far grander affair than the way a man came by his death: that's just an accident: we must all die, and soon or syne it doesn't matter so much to the world. But knowledge is most excellent—the very song says that. And how can we tell what's to be done for our patients if we don't study and study every nerve and every line? It becomes just a passion with some men—the chief, for instance, who is one of the greatest surgeons that ever lived. There's nothing in the world so beautiful to him or so engrossing, or such a grand pursuit, as anatomy. And when you're watching him and hearing him speak, and seeing him trace out, let us say the—But no; I need not put names to the things to you, for you would not understand, and you would perhaps be horrified; but it's better than any play upon the stage, it's grander than any exhibition—you watch with your eyes louping in your head, and your ears tingling, and are just carried away!'

There was a little pause, for the young doctor spoke as an enthusiast, and enthusiasm has always the power of silencing the objections and impressing the minds of onlookers, especially if they are women. It was not till after an interval, recovering herself with a nod of her head in half-sympathy and admiration, that Mrs Dysart resumed.

'I am not saying but what that's true. There's a great power in a clever man's utterance, though it is a gruesome subject. And I'm not blaming you, that are maybe only a student,

Willie—though you are a passed doctor, are you not?"

'Oh ay, I'm a passed doctor,' he replied with a half-laugh.

'Well: but a student still, always a student, I suppose, in these terrible ways? for they say more is found out every day. But Willie, allowing for the Professor that might, as you say, be carried away by his subject, or the students that might have their heads turned, after him—my man, there must be some cool-headed reasonable person, say a colleague or an assistant or something, that would have his eyes open and would know. Will you tell me that there would be no one that would have his attention attracted, that could take a wonder where all these poor creatures came from, and would *know*? Oh, don't tell me that, Willie Torrence! for it would give me a poor, poor opinion of the doctors to whom we have to trust our lives!'

'I thought you could not have a poorer opinion of them than you have already,' he said with a subdued laugh.

'Oh laddie! but that's a different thing, a different thing altogether! giving a jibe at them for professing to know more than ever was intended by their Maker, that's one thing—but to think of them as conniving at a dreadful, dreadful crime!—And there must be somebody—somebody that's not an enthusiast, that would have his brain clear, an assistant, or a dresser, or whatever you call it'—

'A dresser has only to do with patients—and is quite an inferior—and would not dare to have an opinion,' Torrence said with a flush of something like anger. 'The Professor's assistant would ill like to be put on that level.—But I must be going,' he added quickly, pushing back his chair as he rose. 'I've no right to be here at all, if I was not very weak-minded and subject to temptation. You'll excuse me if I run away. I have to catch the last coach into Edinburgh, or else walk, and it's a long trail six miles at this time of the night.'

'Dear me, you've but little time to catch the coach,' said Mrs Dysart.—'Isabel, go you and let him out at the front door. It saves a good bit of road.—Good-night, then, good-night—we'll finish our argument the next time you are here.'

Isabel went out very unwillingly, and yet not without a little tremor of anticipation, into the dark passage with her lover, between whom and herself she felt that such a bond existed as between her and no other man on earth, notwithstanding that every sentiment of her nature had been stirred up against him by his unwarrantable act. She was not surprised, though very angry, to feel his arm round her as she stood with her face to the door turning the stiff key and loosing the bolts. 'Bell,' he whispered in her ear behind her, 'I'm maybe going off to London, to London, do you hear? with a grand opening. Will you not give me your hand, and come with me, and be a lady all your life? I have a grand opening, better than I ever hoped: and I'll be Sir William, and you my lady, I give you my word for it, before all's done!'

'Mr Torrence,' said Isabel with great dignity, 'if you waste another moment, you'll lose the last coach.'

He laughed, as she opened the door quickly

into the clearness of the night, sheltering herself behind it, and compelling him to pass out: but then he lingered a moment and came back on the step. 'Think of it,' he said hurriedly; 'I'll come back for your answer.' Then leaning towards her: 'And give me another, my bonnie Bell, before I go away.'

It would be impossible to describe in words the fury, the passion, the desperation of displeasure with which Isabel dashed the door in his face. As she stood in the darkness, inside, trying to recover herself, she heard his laugh in the air as he hurried away. Another! as if she had been a consenting party! This insult was worse even than the first, and harder to bear.

SCENTS.

THE sweet and tempered sunshine of a warm September day descends upon the Romney Marsh. It is afternoon, and the shadows are long, and fall tenderly upon the great level that rolls away to eastward. The land is mellow with the richness of autumn, and above its wide and peaceful loneliness, a vast vault of blue is streaked with soft clouds, that grow purple toward the horizon. And there, beneath the purple clouds, is the sea, very blue beneath the blue sky, and bluer for the foreground that lies between us; the brown sails of many fishing-boats are burnished upon it, and the white ones of others are as the wings of gulls caught in a sudden streak of sunlight.

I stand upon the little village terrace on the top of the hill, and drink in dreams from the dreamy stretch of pasture-land beneath me, whereon even the red cattle and the hundreds of white sheep browse and crop sleepily. Beside me is the ivied crown of an old stone gateway that still pretends to guard the forsaken town as it used to guard it hundreds of years ago; through its massive arch I can see another old town rise—a dark pyramid out of the pale plain—some three miles away. But that, too, seems to be asleep—asleep, as the grim old gray fortress on the marsh that was yet alive enough once, in the days when the sea lapped its sides, and it was the port citadel of the flourishing town upon the cliff. It is a fit land for dreams.

In the apple orchard on the slope yonder the voices of children sound merrily. Their brown faces and rough heads bob up and down behind the blackberry hedge; their baskets are full, for they have been out all the morning blackberrying in the lanes upon the crest of the downs, on the breezy levels where blackthorn and bramble grow along the dykes, or the rough roadside.

One little fellow, with hair golden as the golden harvest-land, and eyes like blue veronicas in his sunburnt little face, scrambles down through the hedge in such a hurry that his basket's contents lie in a moment spread upon the green bank. The fists go up into the blue eyes at once and the pretty face is contorted. I cannot bear to see a child in trouble, and I am fain to try and comfort this sore distress. A bright penny brings a wondering satisfaction back to the mournful blue eyes, and we are soon the best of friends, gathering up the fallen fruit into the tiny basket, and plucking more from the top-

most boughs of the hedge, which Tommy is very pleased to have brought down to his level.

Evening descends upon the marsh. Tommy has gone home to tea, leaving with me a small trophy of blackberries, in token of friendship, and a tiny sprig of sweet jasmine plucked from his mother's cottage porch.

I wander down upon the marshland, warmer and richer than ever with reflections of the sunset that sends many hues upon the wide panorama of cloudland from its lump of fire in the west. Beside the quiet stream, curtained with tall rushes, home of the lupwing and moorhen, I lie down beneath a gnarled old thorn-tree that the wind has bent towards the east, and gaze into the downy breast of gray cloud above me, just warmed with the distant sun-setting. The voices of the children follow me still; but they smite upon my ear as from a far distance, and the scent of the blackberries, hot from the sun in which they have been ripening all day, seems to me somehow as the scent of a pinewood in the warmth of a southern summer. The gray marsh lies spread around me, and the white sails stud a faint blue sea beyond the yellow line where pasture and shingle meet, and the pale silhouette of Dungeness Foreland melts into the sky afar. But it is none of these things that I see—the voices yonder are voices from a shadowy past, and I am a child once more myself.

Seated on the rich moss of a forest glade, I watch a clear mountain stream ripple past me over gray lichened stones, and around boulders upon which the pink saponaria makes a carpet; blue gentian and frail soldanella grow in the moist mosses, and a sober canopy of dark pines spreads itself shelteringly over my head. I am a child, and a merry one; but I am a child-mother, a little mother to a large and motherless family of brothers and sisters—dear ones, all lost or scattered now—and whom I gladly see grouped once more about me as we play at twig-dolls in the Alpine woods. We have a huge family of them, ranging from two feet to two inches long, only two-pronged fir branches, stripped of their leaves; but they are father, mother, aunts, and cousins to us, and endowed with as marked characteristics as the families of our acquaintance. I laugh aloud, and as I laugh I hear the cattle-bells on the Alp above my head, and I remember that it is dinner-time, and jump up to lead my brood out across the bilberry and wild rhododendron to the hot sunlight of our cottage above the blue lake. For we are only up the mountains on a holiday, a needed holiday from the pleasant heat of our Italian home below. What good times we have had there, too, beside the blue Mediterranean, amid the chestnut woods that fringed the sides of the ravine, and beneath the stone pines on the crest above our white villa!

My hand strays to my bosom, where Tommy's spray of jasmine lies within my dress. Swiftly, in a wide and sudden flight, my spirit flies across seas, and I am on a broad English lawn, where a hammock swings beneath lofty elm-trees, a weeping willow dips into a pond full of water-lilies, a long broad walk is flanked with sun-flowers and holyhocks and the rich red roses of England. Somebody stands beside me, somebody puts a spray of jasmine into my hand, plucked from the creeper-clad veranda around the old

red brick house. I feel my cheek flush and my heart beat, and there are strange sounds in my head, and I sigh—a quick soft sigh. But that dream fades very quickly. Perhaps it was never anything but a dream—a short, sweet dream of a short, sweet English summer; the one English summer—and the one holiday—of my busy, happy youth. For somehow, ere the leaves turn russet and golden on the English beech and birchwoods, I am back again on the trellised terrace of our white Italian villa, where I am mother and sister in one; and the children are picking grapes in the vineyards and blackberries as big as mulberries in the hedgerows, and chestnuts in the amber glades, and there are no sounds at all but those laughing voices that have always echoed through my life. I listen to them gladly, thankful that no dream, however sweet, lured me from them while they called. I listen to them without surprise, so natural does it seem that they should be there. But slowly—slowly they change, and become less dreamy, more and more vibrating; and I know at last that they are the voices of the village children floating down to me from the apple orchard upon the slope, and that I am alone upon the wide Sussex marshland. The thin line of Dungeness Foreland passes once more into my sight, and the sails upon the greens and purples of the English Channel; and my heart grows a little cold as I see that the twilight is falling, and that the marsh is sombre—as I realise what it *might* be in the long winter when the sunlight and the summer have fled.

A little cold, but only for a moment. For if the sunlight is less gay than it used to be on the vine-trellised terrace beside the Mediterranean, or across the blue of the Alpine lake, the beautiful silence of the brine-brushed marshland, that is serene in its strength as a strong life at its close, fits best for me now; and if the voices that made music in the noonday are hushed, their echoes rise up still, and call me blessed, and I am not alone.

'Good-night, good-night!' shout the children on the slope.

And the best of my dream has not fled, though I crush the jasmine spray in my hand as I rise from the ground, and though I have forgotten the blackberries among the rushes.

THE SHAWMUT TRESTLE.

A WESTERN RAILROAD SKETCH.

By WILLIAM ATKINSON.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAP. I.

LOYD FREEMAN, C.B., had just turned in for the night. Having turned in, he could not very well turn over; for his couch was not extensive in area, nor was it a bed of down by any means; briefly, it was a mere hammock swung from the rafters of a den about ten feet square. This den was one of three cramped apartments which comprised the entire 'barracks,' the other two being dining-room and office respectively. Upon the outer door of the barracks (for so had Lloyd Freeman, C.B., christened his headquarters) there was fastened, in striking contrast to its rude surroundings, a magnificent brass plate, upon

which, in artistic letters, had been hammered the legend :

'NORTHERN INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN RAILWAY.
OFFICE OF
THE SUPERINTENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION.'

In the lower left-hand corner of this brazen sign could be deciphered, in very much smaller lettering, the words 'John Smith, St Mary Axe, E.C.'—which showed conclusively that, like Lloyd Freeman, C.B., the brass plate was not a product of the Himalayas.

However, this story is not designed to treat of the Himalayas, nor of the N. I. & A. Railway, beyond intimating to the reader that Mr Freeman was at the period in question the designer, builder, and promoter of that stupendous piece of international engineering.

Lloyd Freeman, C.B., was at the head of his profession—or professions, for he combined civil engineering with splendid executive ability as a railroad manager—and was still on the youthful side of forty. Though an Englishman by birth, he was a citizen of the world at large; for had he not constructed railroads within the shadow of the pyramids, and through Canadian snows? When a lad, had he not carried a surveyor's rod and line through Russia? And, to float and build the Northern India and Afghanistan Railway, had he not resigned the chairmanship of the Melbourne and Western Australia Trunk Line?

His last undertaking he proposed making the greatest of all his works, both in its execution and its results. The latter even His Excellency the Viceroy could foresee, and glowing words of praise from Calcutta secured from Her Majesty's Government a 'C.B.' for Lloyd Freeman.

But the decoration was now a year old, and for the same space of time operations on the N. I. & A. Railway had been practically at a standstill.

The Ameer was not so friendly towards the enterprise as he had at first been; consequently the stockholders were slow to advance payments on their shares, and capitalists who were not already committed fought shy of Lloyd Freeman, C.B., and his 'colossal railroad folly,' as they now dubbed the Afghanistan project.

As a natural sequence the great engineer and manager was discouraged, and was in a quandary as to whether he should continue any longer with the company after the expiration of his two years' contract—an epoch which would arrive in less than a month. And yet Lloyd Freeman had many friends—men of influence and wealth—who believed him to be the greatest railroad man alive.

Freeman had just managed to forget his anxieties in a comfortable nap, when he was aroused by his servant, who re-lit the odorous oil-lamp and then handed his master a telegram. Usually telegrams received at night were laid aside till morning; but in this case the clerk, a trusted and well-paid young man, presumed upon his own judgment, and instructed the coolie to awaken his master at once. Freeman tore off the envelope, rubbed his eyes, and read as follows :

'NEW YORK,
May 10th, 1890.

'LLOYD FREEMAN,
Headquarters, N. I. & A. Railway,
British India,
Via London and Aden.

'Our new road, the Chicago and North Pacific, will be completed and ready to operate in three months. We are looking for a general manager. It is a rough new country, and there will be plenty of hard work. Will you take hold? If so, name your own figure for a five years' contract, and say when you can come.

JAY VANDERGILD.'

Now Jay Vandergild was the richest man in America, and controlled more miles of railroad than any other one man in the entire world. This offer, therefore, meant a great opening for even so successful and well-known an expert as Lloyd Freeman, C.B. The Superintendent of Construction was perfectly aware that he would have to drop his 'C.B.' in the democratic Republic: but 'C.B.s,' or even 'K.C.B.s,' counted for nothing alongside professional recognition, almost unlimited power, and a princely salary.

No. If he could honourably extricate himself from the N. I. & A. Railway enterprise, the C.B. might remain behind until he should again find himself within Her Britannic Majesty's dominions. So he dashed off the following telegram :

'The EARL OF BOMBAY, K.S.I.,
Chairman, N. I. & A. Railway,
99 Old Broad Street, London.

'Two millions will be required at once to carry on one year's work. If not forthcoming, it will be useless for me to remain with the company.

LLOYD FREEMAN.'

In forty-eight hours a reply arrived :

'LLOYD FREEMAN, C.B.

'Money market tight. Suspend operations and report to the company in London. BOMBAY.'

Upon receipt of which Mr Freeman, with a light heart, penned the following :

'The EARL OF BOMBAY, K.S.I.,
London.

'My contract with your company expires on the 31st. I shall not seek to renew it. Will report with books, papers, &c., by first steamer. LLOYD FREEMAN.'

'JAY VANDERGILD,
New York.

'I will accept the position, and see you in New York not later than August 1st. We can arrange terms, &c., then. Thanks for the offer.

• LLOYD FREEMAN.'

It was early in September when a special train pulled out of that great Western metropolis, Chicago, over the tracks of the new railroad, which was nearly completed. This train consisted of an ordinary coach and the private car of Mr Jay Vandergild, the railroad king and the financial backer and practical owner of the Chicago and North Pacific Railroad, drawn by a monster locomotive.

Within the boudoir car were Mr Vandergild and his private secretary, Mr Lloyd Freeman (without the C.B.), and a confidential telegraph

operator, all of whom were embarking upon an inspection trip over the new railroad, preparatory to opening it up to the public, under the management of Mr Lloyd Freeman. As the Chicago and North Pacific was a trifling matter of two thousand four hundred miles in length, the members of the inspection party had a good week's work before them.

Nothing of particular interest occurred on this trip, except that they were joined at St Paul by Mr Medway Parker, the chief engineer. Mr Parker was a good-natured clever little Yankee, who, in addition to the professional information he was able to impart to Chairman Vandergild and his new chief, enlivened the trip by his queer stories and dry humour.

Freeman took a liking to little Parker from the first, and the chief engineer felt that he need have no fears about the decapitation of his own official head.

On the return trip, Freeman and Parker left the train at Medicine Hat, a point which had been selected as the headquarters of the Chicago and North Pacific Railroad, for the simple reason that it was exactly midway between the terminus on the Pacific coast and Chicago.

Here Freeman was introduced by Mr Vandergild to all the subordinate officials of the road, after which the millionaire bade his new general manager a formal farewell, purposely within the hearing of all the aforesaid subordinates.

'Mr Freeman, I take pleasure in turning over to you this valuable property for your best efforts. You will have entire and absolute control; and as long as you fulfil your part of our contract you will have the unqualified support of the Board in New York. Good-bye, Mr Freeman. Good-day, gentlemen.'

The great man shook hands with Freeman, and made a sweeping wave of his hand in token of adieu to the others. Then he stepped aboard his palatial car and left Lloyd Freeman, General Manager, in supreme control.

Now, to a railroad official fresh from a trim London office, and used to the superb management and prime condition of an English railroad, the headquarters of the Chicago and North Pacific at Medicine Hat would undoubtedly have appeared crude and depressing in the extreme.

There was nought in sight but the car-shops, the locomotive sheds, and two or three rows of shanties (each one a precise duplicate of its neighbour) occupied by the railroad men. Yes, there was the depot (pronounced *dee-po*), a long, low, wooden, two-storey building, the upper part of which provided offices for the general manager and other officials.

But Lloyd Freeman, having just arrived from the Afghan frontier of India, where his immediate surroundings were much more discouraging, and where he was five times the present distance from that great bugaboo of practical railroad men, 'the Board,' was not disposed to criticise the physical appearance of the little railroad settlement on the prairies, strangely christened Medicine Hat. He had seen the property, reviewed the country which the railroad was to serve, knew just what resources he had to draw upon, and knew, best of all, that to develop the business of the road, ways and means would be provided as promptly as he should call for them.

Freeman speedily became acquainted with such subordinates as he wished to retain, and quickly appointed others to supersede those whom he felt he could not implicitly trust. And not only so. He resolved, at the outset at least, to interview and know personally every engine-driver, fireman, conductor, brakeman, switchman, bridge-tender, and section-man on the entire railway. It was a big job, but by degrees the general manager got through it.

On the 1st of October the Chicago and North Pacific was to be thrown open to the public, and the event was to be celebrated by a trip over the road, in a magnificent train, of the Governors of all the States and Territories through which the C. & N. P. passed.

On the last day of September Lloyd Freeman sat in his private office, not quite satisfied with the arrangements for the opening. Labour was not so plentiful in the far North-west, and there had just been some heavy rains, which rendered it necessary to carefully watch all rivers, creeks, and bridges. The road was laid out, for working purposes, into four divisions—two east and two west of Medicine Hat—each under a competent superintendent. It was the division immediately west of headquarters which was most difficult to properly man, and it was this division, too, through which flowed most of the normally small streams which became dangerous after heavy rains.

'Telegraph to every station to put out a sign for bridge-tenders at good wages,' said Freeman to his telegraph operator.

This was early in the morning. Late in the afternoon a clerk in the outer office brought the general manager a card, upon which the clerk had written the name of a caller. This was customary when, as was frequently the case, the caller knew nothing of reading or writing.

Freeman read the name on the card two or three times, but the best he could make of it was: 'Young-man-proud-of-his-horses.'

'What's this, Saunders?' he asked of the clerk. 'A joke or some crazy man?'

'Indian, sir,' said Saunders, with a grin.

'Oh, well, show him in; but leave the door open, Saunders, for that sort of cattle smell rather strong as a rule.'

In a moment the entrance was darkened by a gigantic figure which found it necessary to stoop to pass the doorway, and there stood before the general manager a red man in the prime of life, at least six feet six inches tall, magnificent in feathers, paint, and a gaudy blanket.

With arms folded and head erect, the Indian was solemn as a judge as he slowly explained the object of his call.

'Young—man—want—job.'

'Oh,' said Freeman, keenly eyeing his visitor. 'That's the way the wind blows, is it? Well, "young man," what sort of a job would you like?'

Freeman was inclined to treat the incident as a joke, but the Indian never flinched nor changed his attitude as he replied, connecting his words with difficulty.

'Young man watch—watch bridge—watch creek—young man—he know flood—when flood come—young man watch—young man—want—job.'

But Freeman shook his head.

'Look here, "young man;" I don't want to hurt your feelings, but when there's any watching to be done I prefer white men. If I'm not greatly mistaken, you and your people require a good deal of watching yourselves. No, I can't employ you.'

The Indian did not argue or whimper; he simply stalked out of the room as majestically as he had entered.

Down on the platform, however, he met Medway Parker, the chief engineer, who had on more than one occasion been able to make good use of Young-man-proud-of-his-horses. Parker had lived on the frontier among the Indians half his life, and knew the red man pretty well. He prided himself on the fact that he could distinguish a good honest Indian from deceitful trash. Parker knew better, too, than to waste his breath upon high-flown Indian names.

'Hello, Slops!' he said cheerily. 'You look down in the mouth. What's wrong?'

'Oh, well,' said Parker, after listening to the Indian's story, 'Mr Freeman don't understand. You come with me.' And the engineer trotted up to the general manager's office with 'Young-man' at his heels.

'Mr Freeman,' Medway Parker said, 'you have grievously disappointed a friend of mine.'

'Not intentionally, Parker,' replied the chief official, not noticing the Indian, who remained in the outer office.

'No, I judge not,' answered Parker, with a smile. 'You probably wouldn't think of me in connection with my old friend Slops!'

'Slops? Slops? I do not forget names, but'

'There again, sir, you would not connect the name of "Slops" with so patrician an Indian cognomen as "Young-man-proud-of-his-horses."'

'Oh!' exclaimed Freeman, as some light dawned upon him.

'Yes, sir; the fact is I have come up to put in a good word for Young-man, &c., whom we ordinarily call Slops. He's a pretty good fellow, Mr Freeman; trustworthy I have found him. I think you might trust him with a bridge.'

'And the fact is, Parker, that I have no use for Indians, Hindus, Afghans, Chinese, Maori, or any kindred trash when there's any trusty work to be done.'

'But, my dear sir'—

'No; listen, Parker. I have no wish to appear doubtful of your judgment, nor (as I told "Young-man-and-his-horses") do I want to hurt the feelings of the black man or the red man any more than those of the white man. But I have had sad experience. I put a Maori in a signal box in Australia, and he got two trains trying to pass each other on the same line of rails, with, I need hardly say, disastrous results. To humour a big Afghan landowner, I employed an Afghan as a pointsman, and the scoundrel got drunk and ditched a construction train. You must excuse me, Parker.'

'Pardon my persistence, sir,' said the engineer; 'but I happen to know that poor old Slops is trying hard to keep out of mischief and gain an honest livelihood. That's a good deal to say of an Indian. If'

'No, Parker, no. Not now of all times. Later

on, something simpler may be found for your Indian friend—why, there he is in the next room. See here, Young-man!'

The Indian entered with the same firm step and erect head, the same stolid expression on his painted face.

'Mr Parker, here, has been recommending you. I cannot consistently employ you as a bridge-tender, but I'll not forget you if something opens that you can fill satisfactorily. In the meantime, Young-man, accept this as a proof that I am acting from no ill-will.'

Lloyd Freeman, who was good-hearted and generous clear to the core, tendered the Indian a five-dollar gold piece.

But Young-man-proud-of-his-horses shook his head and muttered, 'Young-man—earn wages—want job.' Then, as majestically as ever, he glided from the office.

This little episode soon got bruited among the railroad employees, who commended the general manager for his good sense in refusing to employ 'niggers and Injins when there's lots of honest, deserving white men.' But later on, when Lloyd Freeman turned his attention to these white employees with a view to securing better discipline, these same deprecators of 'niggers and Injins' forgot to speak so well of the chief official of the Chicago and North Pacific.

But Medway Parker, who hated to see a good Indian sent adrift, because he knew the last state of a red-skin who has once done civilised work and gets back to his old life is worse than the first, concocted a job on his own account for Slops. Parker gave him fifty dollars and told him to look up and buy for him a pair of Indian ponies, which Slops was to break in for driving in double harness for Parker's little nieces in the East. And, as carte-blanche in the matter of selecting and purchasing horses is the greatest compliment that one could well pay an Indian, Medway Parker won for himself the lifelong gratitude of Young-man-proud-of-his-horses.

KAFTA, AN ARABIAN BEVERAGE.

THERE are probably but few people who have ever heard of Kafta, and yet it is to a temporary scarcity of the plant producing this beverage that we owe the introduction of coffee. Kafta is much in repute amongst Arabians, especially in the vicinity of Yemen. It is obtained by boiling the leaves and stems of the plant known as kât. The botanical name of kât is *Catha edulis*. The first to describe it scientifically was the Swedish botanist Forskal, who, after travelling extensively in Arabia and Lower Egypt, died in the former country in July 1768. In honour of the discoverer, some of the early botanical authors have referred to the plant as *Catha forskalii*. It is a glabrous tree or shrub, belonging to the Spindle-tree family Celastraceæ, growing about ten feet in height, and having rusty-coloured leaves not unlike those of the strawberry tree. Although it is distributed in the interior of Eastern Africa from Abyssinia to Port Natal, it only seems to be cultivated in a systematic manner by the Arabians. These latter plant it in the same ground as their coffee.

According to a recent writer, the cultivation

seems to require some care. Propagation is effected by cuttings, which, once planted, are left for three years, care being taken to keep them manured and watered and the ground free from weeds. At the end of three years all the leaves are taken off; and during the next year the plant puts forth a young growth, which is collected and sold in bundles under the name of Kât Moubarreh. This is considered an inferior quality. The following year the branches put forth new leaves, and these are cut and sold under the name of Kât Methani. This production is more esteemed. The tree is then allowed to rest for three years, when cutting is again recommenced. Another writer tells us that Sabbare Kât, which is put up in bundles six inches wide, is considered superior to Muktaree Kât, which is put up in bundles about half the size. It would therefore seem that Moubarreh is synonymous with Muktaree, and Methani with Sabbare, so far as kât is concerned.

Kât seems to occupy a position in the social economy of the Arabians similar to that held by the kola nut among the West Africans, and Kava-kava among the Fijians. Every visitor upon entering good houses is presented with twigs of kât, and the floors of the rooms must to European eyes present a somewhat disgusting appearance, for, after chewing the leaves, the visitor throws upon the floor not only the stalks, but also those parts of the leaves which he has not swallowed. Botta, who travelled in Arabia in 1837, tells us that he was presented by one of the sheiks of the country with a bundle of branches of kât, according to the rules of politeness of the people. He ascertained that the leaves when chewed had an agreeable exciting action, which imparted the desire to spend the night rather in quiet conversation than sleeping. He expressly states that he thought the kind of excitation and the lovely dreams provoked by the use of kât extremely pleasant. He gives an account of its virtues, which much resemble those of coca leaves; in fact, messengers in Arabia who have any hard journeys to undertake use kât much in the same way as the natives of the Cordilleras do the coca plant. So invigorating is kât, that it is said the Arab soldiers who chew the twigs are able to stand sentry all night long without feeling in the least drowsy.

When fresh, the green bundles are said to smell very agreeably; and the leaves are by some considered strongly intoxicating; but the intoxication does not last for a long time. This latter statement, however, has not been allowed to go unchallenged. No true Mohammedan will partake of intoxicating liquors, the use of them being forbidden by the Koran. A synod of learned Mussulmans was therefore convened; and as a result of their investigation, decided that as kâta did not impair the health or impede the observance of religious duties, but only increased hilarity and good-humour, it was lawful to use it.

By some it is said to have been employed from time immemorial; but other writers contend that its use is not of very ancient date. It was undoubtedly used long before the Arabians indulged in coffee. The latter, a sixteenth-century writer tells us, was resorted to in Aden when, in the time of Dhabhânî, in the fifteenth century, kât had become a rare article. Curiously enough,

caffeine, the active principle of tea and coffee, and to which these beverages owe so large a portion of their exhilarating influence, is totally absent in the leaves of kât. They have been more than once analysed by eminent chemists; but none of them have been able to trace a vestige of this important alkaloid.

A regular commerce is carried on with the product, fresh branches being brought every morning from the mountains to the contiguous towns. The increasing business in it, especially in Aden, is phenomenal. Assistant-surgeon Vaughan, Port Surgeon at Aden in 1859, speaking of the great predilection that the Arabs have for kât, mentions that the quantity used in Aden alone averaged about two hundred and eighty camel-loads annually; and that the exclusive privilege of selling it, which is farmed by the Government, produced a revenue of fifteen hundred rupees per year; whilst in 1877, Captain Hunter stated that in the previous year twelve hundred camel-loads of kât found their way to Aden; and that eight thousand rupees were paid for the privilege of collecting duty on the commodity.

The leaves, beyond being chewed and boiled in water, are sometimes boiled in milk; and as the infusion is bitter, honey is added to it to render it more palatable.

For the purposes of commerce, the twigs are made up into closely-pressed bundles of different sizes, according to quality, the best kind being in bundles a foot or fifteen inches long, each bundle consisting of forty slender twigs tied together with strips of fibrous bark. The value of a bundle in Aden is said to be about threepence, whilst at Yemen the price is said to vary from sixpence to eightpence.

TURNING THE FLOWERS.

Out in the country, where two roads met,

A cottage with open door I found;

The board for the evening meal was set,

The good wife bustled busily round.

It was homely and plain—but oh, so sweet,

With rose and lavender freshly culled,

And there, in a cradle, just at my feet,

A beautiful babe to sleep lay lulled.

I sat me down, with a bidden right,

And a sense of comfort over me stole;

The board, though homely, was clean and white,

And flowers were upon it—set in a bowl.

And the good wife said unto me, her guest,

As she twisted the blooms in the bowl so brown:

‘I like to turn what are freshest and best

To the side where the man of the house sits down.’

I looked at the flowers—so white, so red;

I gazed at the happy-faced busy wife,

And, ‘That is a nice idea,’ I said;

‘I wish we could carry it all through life.

For the world would be a far happier place,

And many a glint through the darkness loom,

If we “turned the flowers” with a tactful grace,

And showed the glory instead of the gloom.’

NANNIE POWER-O'DONOGHUE.

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ENGLISH CHARACTER-WRITERS.

THE principle of evolution or development is as plainly discernible in literature as in other departments of human activity. New literary forms arise—the tree, as it were, puts forth fresh branches—but the principle of growth permeates the whole. Examples are not far to seek. The periodical essays of Addison and Steele, and of the host of followers and imitators who trod in their footsteps, added a new province to the world of letters; but the eighteenth-century essay, as it may distinctively be called, was a development of two previously existing forms of prose composition. Its beginning was a little uncertain and confused. The element of news, to which at first Steele gave prominence in the *Tatler*, was soon felt to be out of harmony with its surroundings, and was accordingly dropped. The two leading features of the essay proper, as found in the *Tatler*, omitting the earlier numbers, and in greater perfection in the *Spectator*, may be roughly described as moral reflection, and the portrayal of character and manners. The former is descended from the moral or Baconian essay of the seventeenth century; and the latter is the developed form of the Character-writing which was of old so popular a species of composition. The eighteenth-century essay by means of fiction and anecdote made this kind of portraiture piquant and personal. The 'Characters,' on the contrary, were general in their reference, and were written in a series of short, pointed sentences. The characteristics of classes were described under such generic titles as 'a drunkard,' 'a scold,' 'a good wife,' 'a publisher,' and so forth.

One of the earliest writers of Characters was Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, the 'English Seneca,' who essayed successfully a variety of forms of prose and verse composition. His *Characters of Vertues and Vices* contain eleven of the former and fifteen of the latter. They are vigorously written, and show considerable

power in the description of human nature in its strength and weakness. The character of 'The Hypocrite' is thus unsparingly summed up: 'In brief, he is the stranger's saint, the neighbour's disease, the blot of goodness, a rotten stick in a dark night, the poppy in a cornfield, an ill-tempered candle with a great snuff that in going out smells ill; an angel abroad, a devil at home, and worse when an angel than when a devil.'

Bishop Hall's book was followed in 1614 by the *Characters, or Witty Descriptions of the Properties of Sundry Persons*, of Sir Thomas Overbury, the unfortunate victim of Somerset and Lady Essex. This book, a small quarto of less than a hundred pages, became at once highly popular, and rapidly went through a number of editions. It increased in bulk as it increased in favour, for to the original contents many additions were made by various anonymous writers. The book that in 1614 had only twenty-one characters, contained eight years later no fewer than eighty. Overbury was a graphic but somewhat vulgar writer. 'The Tinker,' 'A Courtier,' 'The Fair and Happy Milkmaid,' are some of his titles. In the first named occurs an early use of a phrase which gave rise a few years ago to a great deal of unnecessary discussion: 'So marches he [the Tinker] all over England with his *bag and baggage*; his conversation is irreprovable, for he is ever mending.' 'The Milkmaid,' although tainted by the conceited style—in the old sense of the phrase—that was then so much in vogue, is pleasantly written, with an occasional touch of poetical feeling. 'She rises,' we are told, 'with Chanticleer, her dame's cock, and at night makes the lamb her curfew;' 'When winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry wheel, she sings defiance to the giddy wheel of fortune;' and lastly: 'Thus lives she, and all her care is, she may die in the spring-time, to have store of flowers stuck upon her winding-sheet.' The Courtier is described in a series of epigrammatic sentences: 'He knows no man that is not generally known;' 'He follows nothing but incon-

stancy, admires nothing but beauty, honours nothing but fortune.'

Several books of Characters followed Overbury's work in rapid succession, including one by Nicholas Breton, the poet. But the next work of this kind of any importance was the *Microcosmography*, written by John Earle, Bishop of Salisbury, and published in 1628. In five years it went through six editions, and has been reprinted more than once during the present century. The contents are very varied, and the author is never dull. The manners of the time are vividly painted in a strain of good-humoured raillery, not unmingled with satire, with many touches that show the writer to have been a very acute observer of the customs and doings of his contemporaries.

Among the Characters are 'A Young Raw Preacher,' 'A Self-conceited Man,' 'A Tavern,' 'An Old College Butler,' 'A Player,' 'A She Precise Hypocrite,' 'Paul's Walk,' 'An University Dun,' and many more. 'Paul's Walk' is a lively description of the busy scene then daily beheld within the walls of the old St Paul's Cathedral. The middle aisle was a recognised promenade and meeting-place. There, merchants transacted their business, courtiers and gallants exhibited their newest and bravest attire, gossip and scandal were circulated, servants were hired, and pick-pockets plied a profitable trade. 'The noise in it,' says Earle, 'is like that of bees, a strange humming or buzz mixed of walking tongues and feet: it is a kind of still roar or loud whisper. It is the great exchange of all discourse, and no business whatsoever but is here stirring and a-foot.' Even while divine service was being performed the promenaders continued their proceedings. The usual time for walking in St Paul's was an hour or so in the morning, and from three to six in the afternoon. As noon approached, the crowd of busy idlers melted away in search of dinner at their own homes or at the neighbouring ordinaries, until only the dinnerless were left, who paced out the interval in the aisles, and were said to have 'dined with Duke Humphrey,' in reference to the tomb of the 'good Duke Humphrey' of Gloucester, which was supposed to be in the cathedral.

The 'University Dun' will be recognised perhaps by some readers as a not unfamiliar figure. 'He is a gentleman's follower cheaply purchased, for his own money has hired him; 'He is a great complainer of scholars' loitering, for he is sure never to find them within, and yet he is the chief cause many times that makes them study.' And in a similar vein the Bishop goes on to describe how some men choose their rooms on purpose to avoid the dun, and think that chamber the best that gives them the clearest view of his approach, that by shifting him off men learn to shift in the world, and that the only place to mollify him is the buttery, where he will run up his debtor a long score for liquor, for 'he is one much wrought with good beer and rhetoric.' The 'She Precise Hypocrite' is a bitter attack on the female Puritans, and, though rather coarse, is very amusing. The 'Tavern' and its frequenters are described with mild satire: 'If the vintner's nose

be at door, it is a sign sufficient; but the absence of this is supplied by the ivy-bush.' The first Character in the book is that of 'a child.' 'His soul,' says Earle, 'is yet a white paper unscrawled with observations of the world, wherewith, at length, it becomes a blurred note-book.' This simile occurs in more than one of our old authors, and Shakespeare, in *King John*, speaking of a child, says:

The hand of time
Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume.

The *Microcosmography* was followed by many books of Characters by writers now altogether unknown or of little importance. Most of their contents show the same characteristics. The Characters are hit off in short sentences which try hard to be epigrammatic; some are not without humour, and many are often interesting for the light they throw on the manners and popular habits of the time. Of the books that were published within a few years of Bishop Earle's work, the best perhaps were the *Pictura Loquens*, by Wye Saltonstall, 1631; and *A Strange Metamorphosis of Man, transformed into a Wilderness: Deciphered in Characters*, 1634, by a writer whose name is unknown. As the times became more troublous and party feeling ran high, many of the Characters published began to have reference to the political and ecclesiastical strifes that were agitating the country. In a little book of *Characters and Elegies* by Sir Francis Wortley, 1646, may be found the characters of 'His Royal Majestie,' 'An Antinomian, or Anabaptistical Independent,' 'A Jesuit,' and others of a similar kind. In *The Times Anatomised*, 1647, by T. Ford, are 'A Good King,' 'Rebellion,' 'Warre,' and others having obvious reference to current events.

Between 1647 and the end of the seventeenth century some thirty books of Characters were published; but few were of any importance, and enumeration would be tedious. The author of one of these books, Richard Flecknoe, has been made unenviably famous by Dryden's bitter satire. In the second volume of Samuel Butler's *Remains*, as published by Thyer in 1759, there are over a hundred Characters; and besides these, sixty-six additional characters are lost to the world among the yet unpublished *Remains* of the author of *Hudibras*. Among the latter is a character of a 'Stationer,' as publishers and booksellers were then called. It is written in the spirit of the famous saying, 'Now Barabbas was a publisher.' 'A Stationer,' says Butler, 'is one that lives by books, and understands nothing of them but the prices. . . . He abuses those most (like other cheats) that he gains most by, and like a disease destroys those that feed him;' and in this strain of vilification the whole article is written.

The writing of Characters practically died out with the close of the seventeenth century. The exhibition and discussion of the idiosyncrasies of individuals and of classes became a leading feature of the periodical essays, and as these went out of popular favour, there arose the English novel, in the modern sense of the term, and character became an important item in the stock-in-trade of the novelist. The student of modern manners, as exhibited in fiction, cannot complain

of lack of material; he may range from Fielding to Thackeray, and from Jane Austen to George Eliot, and this surely will give him 'ample room and verge enough.'

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER III.—THE BLACK TULIP AND THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

MEANWHILE, Isabel Raynor and her cousin Euphemia Sulfield wandered in the sunny garden. If they were not 'in maiden meditation, fancy free,' as they walked along the gravelled paths with their arms about each other, they at least appeared to be. The flowers were late that year, and Whitsuntide was early. There was not a hint of rosebuds; but the garden was gay with the last of the blooms of spring, especially with beds of tulips, for which Sulfield had the love of a Dutchman. Fragrant and beautiful, however, as were the flowers in the freshness of the morning, they seemed but sweet and illustrative notes and comments on the beauty of the two maidens that walked among them. A fanciful young poet who afterwards saw the young ladies together in other scenes called them the Black Tulip and the Lily of the Valley. Had he seen them together on that particular morning his floreate fancy would have appeared less forced; for, with the prodigal suggestions of the garden about them, Isabel, in her dark dress and with her rich dark beauty, indeed seemed the human embodiment, express and admirable, of the Black Tulip of Dumas' unfortunate and long-suffering hero—tall and straight, with a full and gorgeous cup; while the fair Euphemia, small and sylph-like, and arrayed in white, looked by contrast with her as the complete realisation of the shy and tender Lily of the Valley blooming in its sheath of green.

The Black Tulip and the Lily of the Valley were in close personal contact; but their meditations, to judge from their aspect, were wide apart. Isabel, moderating her naturally stately gait to Euphemia's convenience, paced along with a serious, not to say sad, countenance; for she felt that her uncle Harry, to whose coming she had looked forward with so lively an interest, if he did not absolutely dislike her, held his liking in abeyance, as if she were primarily under suspicion—and that she both resented and failed to understand. Her cousin, on the contrary, stepped as to a measure, and let her bright eyes rove carelessly round, now and again whistling excellent imitations of the episodic and sleepy notes of the garden birds, drowsy after their early debauch of song.

'Oh, I do love to be up early in the summer-time!' exclaimed Euphemia, in her happy carelessness failing to remark her cousin's serious abstraction. 'Don't you, Isabel?—don't you?'

'I do, my dear,' answered Isabel smiling on her. 'I like to be up early all the year round. It's so pleasant, as Sir Walter Scott used to say,

to break the neck of the day's work before breakfast.'

'How do you know Sir Walter Scott used to say that?' asked Euphemia with a touch of child-like pique and wonder on her face.

'How do I know! I've read it, of course, my dear,' said Isabel with a look of wonder in her turn.

'What a lot of things you seem to read, Isabel! You always make me feel like a goose; when you're not here, I rather fancy myself as a clever sort of person.'

'My dear Phemy!' exclaimed Isabel, 'it's not right of me to make you feel like a goose, because you are not a goose at all, but a very bright, dear, clever little song-bird!'

'Oh, it's nice of you to say that, Bell!' said Phemy, hugging her cousin's arm. 'I like it, you know, though I don't believe it's true.'

'It is true, indeed, my dear,' said Isabel; 'and I shall blame myself very much if anything I may say should somehow make you think poorly of yourself. Forgive me, dear. It is only my schoolmistress way, which I am afraid I can't very easily get out of, to quote books I've read and to name authors I happen to be interested in. I'll try not to do it, my dear.'

'I wish you were not a schoolmistress, Bell.'

'What would you have me be? A mill-girl, or a milliner, or a telegraphist?'

'Bell! you know well enough it is not necessary that you should be anything but a lady.'

'Merely to be a lady, dear,' said Isabel, 'is not an occupation by which you can make a hundred and fifty pounds a year; and to be a schoolmistress is.'

'You know what I mean, Bell,' said Euphemia. 'Father always says he has more for us all than he knows what to do with. Why don't you stay with us altogether? I daresay father would give you a hundred and fifty a year for yourself.'

'My dear Phemy, I know Uncle George is the best and kindest and most generous man in the world. He is too good, but— Well, the fact is I can't endure to be idle, and I like to earn my hundred and fifty for myself in my own way.'

'I can't understand,' said Phemy, 'why you want to be so independent. It's not like a girl at all,' she added, while she blankly felt and vaguely resented that Isabel was stronger, cleverer, more resolute than a woman had any right to be. 'It was absurd—and in a sense improper—in a woman to strive to provide herself with those things which fathers (and husbands) were expressly created to find for her. I suppose, then, Bell, you wouldn't marry a man with money unless you had money too?'

'I should prefer to have some money of my own,' answered Isabel, as if she were delivering an opinion which she had seriously pondered. 'But I think that "in that connection," as the Americans say, it would not matter much if I had money or my husband had money, or we both had nothing but hands and heads to provide a living. Marriage, you see, is like no other relationship; it is—or it should be, I think—not the joining of two persons together, but the bringing together of the two parts of one complete person.'

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'Like a hook and an eye, I suppose?' said Euphemia.

'If you like to put it like that, my dear,' answered Isabel; and then she continued the serious exposition of her view of marriage. 'So, you see, what the one has belongs to both, and what the one wants the other makes up. There can be no question of mine or thine, of different interests, if they are properly matched—that is, I suppose,' she added half-musingly, 'if they truly and unreservedly love each other.'

'What a queer girl you are, Isabel!' exclaimed Euphemia.

'Am I? Perhaps I am,' said Isabel with resignation.

'How you can think of all these awfully wise things, I can't make out!'

'I can't help thinking of "things," as you call them, when I'm alone.'

'Well,' said Euphemia, returning in triumph to the point of conviction she had at first wished to make, 'that's what I tell you: you've no business to be alone. Father always says it's an absurd shame that a clever, handsome girl like you should not get married.—Tell me now, Bell dear, just between our two selves, why you won't accept George?'

'Really, Phemy dear, that is a plain question!'

'Don't you think him nice? Don't you like him?' urged Phemy.

'I like him very much; but'—

'Do you like any one else better?' pursued Phemy.

'That's not the question, my dear,' said Isabel, evading the point with a light laugh. 'To think,' she exclaimed with another laugh, 'that all my serious lecture about marriage has been thrown away! Don't you understand, my dear, that in my view a girl must not only like a man, but understand and admire him, and sympathise with his ambitions very much, to be ready to spend all her life with him? I couldn't marry George—though it's impertinent to say that, since he has never asked me—but I couldn't marry him, because I don't think I could spend all my life with him.'

'But,' said Phemy, 'don't you think you could have an affection for a man you didn't admire in those other ways?'

'Oh, affection!' said Isabel; 'that's another thing. But I think I give all my affection to my family—to uncle and aunt, and you and George. You may have an affection for a person you wouldn't care to marry.'

'George hasn't asked you yet, Bell,' said Euphemia, with a clear intention in her tone, 'but depend upon it he will ask you.'

'You don't mean you will tell him?' exclaimed Isabel in a hot flush of maidenly alarm. 'If you tell him, Phemy, what I have said to you in confidence, I will never forgive you!'

'I won't say anything to him about it, my dear,' said Phemy. 'Don't be so afraid. But do tell me one thing more: what kind of man do you think you could love very, very much?'

Isabel, however, evidently thought she had said enough in confidence; for she answered lightly: 'I don't think I could ever love a man that was not at least twenty years older than myself; I couldn't respect a younger man.'

'Now, you're not serious,' said Euphemia with a pout; 'and I won't tell you the kind of man I could love very, very much.'

'Oh, do tell me that, please, Phemy dear,' said Isabel, relieved and gratified that confidence was now to be diverted to the other side.

'Well,' said Euphemia, hugging still closer her cousin's arm, 'the man I would love very much must be like my dear father. He may be as old as he likes'—

'What?' said Isabel. 'Seventy or eighty?'

'No; not quite so old as that. I think thirty will do. He needn't be very good-looking—I don't think I care for good-looking men; they're so much taken up with themselves and their hair and their moustaches—but he must be very good and very kind and very generous.—But there's the breakfast bell: we mustn't keep mother waiting. I'll tell you some other time.'

CHAPTER IV.—THE TAME PHILOSOPHER.

When they entered the breakfast-room, the household was already assembled for morning prayers, and the master of the house sat in his place at the table with the prayer-book before him, and the unopened letter-bag and the uncut morning paper ready to his hand. Isabel and her cousin dropped silently into vacant seats by the door, and the function went on, Isabel, it must be confessed, feeling and showing considerable preoccupation: she was familiar with that kind of thing twice a day at school. The prayers were decorously and feelingly read, while Tummies, who was a privileged client of the house, and who had been brought up in the Methodist communion, interjected at every pause of the master a fervent 'Amen!' and then the men-servants and maid-servants trooped out with a cheerful countenance to the day's duties and relaxations. Then also Mr Suffield turned with alacrity to the letter-bag, to which he and his wife alone possessed a key. He opened it while the family took their places at table, and Tummies brought in the hot dishes.

'Here's two for you, mother, said Suffield, dealing out the letters; 'three for you, George—and one o' them in a lady's hand: that won't do, lad; three, four, five, six—bless me!—seven, eight for "H. Raynor, Esq., C.M.G.!" That must be you, Harry; and most o' them directed and redirected.—Ah, Isabel, my lass, and here's one solitary epistle for you. H'm! seems to me I ought to know the fist. Redirected twice over. Well, there you are.'

Isabel took her letter and opened it with misgiving. The first words she read blanched her face to a deathly shade, and almost made her faint with grief, pain, and apprehension. But no one noticed her emotion—except George, who always kept an interested eye on her—because of the entrance of a guest, and Isabel devoured part of her letter unquestioned.

Mr Suffield kept open house, and a lavish table without ostentation; for it is altogether a mistake to suppose that only those who have inherited landed estates and personality running to five or six figures have the art of frank and free hospitality. That is really not an art at all, but an instinct, humane and hearty; and the cost-

monger may in his degree possess it as much as, if not more than, the duke. Mr Suffield's nature was lordly, if not ducal; and the amount he disbursed in casual largess, as well as in regular beneficence and undemonstrative hospitality, would have impoverished many a man of considerable means. Many and various were the 'friends' who dropped in at meal-times when the master was known to be at home, but of all, none was more constant in his friendly habit than the present visitor, Mr Ebenezer M'Fie. He seldom came when Mr Suffield was away—for he seemed to know that he was not greatly admired or beloved by the mistress of the house—but when Suffield was at home he came regularly to breakfast.

He was a dry and somewhat toothless little Scotsman, who had failed as schoolmaster and as editor, and who now lived—it was suspected, but scarcely known—on certain meagre earnings as a teacher and preacher and on occasional 'loans'—or, more properly, gifts—from his generous friend Suffield. He was not a very estimable person; but Suffield delighted in him—in his learning and his eloquence. Mrs Suffield unkindly called him 'George's tame philosopher,' and not infrequently hinted that the sole reason of her husband's belief in the tame philosopher's wisdom was that he was the only one besides himself whom he had ever heard talk: her inveterate opinion being that her husband monopolised usually the conversation of the house. The philosopher's style of speech seemed to be modelled on the writings of the late Thomas Carlyle; it was English of a heavy and involved kind—but it was uttered with so abominable an accent that it was unintelligible to most people. Mr Suffield had given attention to it, and therefore seemed to understand it; but his son, who had not patience to quarry a meaning out of the rugged and barbarous eloquence of the philosopher, did not scruple at times to call him 'an odd ass.'

'George Suffield,' exclaimed the philosopher now, fervently shaking hands with his host, 'I'm glad to see ye again, hale and hearty, out o' that welter o' humanity, that roaring loom o' Time they call London.'

'I'm not here for long, though, Eben,' said Suffield, returning his pressure.

'Yet a little while—I know, man. But ye may abide among your own people longer than ye at the present thoughtless fleeting moment intend. Ye may: I hope ye may. The domain of the Possible, man, is immeasurably spacious: there are no limits to the realm of Hope.'

'Just so, Eben,' said Suffield, 'but'—

'Fiddle-de-dee, my dear,' said his wife. 'The sausages are getting cold: will you help them?—I'm much as usual, thank you, Mr M'Fie,' said she in answer to the philosopher's polite inquiry concerning her well-being.—'Will you sit here? This is my brother, Mr Harry Raynor; the others you know.—Isabel, dear, that's a steak-and-kidney pie before you. You don't look well, my dear; you and Phemy have been out too early.'

'I'm very well, thank you, aunt,' answered Isabel, recovering herself with an effort: her letter she had already put in her pocket: she feared to finish reading it then.

George watched her with perturbed spirit and jealous eye: from whom, he asked himself, could have come the letter which had caused her such lively emotion, and which she had crammed away unread?—from whom but from a lover? And yet her emotion did not seem to be of a pleasant kind. Could it be that the lover was ill? In order to hide his perturbation and to refrain from conversation, George opened out *The Lancashire Gazette*. He found and began to read the notice of the play which he had seen the night before, and which had been discussed on his father's return. He was quickly interested. He usually affected to despise all except metropolitan journalism, but here was vigorous and fearless writing which he was compelled to respect and admire. He could not contain his interest.

'By Jingo!' he exclaimed, 'here's Alan Ainsworth going it like one o'clock!'

"Going it like one o'clock," said the philosopher, pausing with a bit of toast near his mouth, 'is a strange phrase of the vulgar tongue, and to the undiscerning eye appears absurd and meaningless. It would be curious to inquire concerning its origin—whence and how—by what association, concatenation, or linking of ideas—it comes to be used to express the extremity of speed, vigour, or abandonment.'

That was properly regarded as but a reflective parenthesis that did not demand discussion. Suffield took polite note of it, however.

'Yes; just so, Eben,' said he; and then turned to his son with lively concern, and asked: 'Pitching into the play, is he? It's sure to be well done. Read it out, lad.'

Isabel, for her part, welcomed this request of her uncle: it would keep curious eyes and questions from herself—she was conscious of appearing pale and disturbed—it would spare her the necessity of making and sharing in conversation; and the interest of the matter might turn her mind a little from the trouble that had seized it. George read, nothing loth, while his father interjected 'H'm's' and 'Ha's' of acceptance or approval, and the philosopher listened with his hand to his ear and with the air of a man who had been in his time a schoolmaster and an editor, and withal a critic. The article was what is commonly called 'a slating' of both play and players; and the 'slating' was very vigorously done, spite of the fact that concerning both players and play London was supposed to be very enthusiastic. 'A noble tragedy,' declared the critic, 'which was altogether unsuited to stage representation, has been laid sacrilegious hands on by the playwright and the play-actor, and the result is an indifferent melodrama, badly acted;' with much more, general and particular, to the same effect. Finally he said: 'Of course the play has been hailed in London as a triumph of stage management and acting; but it is in reality a triumph of pedantry, dullness, and incapacity.'

'What do you think of that?' cried Suffield in triumph, when the reading was finished. 'That's just what you were trying to say last night, I suppose, Isabel?'

'Just what I was trying to say, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile.

'Yes,' said the philosopher, looking round, perking himself, and clearly demanding the atten-

tion of the table; 'the young man writes with great promise—great promise, indeed.'

'Mr Ainsworth,' said young George, 'if I understand him at all, would hope there is performance there as well as promise.'

'No doubt, sir; no doubt, my young friend,' said the philosopher. Then, eluding the point presented, he continued: 'He is right. We are the slaves of rumour. We accept alike the reputation of book or man.'—

'Or play,' suggested George.

'Or play,' accepted the philosopher.

'Or play-actor,' suggested George, pleased with his success.

'Or play-actor, sir,' again accepted the philosopher. 'We accept their reputation, if it be made in London, let us say.'—

'Or made in Germany,' again suggested George.

'—because,' continued the philosopher, without taking account this time of the interruption, 'we are ourselves incompetent to distinguish between the estimate of ignorant exaggeration and that of the authentic insight of the few who know what they say, and say only what they know.'

'You're eating no breakfast, Mr M'Fie,' said Mrs Suffield. 'George, my dear, see that Mr M'Fie has something; wh reupon Suffield recommended the dish before him.'

'Ah,' said the philosopher, 'I believe that in the great metropolis they call these little things saveloys.'

'Sausages, sir; these are sausages,' said young George. 'Saveloys are, I understand, a very inferior and vulgar kind of sausage.'

'Mixed originally, I think the dictionaries say,' Isabel was tempted to remark, 'with brains—as Sir Joshua Reynolds said his colours were.'—Then remembering her promise in the garden to Euphemia, she said aside to her: 'I beg your pardon, dear.'

'Now,' said the philosopher, shaking himself up as if he were a bottle of medicine, 'I call that very good; really witty, and of the true Attic flavour. I do.'

'Oh yes, Isabel's a smart girl,' observed Suffield genially; then with his kindly eye more particularly on his brother-in-law, he insisted: 'I say, Isabel's a clever girl.'

'No doubt,' said Uncle Harry, while he shrewdly considered his niece.

'Please, uncle,' said Isabel, blushing with confusion, and appealing to Suffield in a low voice, 'don't!—don't make me ashamed of myself!'

'No need, my lass,' said Suffield aloud, 'to be ashamed of yourself!'

But Isabel thought there was, especially with Uncle Harry's shrewd eye, which she felt to be cold and critical, fixed on her. She lapsed into a painful silence, on the sudden suspicion that she must appear a very forward and conceited young woman. But why did Uncle Harry—her father's own brother—regard her so? Why did he look at her, not only without affection or tenderness, but—it seemed to her—with absolute aversion? Did she strike him as being so disagreeable a creature either in character or in appearance, or in both?

'But,' said the philosopher, seizing the opportunity of the pause, 'to return to the interesting subject we were discussing. I said a few moments

ago that we are the slaves of Rumour. About this play now: we either accept the opinion of the great Babylon borne on the wings of the newspapers, or we accept this young man's opinion.'

'I don't,' said young George promptly.

'My dear young sir,' said the philosopher, 'I question that. You think that you don't. To all but a few'—and there was a clear hint in his eye and his manner that he considered himself one of the few—'current report is irrefutable evidence. To see with our own eyes—to hear with our own ears'—

'Goodness me!' exclaimed Mrs Suffield impatiently; 'whose ears should I hear with if not with my own?'

'Ah, my dear lady,' crackled on the philosopher, now enjoying himself immensely, 'this commonly thought easiest of all things—is of things hard to be done one of the hardest—nay, the hardest of all.' And so on, and so on he continued, becoming more and more intoxicated with the sound of his own voice and swollen with the volume of his own verbosity.

And his audience seemed to listen with attention and interest. The excellent Suffield, however, was the only person who toiled after him through his obscure and sounding platitudes in the single-minded hope of carrying away some wisdom. All the others were more or less occupied with things of livelier and more intimate concern. Mrs Suffield was thinking over her arrangements for the day—and at the same time giving a ray of attention to her niece, who looked very much less than her usual self that morning; George was still considering, half in pity, half in jealousy, his cousin's preoccupation and depression; Euphemia was chilled and saddened because evidently Isabel cherished a feeling for some one of which she had refused to let her know; Uncle Harry was wondering whether Isabel added to her faults of self-consciousness and conceit that of sulkiness; and Isabel herself was thinking of that letter which was burning her pocket, and resenting—as unkindly and undeserved—the cold and critical regard under which Uncle Harry was keeping her. The notable thing was that to all save to the philosopher and his simple-minded patron and pupil, and to Isabel herself, the real centre of interest was Isabel.

'Well, now, my dear,' said Mrs Suffield at length to her husband, thrusting into a pause in the philosopher's discourse, 'we have a great many things to do to-day, and we haven't yet begun to do any of them. The girls and I must see to things,' continued she, rising.—'George, my dear, will you ring the bell?—If you, my dear,' said she again to her husband, 'want to discuss the affairs of the universe with Mr M'Fie, you'd better take him into the garden.'

'My dear lady,' said the philosopher, 'I and your husband have had our say, I think.' (As matter of fact, Suffield had said nothing but 'H'm!' or 'Ye-es' now and then.)

The philosopher rose then and straggled out through the open French window into the garden. Suffield was politely following him, when Uncle Harry laid his hand on his arm.

'Who,' he asked, 'is your Mentor, George?'

'I don't know about Mentor,' answered Suffield, 'but he is a curious, clever creature.'

'Strong in the wind, but weak in the legs, I should think, George,' said Uncle Harry.

'I shall be back to you in a minute or two, aunt,' said Isabel; and she fled to her room and locked herself in to read her letter.

ROASTING VERSUS BAKING.

It is a little difficult to give an exactly correct definition of the word Baking so far as it concerns the treatment of meats; for although its generally accepted meaning is cooking in ovens, it can be shown that joints may be roasted in an oven as perfectly as (or possibly more perfectly than) they can be done in the front of a fire. The real difference between an oven suited or unsuited for roasting meat is chiefly in the provision or absence of effective ventilation. There are other features to be considered, as will be explained directly, but the primary variation is this. If we take an example in the oven of an old-fashioned open range, we shall have about the most primitive thing of its kind; and the results, if we attempt to roast in it, justify the long-standing prejudice against oven-cooked meat, a prejudice which appears to have made up its mind to die hard. The old open-range oven is the root of the prejudice, although many of the cheap descriptions of more modern ranges should have some share of the blame. What is generally termed (and condemned) as baked meat is that which is served up apparently saturated with moisture, and having a peculiarly noticeable flavour, different from what is experienced with joints roasted in front of the fire, and decidedly to its disadvantage. This is meat cooked in an oven which is innocent of ventilation, not scrupulously clean, and with a roasting-pan which favours the spitting and subsequent calcination of what fatty juices drip from the article being cooked. It is, however, quite possible to get these results with a really good and perfected range oven, if carelessly used; so it will be seen that another feature exists conducive or otherwise to good results, and this is the care exercised by the cook.

Assuming an oven is ventilated, and ventilated as it should be, with both an inlet and outlet ventilator—for one will not act alone, neither will one act without the other—then both must be open if ventilation is sought for. Supposing these to exist, then we may rely upon all steam and vapours driven from the joint by the action of the heat being promptly carried away, just as effectively as if the meat were suspended in front of a fire. This is desirable and good. Next, we may assume the oven is really clean—sweet, in fact; so that if it is heated when empty, it will yield no odour upon opening the door. In assuming this state of things, it is to be feared we assume too much in reality the majority of cases. Often and often, when there is a complaint that odours of cooking are

obvious in other parts of the house than the kitchen, the objectionable smell is due to a hot oven, but which has nothing in it—that is, nothing being cooked. Bold as the assertion may be, it is true, that the majority of ovens in busy kitchens are foul—no milder word will describe the state. The most delightful practice in relation to ovens which it has been my pleasure to observe, is, I believe, peculiar to Devonshire. They whitewash the interiors of their range ovens. This practice is excellent in many ways, and it is ingenious. Firstly, it makes the ovens light, very much so; and it is doubtful if ovens would be allowed to get so dirty if they were not so dark and the dirt so inconspicuous. Then the lime-whiting, which is the particular ingredient of whitewash, is a material approaching the nature of a disinfectant; anyway, it is not favourable to smells or odours of any kind whatever. Lastly, it so plainly shows by discoloration when objectionable results may be expected and the limewash should be renewed. Any odd-man or gardener or boy can apply it, say once a fortnight. Whitewashing the inside of an oven is as good as lining it with tiles, and has none of the many objections this latter arrangement would involve. Next best to whitening oven interiors is the practice of regularly scrubbing them out, as one would have a cupboard scrubbed. Surely the place, limited as it is as regards space, where we complete the preparation of our cooked foods should be wholesomely clean.

Assuming, then, that the oven is really clean, a further necessary feature is a suitable roasting-pan. Now, a very common and prevalent idea is that anything in the form of a tin pan will do to place under the joint, providing its size is correct or nearly so, and that, of course, it is not leaky or imperfect. This idea is a very wrong one, and accountable for a good deal of the difference between what we may still continue to call roasted and baked meat. A single pan, after the cooking process has been going on for a short time, becomes partially filled with liquid fat, and after a further short period, this substance begins to boil and continues to do so practically without cessation until the cooking is finished. The objectionable feature is that fat, when boiling, has little bursts of air or gas, causing particles to be projected against the highly heated plates of the oven, where it is instantly scorched up, evolving the strong and disagreeable odour of burning fat so commonly associated with oven-cooking. This action of the fat is termed 'spitting,' and when the oven is very hot and the fat at the boil, it is really a little shower that falls upon the oven sides. Occasionally, especially when the oven is allowed to become overheated, this occurs to such an extent, that upon opening the oven door, quite a cloud of hot disagreeable vapour escapes. The remedy for this is to have a double pan—that is, two pans, almost the duplicates of each other, except that one is made to fit in a suitable manner within the other. (They are obtainable at all ironmongers and stores in a variety of sizes.) The object of a double pan is that the lower one is arranged to receive water, and when it is filled, this water consequently envelops the lower part of the upper pan. In other words, the upper pan rests in water during the time

that cooking operations are in progress. The result of this is that the fat never boils; and if we prevent the boiling, then we prevent the spitting and subsequent odour; the discoloration and spoiling of the fat being also averted. Water reaches a maximum temperature of two hundred and twelve degrees when it boils, and this is too low a heat for fat to boil at; consequently, while there is water in the lower pan, the fat in the upper pan is motionless, and does not boil or act disagreeably. The use of a double pan, it will be seen, tends very materially to keep the oven clean and wholesome.

There are a considerable number of people who strongly assert that oven-cooked meat, under the best of circumstances, with the most skilled care and attention and other details, cannot be made to equal in flavour and other advantages a joint roasted in front of a fire. This, as before mentioned, is really owing, first, to the influence of a rooted prejudice; secondly, an oven or appliances (or care) unsuited to give the desired results. Roasting in front of the fire requires no special care as regards ventilation, choice of pans, &c., and is therefore at an advantage in this respect, that carelessness or ignorance is less likely to have an ill effect. When meat is roasted in an oven, the different features dwelt upon are essential; but if these features exist, then the roasting is done with less trouble and with decidedly less fuel than by the other means. The fact of oven-roasting being least trouble is testified by the majority of cooks giving preference to it, without any other tangible reason.

It is interesting to notice how long the prejudice to oven-cooked meat has existed, and how real and vigorous it has always been. Count Rumford, who may be considered the pioneer in regard to improvements in heating and cooking appliances, was the first to introduce an oven, and also, strangely enough, an oven pan, which gave the requisite results, equal to the best we can get to-day. He, as a very capable authority, gave out that meat roasted in an oven was superior in flavour and better generally than that roasted in front of a fire. This was in 1802, ninety years ago, when it may be supposed ovens and oven-roasting could not have been nearly so well understood, either by makers or users, as now. Mr W. Mattieu Williams, another high authority, and but recently deceased, also pronounced in favour of oven-roasting as the superior method. Count Rumford remarked, in one of his lectures, that he despaired of getting any Englishman to believe his words, showing that he was fully alive to the prejudice in all its strength. Mattieu Williams in his *Chemistry of Cookery* makes some very telling remarks in relation to this subject. He wonders how it is that beef (when being cooked) is attributed with emitting vapours that are injurious to beef, and mutton with vapours injurious to mutton. He says it is to the effect of burning fat that ill results are chiefly due.

It is not intended to advocate the use of ovens to the exclusion of front roasting, for the latter method of cooking joints has no ill features beyond the greater attention needed and the greater expenditure of fuel. A good and modern range should be capable of cooking both ways at one and the same time if desired; but if the

kitchen is a busy one and time has to be economised, then the cook may certainly be trusted to put a joint in an oven if the necessary features to ensure good results exist.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER III.

THE fumes of that excitement still troubled Isabel's brain next day. She scarcely heard what her mother was talking of during all the rest of the evening, and the first thing that came into her mind when she woke was that incident in the dark road—the big gables against the sky, the blackness of the shadows, and the encounter—which she thought had marked her for life. It seemed to her, as she dressed, that there was still a red spot on her cheek where *that* had been, and that he had put a brand upon her to mark her for his property, as the farmers do with their sheep. She rubbed it once more till it did really blaze, as she fancied, and again called Mrs Dysart's attention. 'It must really have been a bee that stung you, Isabel. What a strange thing at this time of year,' her mother said.

And then there was the thought of what he had said at parting. He would come for his answer to-morrow. To-morrow! That was now this day. And why should there be such a hurry for an answer, and what did he mean by going to London? There had never been a word about it before—going to London!—when he was in the heart of everything in Edinburgh, and with the greatest doctor in Edinburgh, and so much thought of there. Never had such an idea been suggested till now. To London! The thought made Isabel's heart beat a little. None of her sisters had gone farther afield than Glasgow, and that was Jeanie, whose man Mrs Dysart put up with so painfully, and who was never done flourishing the shops in Buchanan Street and the conveniences of a big town before the eyes of her mother and sisters. What would they think of a London lady that could walk in the parks, and see all the grand shows, and the King himself in the streets? Isabel's bosom could not but thrill in spite of herself with that suggestion. But what was all the hurry for, and an answer to-morrow, and everything brought to a crisis in a moment? The more she thought it all over, the more her head went round. Willie Torrence had been her sweetheart all her life. That their intercourse might come to a sudden crisis at any moment, had always been a thing possible—but nothing so hasty, so immediate as this. To be summoned to accede to a sudden proposal, to take his hand and come with him, as if it was a thing which she was sure to do for the asking, and for which she was quite ready, was in itself an offence almost beyond pardon, even if there had not been the bold freedom, the outrage—for so the girl felt it—of the previous incident. What did Isabel care if he were Sir William twenty times over, and who was he that he should dare to think she would take him whenever he pleased to ask her? Her pride and her spirit were all in arms.

It added no little to Isabel's excitement that

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the young minister should choose this day of all others to make one of his visits. He came in early in the afternoon, coming through the garden, and was seen by Mrs Dysart from the window, who exclaimed at the sight of him, 'Bless me, Isabel—Mr Murray with a gun over his shoulder! What will be going to happen now? the volunteers called out, and even the minister under arms? But that would mean an Invasion at the very least, and there's no Bonaparty to trouble the world now.'

Isabel was not interested by the prospect of an invasion, though her heart gave a jump to hear the minister with his light, active foot come up-stairs. 'I'll take care o' it, sir—I'll take care o' it—if it disna gang aff o' itsel,' Jenny was heard to call after him as the drawing-room door opened; and Mrs Dysart plunged into the subject before the young man had found a chair. 'Was that you, Mr Murray, carrying a gun?' she said. 'Lord bless me! I just cried out: "There'll be word of a new invasion." But perhaps it was just for a day's shooting, after all! There's no harm I know of,' she added apologetically, 'why a minister should not shoot a bird for his dinner as well as other men.'

'Not that,' he said with a smile; 'neither the one nor the other—but nothing very cheerful. I am going to take my turn to-night in the churchyard to watch our graves, that there may be no desecration. I have been up to Mr Philip Morton's to borrow his gun.'

'But, dear me,' said Mrs Dysart, 'there are surely plenty of men without the minister.'

'And why should the minister be behind when there's unpleasant work to do?' he asked. 'They do not like it, as how should they: and neither do I like it: but I would watch night and day,' he said with a hasty rising of colour, 'before that last resting-place of my poor folk was disturbed—if it was to cost me my life.'

'And that it might well do,' cried Mrs Dysart; 'for you're not too strong a man: you should mind that.'

'I am strong enough for my duty, as I think every man is,' he replied; 'it's never that that harms.'

'But there's very different notions on that point. Here was Willie Torrence maintaining with me the other night that a doctor's duty was just the other way; and he was earnest about it too, as earnest as you are,' Mrs Dysart said.

Murray gave a quick unconscious glance round the room, which seemed to him in a moment to be full of traces of his rival: he saw them in Isabel's silent air bending over her work, as if entirely absorbed in it, taking no notice of anything, she who generally was so ready to take her part in the conversation. He gave her a long regretful look, of which she was partly conscious, though she never lifted her eyes.

'And I would not say he was wrong,' he answered with a sigh. 'He's an enthusiast for his profession, as every man should be. I would not say he was wrong. But,' added the minister, 'I wanted you to tell poor Mrs Anderson, if you'll be so kind, I've kept a special eye upon that spot. She will know what I mean; and all is safe, as safe as if her arms had been about the place.'

'Where her little Jeanie lies,' said Mrs Dysart, her eyes filling with tears. 'Oh, Mr Murray, you know what's in a mother's heart.'

'I have had one of my own,' he said with a glimmer in his eyes also.

How did Isabel know what all that meant? She never looked up, did not listen, but kept going over in her head the utterance of another voice: 'I'll be Sir William some day, and you my lady.' Very different—very much more interesting than this dreary talk of midnight watches and of graves—hot with life and ambition and excitement, things that make the blood flow fast in your veins—and yet— Her eyes were on her work all the time, and her needle flying as if for bare life: but she felt everything that was passing, and the conclusion to which her other lover was making up his mind. He, too, was acquiescing, putting her into the arms that had seized her so boldly, believing that she was ready to follow Willie Torrence as soon as he held up his finger. The girl felt as if she could have jumped up and cried aloud, and rejected that bold suit there and then.—To whom? To her mother and to the other, who was relinquishing his hopes so easily? Would they have known what she meant if she had cried out that 'No,' only 'No,' no more, which almost burst from her lips? They would have thought it nerves or temper, or perhaps an indignant throwing off of every blame from the other—the man she was supposed to love. When she rose to give her hand to the minister, and met his wistful regretful look, which seemed to question her very soul, her spirit rose in wild impatience, 'You should not find fault,' she cried hastily, 'with them that are not here to answer for themselves.'

'Isabel!' cried her mother in dismay.

'And I don't,' said the minister, with a slight quivering of his lip; 'I find no fault. I just hold by my side, as he holds to his. We must all do that, if we're to act like men.'

'Bairn, what are you thinking of?' said Mrs Dysart.—'She is just a great one for standing up for the absent,' she added, in an apologetic tone, as young Murray went away. But she, too, made up her mind that Isabel's choice was fixed, and that this great question was to be held in doubt no more. They both stood watching the minister go through the garden with his gun, involuntarily, almost unaware what they were doing in the preoccupation of their minds. Going away, Mrs Dysart thought, carrying with him all her hopes of seeing Isabel established near her, and in the care of a good man. Her heart was heavy with doubts and fears for what might be before her child. 'You will maybe be sorry some day,' she said with a sigh.

'Sorry—for what?' said Isabel: and then she threw her work aside and hastened to her room, to put on her blue pelisse and hurry out—where? for a walk—for a long walk, she said to Jenny in the kitchen.—It was such a fine day—at this season it was best to take advantage of every fine day—

Isabel did take a long walk, and as she came back, passed through Musselburgh, where there were more people than usual in the streets, and some apparent commotion which was no less unusual. She could not but hear some scraps of talk as she passed—something about a riot

in Edinburgh, and some one who would have to flee the country—of which she took no conscious notice. What did a riot in Edinburgh matter to her? If she had thought of it, she would have taken care not to pass by Uncle John's house on her way home: but her mind was so full of other things that she never remembered this danger, until she had been seen and hailed from the window, where there was generally a watch kept in the afternoon, lest Isabel should go by. She was very reluctant to be thus stopped, her mind being too full for talk, and for finding answers to all Aunt Mary's questions. And what was worse still, here again was Mr Murray, to whom she had betrayed herself so short a time before, and who met her with the same wistful, half-compassionate, half-reproachful look, as if—which was more ridiculous than all the rest—she was doing any injury to him. But to resist Aunt Mary's entreaty was impossible. 'I was just wanting somebody to send upon a message to your mother—and the minister was offering to take it up himself, though it's a mile or more out of his way.'

'That's nothing, nothing!' young Murray cried.

'You're very kind,' said Aunt Mary; 'but now that Easabell's here, she can take it herself. Your mother will be dreadfully shocked, my darlin', and so will you your own self. It's just awful news.'

'There's a new edition of the *Courant* with it all in: and nothing but a change in the ministry, or rebellion in the colonies, or the King's serious illness, would in an ordinary way justify that,' said Uncle John. He had the paper all crisp and new in his hands. 'I got it as a regular subscriber, sent out by an express; and by this time that bit slip of paper is worth its weight in gold. Your mother will like to see it. It's more satisfactory than hearing of a thing like that just by word of mouth.'

'What is it, Uncle John?'

'It's not said,' cried Aunt Mary, 'that anybody is blamed but just the Professor himself: the rioters were just keen after him: and his house has been mobbed and all his windows broken.'

'And they say he will have to flee the country,' the minister added in a solemn tone.

'I heard that in the town,' said Isabel, still indifferent, 'something about fleeing the country. But who is it? It cannot be these terrible villains, Burke and Hare.'

'My dear,' said Uncle John, 'it's worse in one way, though not in another. These fiends in human shape are safe in prison; and I'm hoping they'll go out from there only by the gallows. But to think of a Professor in Edinburgh College, and one of the first surgeons in the world, and an elder of the kirk, and a very respectable man—'

'Lord bless us!' cried Aunt Mary, 'it's enough to make a person mistrust the General Assembly itself.'

'I am in a hurry to get back,' said Isabel shortly. She knew in her inmost soul that Mr Murray would propose to 'see her home,' and this was more alarming to her than any news that could be in the papers—or so at least she thought.

There was a little trill of voices all beginning to speak at once; but Uncle John rose up in his large seafaring person from his chair and dominated them all, waving the paper in his hand. 'Where do you think,' he said impressively, 'the last of these poor victims was found?—Isabel! in a box, in a cellar, in one of the grand new Edinburgh houses, the house of Stokes, the great Professor.'

'Dr Stokes—that all the College folk were so proud of, and his name in all the papers!' cried Aunt Mary breathless.

Murray said no word; but he placed a chair carefully behind Isabel, as if she might faint or fall.

'Dr Stokes!' said Isabel, still unawakened. 'Yes, I know about him: he is the man that— But he is nothing to us. I'll tell my mother; but she will not be caring so very much.—You may keep your paper, Uncle John, and I must just run away home.'

'You don't understand, Isabel. If it was just him and no more! But there are others that cannot be forgotten when he's named. Oh, the shame to our College and all our grand doctors! But there's more still, more than that.'

'You see, they must all have known,' said Aunt Mary, 'not just one person alone.'

And the minister shook his head. 'Knowing all they know, I fear, I fear,' he said, 'they must have known.'

Isabel's head began to clear slowly: it had been confused with so many thoughts of her own, and had refused to take in any new thing: but now a sharp pang like a knife cut all the web of these thoughts and sent them flying away. 'Dr Stokes,' she repeated, faltering; 'I—begin to mind. He's the chief that—that they all speak about: he's a great man.'

'Great in one way, not, it appears, in another,' said Uncle John with solemnity. 'I would say nothing if it was only him that was in question; for, as you say, Isabel, my dear, he's nothing to us; but there's more, more to think of than only him.'

'It's that poor, poor woman down by Eskside that I'm thinking of most,' added Aunt Mary, shaking her head.

Isabel had by this time come fully to herself: it had flashed upon her like a wild blaze of fire, lighting up the whole landscape, what they meant: but she would not allow it to be seen how she was moved. 'I'll take my mother the paper,' she said, holding herself up with a sort of dignity, 'since you wish it, Uncle John: and tell her. I am sorry for Dr Stokes, if—if anything happens to him, such a great man; but it's no—no—business of ours.—I must not stop another moment,' she cried hurriedly, 'for I was a little late last night, and the days are short, and it's soon dark.'

'If I might see you home, Miss Isabel!'

Aunt Mary frowned behind Isabel's back and shook her head. 'Let her be, let her be; this is no the moment,' she said.

Isabel herself took no notice of his petition; she hurried away, not even hearing him, preserving her composure with a great effort, but with a strange singing in her ears and beating in her heart. She seemed to have heard it all before—to have heard nothing else discussed—

yet to have listened without understanding: till suddenly it was brought home to her what it all meant. Oh, what would it have mattered to her how much or how little the doctors knew? What were the doctors to Isabel? or even Dr Stokes, though he was the greatest surgeon in Edinburgh, and people came from far and near to his classes. The doctors must have known—she had heard nothing but this for twenty-four hours past. But why should she care? The doctors! What were the doctors to her? She repeated this over to herself with a strange bravado, saying the words again and again, as if that would make them true. But her whole brain was on fire, and there was a tightening and oppression in her breast such as Isabel had never felt before.

As she set her face to the wind, it came blowing down keen upon her, bringing voices upon it in broken gusts, flinging words and indistinct phrases in her face, sometimes like the noise of a distant tumult: 'He'll have to flee the country: he's been mobbed, and his windows broken: he'll have to flee the country,' in a hurry and roar of many voices. And then one small note came in, her mother's voice, saying: 'There would be an Assistant or somebody,' and then another—oh, quite another! that said in the dark—'I'm going to London, with a grand opening—and to-morrow I'll come for my answer.' Then the clamour seemed to rise once more over all the dim landscape, the voice of the crowd: 'He'll have to flee the country, flee the country, flee the country!' What a wild, hurrying, dizzying tumult and confusion of sound!

This strong excitement yet confusion which drove her along took all her girlish fright away when she came again to the dark corner of the road. The heavy shadows of the old house had no terrors for her that night. It was not so late, indeed, as the evening before. The sky was clear and still full of light, though there had already risen into it one clear little inquisitive star, the very star that had shone into her window last night and reflected itself in the mirror on her wall. It seemed to have come out now to look after Isabel, to make sure what she was going to do. And she was not surprised, though her heart gave a jump, when something detached itself from the shadow and a figure came forward to meet her. There was no jest of pouncing upon her this time, none of the rough play which had been carried to such unwarrantable lengths the night before. Her hands and her feet grew cold and her head hot in her sense of the great crisis in her life that had suddenly arrived: but she went on to meet him silently, as if they were both figures in a dream. 'So it's you,' she said to him with a catch in her breath as they came together. 'Isabel! you've brought me my answer,' he said. And then they stood and looked at each other in the stillness of the twilight: and a confusion of all those strange echoes came once more over Isabel's brain. 'Will you have to flee the country?' she said slowly. It seemed the only thing there was to say.

'What do you mean—what do you mean? I am not going to flee the country,' he cried indignantly, though with no surprise in his tone. It seemed natural to him, too, that these were the only words she could say.

'And all the time,' said Isabel, 'all the time it was you: and you knew.'

'What are you talking about, Bell? Do you want to mystify me altogether? I'm come for my answer after what passed between us last night. Are you coming with me? That's the question before the house,' said Torrence with a forced laugh.

'They say he has been mobbed and his windows broken; and he's in danger of his life. Oh, Willie! are they after you too?'

'I think you are out of your senses,' he cried. 'Give me no nonsense, but an honest answer. There's great things before me yet: I'll make a lady of you, Bell; you shall have a finer house than any of them, and a carriage, and there's no telling what we'll come to. Just put your hand in mine.'

'What is the difference between fleeing the country and hurrying away to London, that you never thought of before?' she said. 'Oh, Willie Torrence! and your mother? and all of us that were so proud of you.'

'You may be as proud as you like,' he cried desperately; 'a man may make a mistake and be none the worse. I'll be Sir William before all's done. The London hospitals know a man when they see him, not like those asses in Edinburgh. I'm safe enough. Come Bell, give me your hand.'

'Oh,' cried Isabel sinking her voice, 'you were never cruel nor an ill man. Willie! will you say you did not know?'

'What has that to do with it?' he cried, dashing his clenched hand into the air. 'I came here to ask a question, not to answer one. Bell! just you mind what you're doing! You're letting your chance slip as well as mine.'

'I'm going home to my mother: and I've nothing more to say to you, Dr Torrence,' Isabel said.

LEFT HANDED FOLK.

WHY anybody should be left-handed is one of those matters in which the question is easier put than answered. The reason why we are right-handed has been met by statements and theories more or less plausible. In the first place, it has been shown that the human body is not symmetrical. The right lung is larger than the left. The liver, during the inspiration of the lungs, swings to the right side, so that the centre of gravity of the body is brought nearly over the right foot. The weight of the viscera to the right of the medial line is nearly a pound and a half heavier than that to the left of it. All this, while it gives a mechanical advantage to the right arm in working, and to the right shoulder in raising a weight, shows us also why, passively, burdens are more easily carried on the left shoulder, for in that case we stoop forward so as to bring the centre of gravity through the stronger right limb. Again, it has been pointed out that the left hemisphere of the brain is larger and better supplied with blood-vessels than the right, and that it is the left hemisphere of the brain which, working crosswise, controls the muscles of the right arm and hand. Then there is the sword-and-shield theory, which considers the earliest

condition of man to have been militant. To soldiers, the vital organ, the heart, being on the left side, it was thought necessary to cover it with the shield and wield the sword in the right. True, against these is the wet-nurse theory, which supposes 'left-handedness' to be favoured in youth by the fact of the infant being carried most frequently on the left arm, thus giving more scope to the early use of the child's left hand. Fashion, however, is always alert, and to this imperial mistress even our limbs must submit. Fashion incessantly demands that the right hand should have the preference.

So that, with all these weighty reasons why we should be right-handed, it is marvellous why left-handed people should be found at all. Yet such are by no means uncommon. The teacher of an elementary school who watched the proportion for many years, gave it as his experience, that, in the rural district in which his school was situated, more than five per cent. of the children were left-handed. In these cases the tendency could be shown to be hereditary; and the left hand, even to the size of the thumb-nails, showed itself larger than the right. It was painful to see the attempts made by the left-handed pupils to write and cipher normally; and, after the right hand had been forced into service, the result was a compromise, the writer generally developing a handwriting inclined neither to right nor left. In the making of figures, both the 3 and the 6 were for a time reversed, and 8 in some cases formed by drawing the straight line down and curving the other from below. In the mechanical trades, the carpenter's bench, his gimlets, screws, and many of his planes are made to suit the right hand, so that a left-handed apprentice is handicapped, and must either fight against Nature or obtain tools fitted for the left hand. An elaborate print-cutter's gauge for measuring off different sizes of copper required to be driven into the pattern, if made for a left-handed man is of little value when exposed for sale.

But we do not need to go far for illustrations of how inconvenient a world this is for the left-handed. Purchase a scarf, and the left-handed owner finds the slit, through which the part requires to be pushed to catch the pin, on the wrong side for him. Let him sit down to dinner, and the waiter brings the dishes from which he selects a part to the wrong shoulder. Let him lift a moustache cup, and he perceives his peculiarity has not been taken into account. Let him attempt to mow, and he vainly would reverse the shape of the scythe. Let him learn drill or dancing, or endeavour to work in harmonious combination, and his awkwardness is for ever brought home to him.

And yet, on the other side, the despised left hand makes good its claims in many cases to be the defter of the two. The fingers that touch and adjust with such nicety the strings of the violin are surely as cunning as those that move the bow. The hand that guides the reins and steers with exactness the horse through the crowded streets is quite as cunning as, one might say much more than, the hand that wields the whip. But great is fashion, unanswerable is theory. It would appear that as life becomes more and more complex, we are becoming more

and more specialised, and the difference between our limbs is encouraged, rather than hindered, by every pair of scissors turned off at Sheffield, by every screw made in Birmingham, and by every slap administered to the young offending fingers that would dare to shake hands incorrectly.

It is curious to notice the vagaries of humanity in cases where no hard and fast line has been already drawn. Although most right-handed persons put on their coats left arm first, a considerable percentage thrust in the right first. Soldiers fire from the right shoulder, but sportsmen are found who prefer the left. In working with the spade, a proportion of right-handed men grasp the spade with the left and push with left foot and right hand; though, when using an axe, the same individuals would grasp farthest down with the right. The Persians mount their horses from the right side, which is the different side from that mounted by Europeans.

The buttons on coats, &c., are placed on the right side, and the shed of the hair in boys to the left, evidently to suit manipulation by the right hand. The great philosopher Newton records that at first he confided his astronomical observations to his right eye, but afterwards he managed to train his left. But there are persons who could not do this owing to the unequal strength of their eyes. Strange to say the Chinese assign the place of honour to the left. At Kunyenyé, in Africa, Cameron relates being introduced to the heir-presumptive to the throne, the nails of whose left hand had been allowed to grow to an enormous length as a sign of high rank, proving that he was never required to perform manual labour, and also providing him with the means of tearing the meat which formed his usual diet.

The falcon in Europe is carried on the left wrist, but in Asia on the right. The Latin races hold omens to be favourable when towards the right; but the Teutonic races, including our own, when towards the left. The Saxon races, as masters of the sea and pioneers in the laying of railways, have imposed their own rules of the left side on the French and other Latin races, who, however, still in driving and riding keep to the rule of the road derived from their progenitors. The hands of clocks and watches travel from east to west like the sun, or as we draw a spiral from the interior outwards; and we hand around our playing-cards and our hospitable bottle after the same fashion, which like fashion we adhere to in turning a horse, so that the violation of it, or the turning *widdershins*—that is, against the sun—is considered unlucky. It is a curious circumstance how few people ever clasp hands otherwise than having the right thumb outwards, or coil thread save one way.

With regard to symmetry, Nature, when she has a purpose to serve, is nowise loth to depart from it. Indeed, there is hardly a symmetrical human face to be found. The right eye and ear are generally placed higher, and the left leg is frequently the longer. Quadrupeds and very young children are more symmetrical; but the hermit-crab has the claw protruding from the shell the longer; the cachalot or sperm whale has the eye on the one side larger than the other. Parrots rather favour the right claw; and the

African elephant—as Sir S. Baker assured the writer—works most with the right tusk, called on this account by the Arabs 'the servant.' Aristotle declares that motion begins from the right. 'Wherefore the burden should rest on the part moved, and not on the part moving, otherwise motion is more difficult.' He also looks on the spiral curves of shells as suggesting a right-handed designer. Another ancient philosopher assures us that our dreams are less egotistical and selfish when we are sleeping on our right side than on our left.

Curiosity was naturally highly strung when discoveries were made of exceedingly ancient engravings and sculptures fashioned by cave-men at an era further removed from the earliest Egyptian records than ours is from those. We have the authority of Sir Daniel Wilson that the earliest records of the human race show a preference for the right hand, although not so completely as that shown in modern times. In the scarcely so remote Bronze Age, the preference still holds good. One has only to look over Egyptian, Etruscan, Assyrian, Greek, or Roman pictures, engravings, or sculptures, to see that man was right-handed as he is now, and that he carried his burdens then, as now, mainly on the left shoulder, while his dress and decoration follow in the same lines as the soldier still wears his sword or the shepherd his plaid. At the same time shoes made especially for each foot, and gloves designed for each hand, have more of a modern aspect. The sandals of ancient times are extremely much alike. Among the humble classes in Scotland sixty years ago shoes for young people not made for right and left were preferred.

It is pleasant to be able to record that notwithstanding the sinister ridicule of ancient and modern language and literature, and the antagonist pen and ink demonstrations of doctors, there are and have been many eminent left-handed individuals both professional and gymnastic. A list of these has been preserved to us through the labours of Sir Daniel Wilson, and Charles Reade, the novelist.

THE SHAWMUT TRESTLE.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

By the employees of the Chicago and North Pacific, Lloyd Freeman soon came to be looked upon as a good deal of a martinet. Perhaps he was. But then Lloyd Freeman had gained his training and first experience as an official in England, where, as every one knows, the discipline on the railways is well-nigh perfect. He had topped off his experience by two years in India, where the methods of managing railroads are semi-military, and where all but a very few of the employees are as afraid of an official as a rabbit is of a poacher.

In the great West of America, Freeman found he had a very different lot of men to handle. They were not well-disciplined Englishmen, nor were they scared Hindus. They were free and independent citizens of the almighty United States, and they were 'just as good as the next man, and a little better, you bet!' They were

intelligent enough, goodness knows. Freeman thought a large number of them knew a little too much for their own good, for the benefit of the railroad, and for his peace of mind. What these 'birds-o'-freedom' objected to most was to be 'called down' by Freeman for going on duty untidily attired or a minute or two late. The locomotive firemen especially rebelled because Freeman insisted upon their having the bright parts of their engines at all times in 'dress-parade' condition. The crisis came when the general manager issued an order in which he announced that he would hold the engine-drivers personally responsible for the proper attention of their respective firemen in the matter of keeping the engines bright and clean.

Mutterings of complaint became general all along the line, and when two or three of the engine-men had 'walked the carpet' (that is, had stood upon the general manager's office carpet while that gentleman warned and admonished them) rebellious language became loud and frequent. Still, the men had a modicum of good sense, and the older ones admitted to themselves that Freeman's requirements were reasonable. They were receiving excellent wages, the best paid in the country, and they were well aware that the business of the railroad was not yet remunerative. Both old and young could plainly see that the general manager was as firm as a rock, and they well knew that he had the support of the New York financiers.

'Yer see, boys,' said Hank Larrabee, a grizzled old Western railroader, 'the old man's got sand, if he is a derned Britisher, an' don't yer ferget it! He's a stayer from 'way-back, an' if they's any pushin' ter be done, yer kin bet yer last pair o' socks Freeman'll do the pushin'! My ways ain't the old man's ways, but, mark my words, we might as well come ter Freeman's time first as last.'

Which last remark of Mr Larrabee's was as true as gospel, and the chances are that the men would have taken the old engine-driver's advice, if an unlooked-for disturber of the peace had not arrived upon the scene.

It was in the cold weather, a little before Christmas, and Lloyd Freeman was in the bustling Pacific coast town of Portland, Oregon. His business was over for the day, and he was strolling along the brilliantly lighted streets of the town, gazing in the gay windows of the stores, if haply he might find some little knick-knacks which might serve as Christmas gifts for the officials who had so far loyally supported him in his onerous duties.

Freeman was looking in a jeweller's store window, when he became aware that another person was doing likewise. Once or twice this other person brushed quite closely against Freeman, but our friend supposed the movement accidental, and did not take his eyes from the window. When at last, however, the stranger shoved Freeman so violently that he had to take a step to prevent a tumble through the window, the general manager turned quickly round with an exclamation of surprise.

'Ah! Don't quite relish the idea of being crowded, do you?' asked the man, who was just a little too massive in his build and too coarse-featured to be handsome.

'As there is ample room for both of us, sir,' replied Freeman haughtily, 'I shall be obliged if you will not stand quite so close to me.'

As he spoke, Freeman closely scrutinised the man, whose appearance was just a trifle familiar, yet who was so well wrapped in a rich heavy coat well-trimmed with fur, that he might have been either friend or enemy in disguise.

'Trying to place me, ain't you?' asked the fellow, with a leer, divining Freeman's thoughts. 'Well, I'll assist you. You didn't like being jostled a little bit, did you, Mr Lloyd Freeman? No. But four years ago you crowded a poor wretch to the wall when he was trying to make a fresh start, just because he felt good over a sup of liquor. Do you mind, Mr Lloyd Freeman?'

'Bibb? Michael Bibb?' exclaimed the manager with some surprise. He recognised the man now, though he had last seen him in the West Australian bush.

'No, not Michael Bibb, either! This is a free country, thank Heaven! A man is at liberty to change his name if he sees fit. Michael Bibb expired in Australia; and the man who landed in San Francisco with a few thousands of the yellow in his grip-sack is Mr Demuth—mind that. And bear this in mind also: Robert Demuth, Esquire, don't have to carry a darned ticket-of-leave—do you understand?'

Quietly, to avoid a scene upon the street, Freeman had led the way to a darker side-street.

'Now, look here, Mr Demuth,' said he, humouring the fellow in the matter of his name. 'You go your way, and I'll go mine. I bear you no ill-will; and if you will not annoy me, I pledge you my honour that not a word will I breathe to do you hurt. Why prolong this conversation? Good-night.'

'No, that won't do,' said Demuth, *né* Bibb. 'I'm going to say my say. You don't want to hurt me, eh? Great Heaven! You hurt me enough, didn't you?'

'Why go over that old ground, man? I gave you every chance over yonder. I knew very well when I employed you that you had escaped from Freemantle. Yet I gave you a good job, and trusted you, until you took to whisky and began to raise Cain by disaffecting the other workmen. Even then I tried to reason with you; but when you went too far, and imperilled the company's property and the lives of the passengers, I had no option but to turn you over to the police. Now, man, leave the past alone. If you have made a fresh start and are doing well, I am glad of it. Don't try to see me, for it only excites you. You are excited now.'

'Excited? Yes, by thunder! And you'll be excited, Mr Lloyd Freeman, before I get through with you. I'm rich now, I tell you, and in shape to pay off old scores. I'll take you at your word and keep out of your path—but you'll hear from me, darn you! You'll hear from me.'

For the rest of that evening Freeman was somewhat upset; but when, three days later, he returned to Medicine Hat, the general manager had almost forgotten his encounter with Michael Bibb in the streets of Portland.

Yet, when, on New Year's Eve, the startling news that nearly every engineer and fireman, as

well as several of the other employees, had struck work, reached the ears of Lloyd Freeman, the chief executive of the Chicago and North Pacific could not help connecting the unfortunate occurrence with the ex-Australian convict.

By much effort, and chiefly by the promise to arrange and adhere to a fast-time schedule, Freeman had secured a year's contract with the Government to transport the United States mails between Chicago and the cities of Oregon. The contract took effect on the first day of January, when a mail-train must leave Chicago, and another, bound East, must leave Portland. Early in the morning of the third day both trains would be due to pass each other at Medicine Hat. On the night of December the 31st the officials did not know where to lay their hands on more than half-a-dozen loyal engine crews. It would require at least twenty to work the mail-service alone.

Behind closed doors, Lloyd Freeman held a consultation with his subordinate chiefs, while the confidential telegraph operator kept the wires warm sending and taking messages to and from the division superintendents.

'Gentlemen,' said Freeman—and he was the coolest man in the room—'we must run the mail-trains. Not only do we forfeit the year's contract by failing in one day's service, but the prestige and honour of this railroad are at stake. I must take time to think over future methods and of the attitude which we will permanently take towards the strikers. For the present our entire energies must be devoted to the mails. I find we can count upon seven loyal engine crews. The four superintendents have volunteered to man engines and to find firemen to help them. Our Locomotive Superintendent, Mr Scott, says he will take the East-bound train out of this station. I ask none of my colleagues to go where I will not go myself. I will take the West-bound run from Medicine Hat. The strikers dare not interfere with the mail-trains, for the whole power and force of the United States Government will guarantee their safe running. The telegraph operators and station agents are loyal. We will all do our best, and we must succeed!'

At four o'clock in the morning of January the 3d, two monster locomotives, attached to each of which were three huge mail-cars, puffed and snorted into the depot at Medicine Hat. Notwithstanding the unfortunate strike, each of these trains had successfully travelled over twelve hundred miles of rough track through some of the dirtiest weather in winter. But they were right 'on time,' and Lloyd Freeman felt elated as he knew that one-half of this most difficult task was accomplished.

The two trusty engines, coated thickly with frozen snow, rain, and mud, were quickly detached from the trains of mail-cars, and fresh hissing and throbbing monsters took their places. Freeman stood on the platform and wished Locomotive Superintendent Scott 'good luck' as that official pulled out with the East-bound train; then he himself mounted the engine headed for the West, where Medway Parker, who was to act as fireman, had already taken his place.

Lloyd Freeman was no greenhorn at the lever and throttle. He was a finished expert; and a

master-hand controlled that magnificent piece of mechanism, as the hundred-ton engine slowly steamed out through the intricate maze of tracks which form the 'yard' at Medicine Hat.

The general manager had gathered some varied and curious experience in his lifetime, but this was the toughest job he had ever tackled. The morning was dark as pitch, although it was after four A.M. when they started out, and it would be dark until seven. It had rained all the previous day, but toward midnight snow and frost had taken the place of rain. Now the weather appeared to be moderating slightly, and rain and sleet, aided by a driving wind, assisted the intense darkness in making it a night to be remembered.

Freeman and Parker were to take the train two hundred and twenty miles, and a stop must be made about half-way for water. They were able to run swiftly and somewhat recklessly, owing to the fact that the strike prevented other trains from being in the way; like all Western roads, the C. & N. P. consisted of a single track only.

For more than two hours the men exchanged scarcely a word; they needed all their breath to face the weather, from which the engine-cab only partially sheltered them. As for Parker, he was busy enough shovelling coal into the furnace.

About half-past six Parker leaned upon his shovel, consulted his watch, leaned his head out of the cab, and then put his mouth to Freeman's ear.

'Don't forget to slow up for Shawmut Trestle,' he said. 'I calculate we'll strike it inside of ten minutes. It's two miles long, and such devil's weather as this makes it a ticklish place to cross at high speed.'

Freeman nodded his head. He knew Shawmut Trestle to be a lofty wooden viaduct, built over a deep gulch. Turning to Parker, he said: 'What are your standing orders to engine-drivers?'

'Ten miles an hour over the trestle,' was the reply.

Again Freeman nodded his head.

'I'll not forget,' he said.

Lloyd Freeman grasped the lever tightly with his left hand, threw back the glass slide in the side of the cab, pulled his fur cap down over his ears, and thrust his head out into the night, which was just commencing to disappear.

About three minutes later Parker was nearly thrown from his feet as Freeman pushed the lever over with a jerk and shouted, 'Brakes!'

Quick as lightning, Parker put down the Westinghouse brake, which acted upon the entire train, and then both men, one on each side of the engine, leaned out as far as they could reach.

What they saw (and it all happened in a moment or two) was a hand-car approaching along the track, a hundred or two of yards ahead of them, upon which stood a man working the car with one hand, and frantically waving a red lantern with the other.

On rushed the engine (slowing up, oh, so slowly!), every quarter-second bearing down more closely upon the man on the hand-car, who seemed utterly oblivious to his possible fate.

Freeman sounded the whistle once—twice—thrice; and then both men on the engine yelled like maniacs.

But even in that brief time and space the man

on the hand-car was saved from being crushed to death by the giant locomotive.

Saved? Yes, by a bullet; for Medway Parker's quick eye saw, from his side of the track, a shot fired; and Lloyd Freeman noted the sudden fall of the tall figure on the hand-car. But Medway Parker was not only quick with his eye; he was an old frontiersman, and his pistol hand was (as his enemies had often remarked) like greased lightning. He took in the whole situation in an instant. The man on the hand-car was killed for warning them of some unseen danger. From Parker's revolver sped a bullet which dealt summary and irrevocable vengeance.

When the train was brought to a standstill, the cow-catcher of the engine touching the little four-wheeled trolley, Lloyd Freeman and Medway Parker gently lifted from the hand-car a dead Indian. It was Young-man-proud-of-his-horses, otherwise 'poor old Slops.'

And by the side of the faithful red-skin they laid the corpse of Mr Demuth, known in the convict settlement of Freemantle, Western Australia, as K. 644, formerly Michael Bibb.

That morning the North Pacific Mail was delayed two hours, while Parker, with some Indian help, relaid seven or eight rails that had been removed from the Shawmut Trestle.

GERMAN FOLKLORE.

It is fitting to begin the roll-call of superstitions with one connected with the first of the year. The dreams of New-year's Night, Hausfraus will tell you, invariably come true. A similar property is accorded to the first night's dream in a strange house; this, it is said, is sure to come true, no matter how preposterous and improbable it may appear to be. If the child in the cradle laughs in its sleep, the mother's heart is gladdened by the thought that angels are whispering to it. If a tempest is brewing, she shudders, and prays for the poor distracted soul that has just died by its own hand. If a star falls, she sighs for those who loved the dead man or woman; and when scientists rejoice over the discovery of a new star, she only has tears for the bereaved mother whose lost child the star represents. She checks the heedless girl who would rock the cradle empty, ignorant that thereby she rocks the baby's rest away. She watches heedfully lest the tears of the mourners should fall on the dead man in the coffin and make him restless in the grave; and she chides the children who would eat off one plate, careless that by so doing they will become enemies for life.

When the sky darkens, she is wise enough to know a babe has been born that will be a scourge to itself and its neighbours; and she is heedful not to point upwards, lest she should destroy the rainbow, or lay knives edge uppermost on the table—for they would cut the angels' feet—or neglect to knock at the wine-casks when there is a death in the house, for such neglect would turn the good wine sour. She shuns the neighbour who spins on Saturday night, for she will walk after her death; and the neighbours

who sew on Sunday and on Good-Friday, for they will be struck by lightning. She mutters the Paternoster when she watches a shooting-star; crushes empty egg-shells lest witches should get into them; and refrains from looking in the mirror at night lest the Prince of Darkness should glance over her shoulder.

If she is born on a Sunday she can see ghosts, and is quite untroubled by the gift. She is learned in weather-lore, and knows that rain on St John's Day will spoil the nuts; that cold April gives bread and wine; that the moon's change on a Friday betokens storm; and that wheat sown on St Maurice's Day will be blighted. If she is curious to know what will happen during the year, she creeps into the winter corn on Christmas Eve and hears the future revealed.

If she has many troubles, she wears a girdle of mugwort on St John's Eve, and afterwards flings it into the fire, trusting that as it burns her griefs will wane and disappear. When the wind blows the long grass about, she calls the children about her, lest they should stray away and come upon the corn-wolf, whose stealthy passage makes the grass sway thus. She forbids them to pull the roses, which are under the protection of Laurin, king of the dwarfs; or to sleep under an elder-bush, or even to pluck its white flowers, lest they should offend the petulant Elder Mother. On winter nights, while she spins, she tells her lads and lasses of Holda, who sails her silver boat across the dark skies by night; and of the moss-women whom the Wild Huntsman pursues during storms; and of certain flowers which once were men and women: how the plantain was a girl deserted by her lover, who used to wait by the wayside for him: how the maple was a village beauty who loved a soldier not wisely but too well, and was cursed by her mother: how the camomile flowers were turbulent and rapacious soldiers, changed after death into this shape for their sins: how dead babies ascend to heaven crowned with strawberry flowers: and how crumbs of rye-bread placed on the saddle of a tired horse will remove his fatigue.

That a red mouse is an emblem of the soul, every German knows; and my typical woman is not likely to ignore, any more than she is to forget the story of the old woman who became a woodpecker, or the way to ensure plenty of chickens; that is, to set the hen to hatch when the worshippers are leaving church. She knows that every slain swallow makes a mouth of heavy rain; that sparrows' nests on the roof bring riches, and a stork's, long life; and that lightning strikes where the redstart builds; as well as she knows that oaks are the chosen homes of fairies; that demons dwell in old cherry-trees; that the 'undines' hide from mortal eyes in the cups of water-lilies; and that flax and its spinners are under the peculiar care of the goddess Holda.

If a hare crosses her path, she turns back, fearing some bad luck. If she witnesses a wedding in the rain, she congratulates the happy couple on coming riches. She welcomes the song of a cricket as a sign of good luck; and leaves her child unchristened as long as she can, that it may have large eyes, for as long as a pair of scissors or a knife is in its cradle, it is safe from the witches. At the christening she selects, if

possible, godparents from three different parishes, that the child may live to be a hundred, and refrains from giving it her name or her husband's lest it should die before them, and checks the flighty young gossips from looking about them in church, for fear the infant should have the unenviable faculty of seeing ghosts. On May-day Eve (Walpurgis Nacht) she draws crosses on her door, that witches may not enter; and persuades her husband to fire his gun over their cornfields before retiring, so that no evil thing may harm the wheat. Thus lives she amid a store of harmless superstitions and dainty fancies.

IN THE GLOAMIN'.

WHY sinks the sun sae slowly doon
Behind the Hill o' Fare?
What restless cantrip's ta'en the moon?
She's up an hour an' mair.
I doubt they're in a plot the twa
To cheat me o' the Gloamin';
Yestreen they've seen me slip awa',
An' ken where I gang roamin'.

The trees bent low their list'ning heads
Around the Loch o' Skene;
The saft wind whispered mang the reeds
As we gned by yestreen.
The Bee, brushed fine the heather bell,
Hummed loudly at our roamin',
Syne hurried hame in haste to tell
The way we spent the gloamin'.

The Mavis told his mate to hush
An' hearken frae the tree;
The Robin keekit frae a bush
An' thought we didna see.
But now they sing o' what they saw
Whenever we gang roamin';
They pipe the very words an' a'
We whispered in the gloamin'.

The wintry winds may stir the trees,
Clouds hide baith sun an' moon,
An' early frost the Loch may freeze,
An' still the birdies' tune.
The bee a harried bike may mourn,
An' mirk o'ertak the gloamin',
But aye to thee my thoughts will turn
Wherever I gang roamin'.

CHARLES MURRAY.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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 - 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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THROUGH THE NARUTA WHIRLPOOL.

I was at Kobé, in Japan; and because it was Easter, and I could manage to get away for three consecutive days—because, also, the weather was as warm as an English midsummer day, and that I have a lurking idiosyncrasy for sea-trips in spite of *mal de mer* at the least rolling of the water—I decided to accept S——'s invitation to take a trip with him in his launch, the *Lapwing*, down the Inland Sea. The *Lapwing* is a tiny little boat thirty-six feet in length; but she steams seven knots, and has a comfortable little cabin in which four can sleep without disturbing each other. Dimensions as a rule are superfluous; but in the present instance, considering the nature of the trip to be taken, they are of interest.

There are two entrances to the Inland Sea from Kobé—one by way of the Akashi Strait, the route taken by the mail-steamers, and the other through the Naruta Passage, or Whirlpool. We selected the whirlpool, partly because we wished to visit, for journalistic purposes, the charming but unproductive little island of Nomashima, where it was rumoured that two thousand fisher-folk were starving in consequence of a bad season, and chiefly for the excitement attendant on the adventure.

We left Kobé about one o'clock on Good-Friday, and made for Avadji. The weather was delightfully warm, and the water as idle as a painted ocean. We reached Sumoto about six o'clock. A strong pier or breakwater protects the little town from the easterly gales. It lies at the back of an inlet some three hundred yards in length, and is sheltered behind a broad beach, which lies higher than the town itself. The hills surrounding it are precipitous and pine-clad; but every spot available for vegetation has been seized upon. We had not time to land, but made our way to Yura. After an hour's steaming, a break in the land just before reaching the headland jutting on to the Kii channel disclosed the entrance to Yura, a pretty little land-locked har-

bour, with a circular range of hills, forming a natural basin large enough to hold a fleet. Letting our anchor down, we had dinner; after which we held a council of war as to the advisability of proceeding to Nomashima that night. The sky was overcast, the moon, which had just risen, striving vainly to pierce the sullen clouds; and outside could be heard the dull roar of the Pacific. We decided to venture, however, and were soon making for the exit. The tall cliffs narrowed as we approached the exit, and there was light enough to see a massive wall of masonry on the left of the passage. Just before reaching the narrowest part, a giant shadow rose ominously up, and an immense junk bore stealthily and noiselessly down upon us like a spectre, without a light showing, her huge bulk making our tiny craft look exceedingly diminutive, and causing an involuntary shudder at her proximity. This is no uncommon occurrence in Chinese and Japanese waters, and forms one of the great dangers of night navigation.

The sea was smooth, except for a long swell which hardly raised the water, but which broke with a roar along the black line of rocks on shore, making a white stretch of foam visible in the blackness. As we neared our destination for the night the sky cleared, and the moonlight showed us into the little harbour, which was protected by a stone breakwater. Morning broke sullenly, rain falling heavily, and a nasty fog shrouding the shores of Awaji. It looked as if we were in for a blow, and that would mean a few days' stay. So, after making inquiries ashore, and failing to elicit any information as to cases of starvation, we once more got under way.

As we crossed, we could feel the long heave of the Pacific swell, which inshore was foaming with an angry surge. Making for the headland of Shiro-saki, the wild nature of this part of the Awaji coast was rendered more impressive by the gloomy weather. A curious feature was the way in which villages were perched half-way up cliffs apparently inaccessible from the beach, and only approachable by a winding and difficult path

from inland. Passing the point, we came into full view of the bare-beaten shores of Hama-nahama. The sandhills, piled up for a long distance back from high-water mark, showed too visibly with what tremendous force the waves can break there when urged on by a south-westerly gale. It was certainly a nasty place to be caught in a breeze, and many were the furtive glances we cast at the leaden sky while assuring each other it would clear soon.

At length we came in sight of Fukura, a delightful place, situated on the mouth of a river, the shores of the estuary evincing great fertility, and the town itself almost hidden behind an island covered with pines and maples. But now the clouds broke to the eastward, letting in a burst of sunshine over the islands of Oge-shima and Shimada, and clearly defining the rocky peninsula which jutted from the shore in a narrow rugged line into the notorious Naruta passage. Swarms of fishing-boats crowded the bay, odd narrow boats of great length, and so slight in the beam that a person could hardly sit down in them comfortably even in the middle. How they stand the Pacific roll is a marvel. The occupants were fishing in the strangest fashion. They had lines overboard, and were pulling them up and down with a regular see-saw motion, the lifting being about two to two and a half feet. Now came the question as to whether we should try the Naruta Passage. We had set out with that object in view; but we did not know how the current was setting, for or against us; and when the chart was produced, the observations upon it caused that indefinable sensation which, if not fear, is nearly allied. To understand the nature of the passage, it should be mentioned that it gives the only entrance to the tide from the Pacific. The passage is not more than three hundred yards wide, and is divided into channels by three reefs. Just at these reefs the water is shallow, but immediately beyond, shelves to fifty or sixty fathoms; hence the water outside is often higher than inside; and it pours down like a cataract, forming the whirlpool which in bad weather is so remarkable a sight.

The Admiralty chart of 1876, published under the superintendence of Captain Evans, R.N., has the following observations: 'The tide sweeps through the Naruta Passage in a NW. and SE. direction with great velocity, and the roar of its breakers can be heard for several miles. About an hour before and after change of tide it runs from seven to eight knots an hour; but during the strength of the stream it much exceeds this. At springs there is scarcely any slack-water; but at neaps there is about a quarter of an hour. The passage should not be used except in case of necessity, when it must only be taken in the first and second hours before and after change of stream. In bad weather it should not be attempted, as it then breaks across, and the channel becomes difficult to distinguish.'

Even more fear-inspiring are the remarks by Captain H. C. St John, R.N., in his work entitled *Wild Coasts of Nipon*, published at Edinburgh in 1880. He says: 'The Naruta, or "Whirlpool," between the island of Avadji and Sikok, is very narrow; through here the ebb and flood tide literally falls eight feet in two hundred yards. In passing through in a ship

you feel like rushing to something unknown. Very few people venture to take this channel, and wisely; but from being intimately acquainted with the tides, rocks, and locality generally, I often took it with perfect confidence, in ordinary weather. In fact, after getting within the influence of the rush of the water, you are carried through in safety *volens volens*. When deer-shooting once on the Sikok side, and passing close to the rocky point which formed the boundary of the pass on that side, we were not a little surprised to see one of our men-of-war approaching from the Inland Sea; but after watching her through in safety, we thought nothing more of her nor of her bold captain, until, meeting him a month afterwards, I found he had hardly recovered from the effects of passing the Naruta.

"Why did you take the channel?" I asked him.

"Because it was recommended on the chart. But you will never catch me there again. As I neared it, I could see nothing but rocks, breakers, and foam; wished myself out of it, and put the helm hard down; but although the ship was going twelve knots through the water, she would not answer the helm a bit. In another moment I was through, and being whirled about among the eddies in the most horrible manner."

"Well," I said, "I rather expect you never went so fast in a ship before?"

"Never," he replied. "Why, I must have been going at least twenty-five knots."

'Another man, the captain of one of the American mail steamers I knew well, took his ship once through the Naruta, and but once. He hardly liked to speak of it; his rudder-chains were carried away when approaching, and the steamer passed the narrows in the most erratic manner, whirling and twisting about entirely at the mercy of the waters, which waters, as I said before, took you through safely enough if you allowed them. After my friend's little adventure, I had the recommendation removed from the charts.'

If such were the experiences of large vessels, how could we hope to fare in so small a boat as ours! Needless to say we approached it anxiously, though the love of danger for its own sake was sufficient to make us attempt it. Gradually we left the fishing-boats behind, and more and more distinct became the crashing of the breakers over the jagged rocks which divided the channel into three distinct parts. All vegetation had left the shore, which simply consisted of blocks of granite. Three groups of rocks divided the channel, the narrowest entrance being on our side, and this was the one S—— decided to take. An encouragement to us was the sight of a huge junk, which, hugging the opposite shore, was also making for the passage. There was not a breath of wind; but the monster hull was gliding swiftly and noiselessly through the water, as if impelled by some magic power. More swiftly, and more swiftly still she drew away from us, and going straight for the central channel, rushed through with the speed of an ocean liner. She was going very smoothly until a few yards past the reefs, when suddenly her prow dipped, tilting her stern in the air. Then she veered as if she would turn within her own length, and all the time she was

shaking, rocking, and quivering, as if from the shock of a powerful explosive. Three seconds later she again headed straight, and in less than a minute was careering through the broken waters safely, at a speed her sails would never enable her to attain in the freshest of gales.

In the meantime we had steamed steadily up, and the captain, urging the engine-driver to keep up the highest possible pressure of steam, steered for the current. The treacherous ocean-river was as smooth as a polished mirror, yet we could gradually feel our pace accelerating until we were going much faster than ever the *Lapwing* had sped before. Nearer we drew to the grim rocks standing up on our left like a huge wall, and on our right in a perspective ridge tapering to a point. Over the central reefs the water foamed and hissed, and for the first time we caught sight of a seething mass of broken water beyond. But it was too late to return. Gently, with scarcely a tremor, we reached the line of rocks, and then suddenly experienced the sensation of falling, akin to that which one has in descending in an elevator for the first time. The prow dipped, but not quite to the water's edge; the little craft shook and trembled like an aspen leaf, swerving and swaying at the mercy of the current, and then dashed into the midst of the bubbling, broken, hissing water; but still irresistibly carried forward, she struggled through, and again answering her helm, we got outside the force of the stream, while the junk had forged ahead about three miles. The actual passage, from the time of entering the current to getting through a distance of nearly a mile—occupied only three minutes.

Once through, we breathed freely, and our cheeks resumed their natural hue. We had a couple of days' steaming between tiny green islands interlaced with winding channels, and entering romantic little harbours and penetrating inlets running for miles parallel with the shore, and such as are only to be found in Japan.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER V.—ISABEL'S LETTER.

ISABEL first considered again the envelope of her letter. It had been, as her uncle Suffield said, redirected twice. It had first gone to the Ladies' College where she taught; thence it had been sent to her lodgings; whence it had been forwarded to her at her uncle's. The significance of these directions and the poverty of the paper on which they were written having been duly pondered, she opened the letter itself. She had seen the handwriting only twice in her life before, and yet it ought to have been familiar to her eyes, for it was her father's. The following is the curious epistle which Isabel read, and which the acute reader will find full of suggestion:

MY DE^r CHILD,—you w^l wonder exceedingly th^t you sh^d hear again fr^m yr poor, unfortun^t father. I h^l wander^d t^round earth ov^r (tho', as a teacher o youth, you are aware th^t t^e earth is not a perfect sphere, but flatten^d at t^e ends o t^e axis like an orange) 'fr China to Peru' (*vide* any stand^d

book o quota^{tions}) since last I h^d t^e parent^l delt o writ^{ts} to you. It w^l achieve no desir^{ble} end to relate to you in det^l my wander^{ss} and adventures, my gains (insignific^t) and my losses (consider^{ble}), my br^t-wing^d hope and my dull-ey^d despair. T^e fact, howev^r, th^t my prest^l address f^r correspond^{er} is Mrs Ackland Snow, Tobacconist, Nelson Street, New North Road, N.,—wh, as you may be aware, is contigu^s to 'Merrie Islington',—must speak to you wⁿ an eloque^s all its own. Aftr these diverse experie^s (in t^e main adverse) I am again a miser^{ble} denizen o our modern Babylon. Moreov^r in t^e humble dwell^g wre I am at prest^l domicil^d I am detain^d as a kind o person^l pledge f a debt o two-twelve-six. I am permitt^d to go out only to call f lett^{rs} or to post them, and th^t under t^e vigil^t surveill^{ce} o my landlady's son, a sharp London boy who 'has no little handkerch^f'—you know t^e quotⁿ. I expect noth^g as t^e result o this communicⁿ, as I deserve noth^g;—yet if we all h^d our deserts—? I h^l t^e unshak^{le} convicⁿ, howev^r, th^t there still resides in yr bosom some filial regard to^{ws} him who, tho' unworth^y o t^e name, cannot but subscribe him^s—yr father, JOHN RAYNOR.

Two or three things were obviously remarkable about this letter: it was written on a half-sheet of paper, which was of as poor quality as that of the envelope; it contained contractions in spelling which suggested that the writer either had, or had had, experience of some walk in journalism; and it expressed sentiments and made statements which very plainly implied that John Raynor was a somewhat shady and shifty person.

Isabel stood by her dressing-table in the light of the window, and looked meditatively forth into the sun-lit garden while she mechanically folded and folded again the flimsy paper in her hand till it was of the appearance of a pipelight. This was the third letter she had received from her father, and all three were in the same strain. The first came to her four years before, when she was first appointed teacher in the Ladies' College, and she had replied to it with money, and the request that her father would let her see him. That, however, he refused to do; but he begged for more money to go to America and to take up a 'literary appointment' which had been offered him; and that was his second letter. She had answered it as he had desired, with considerable difficulty, and had heard no more until now. The four years which had passed since her father had gone to America had widened considerably not only her knowledge of books, but her understanding also of men and women, so that this third letter appealed as to a different person, and provoked doubts and apprehensions altogether new. The father who thus wrote to her she had not seen since she was five years old, when her mother had died and her aunt had taken charge of her. She had, therefore, but a dim recollection of him—a dull child would probably have had no recollection at all—but such recollection as she had, which had been awakened and clarified by the sight of her uncle, was bewildered by the letter. Her father, as she now recalled him, was much taller than her uncle—but that, she admitted to herself, might be only in the view of a child, to whom all grown-up

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people seem tall—but in other ways he was like her uncle; he was reticent and serious, and seemed severe. He was therefore scarcely the person—it now occurred to her—to write such an epistle as that she now held between her fingers, or as those she had received four years before. Could it be, she asked herself suddenly, that she had been imposed upon by this person, whom she had believed to be her father because he had so represented himself, and because he had recalled certain family matters which she had thought only her father could know? She might, she considered, have her doubt set at rest by showing the letter to either of her uncles and saying, 'Tell me if this be my father's hand or no!' but then she remembered that her uncle George had remarked, when he handed her the letter, that he ought to know 'the fist'—as if he dimly recognised it—and she shrank from making known even to her uncles her father's condition, if this person who had written as her father were her father indeed.

She still hoped he was. For when her father—or this person who was not her father—had first written to her, she had had a waking dream of the kind that was sure to invade a good and generous girl. She had gathered vaguely and at intervals, during her schooltime when she spent her holidays at her uncle's, that her father, if he was not dead, was leading a life of so disreputable a sort that his existence must be ignored. She had not ventured to ask either her aunt or her uncle what his offences were; but her aunt was so severe and even unjust to her on occasion, that she concluded her father's fault must be neither unforgivable nor irremediable. When, therefore, he put himself in communication with her, her heart leaped forth to help and save him. Her impulse was not so much that of a daughter as that of a mother.

Men are slow to recognise—and slower to believe—that the earliest and the most potent affection of a good girl of strong character is maternal. She first expends it upon her dolls, and her younger brothers and sisters—when she has them—and then she lavishes it upon her lover, who is somewhat bewildered by this divine mixture of feeling for himself, until he is husband and father, when the new feeling in his own breast teaches him to understand hers. Isabel's circumstances had dammed up the flow of this kind of affection. She had been too clever in her girlhood and too much occupied with books and duties to be seriously concerned about dolls, and neither her cousins nor her fellow-pupils at school had needed her attentions. It was therefore with all the more overwhelming volume that this maternal feeling rushed towards her father when he made himself known. He had pushed it back again by his refusal to see her and by his flight to America; but again it was seeking vent, now that he was returned and was within reach—if it was indeed he who had written to her. She passionately hoped that it might be he.

As she considered and hoped, she resolved what she would do; for Nature and training had conspired to make her a person of quick decision. She would send some money at once, with a promise to send more in a few days—when, that is, she would be in London, and could observe and discover for herself the person who would

call for it. She would stop him and speak to him. If he were not her father, then all would be at an end; but if he were, then—oh, then!—with what passionate joy would she take him to her heart to tend and comfort him, to strengthen and restore him. It never occurred to her to doubt whether her father, if found, would be worth such wealth of love. For her feeling was of the serene quality of divine mercy, which regards no sinner as beyond hope of redemption.

A tap sounded at her door, and a voice—Euphemia's—said: 'Bell dear, will you be long? Mother wants us to go into town.'

There at once presented was Isabel's desired opportunity. 'I'll put my things on and be down in a moment,' answered she.

When she descended—with her purse and her letter in her pocket—she found that her aunt and her cousin had gone into the regions of the kitchen. Thither she followed them, and came upon both at the back door of the mansion. Her aunt was there a person to behold and consider. The front of her stately figure was arrayed in a large linen apron with a bib, and she was superintending the unloading of a baker's van piled with buns for the children's Whitsuntide 'treat' in the park that day. She had torn open one of the buns, to judge if they were well baked and white within, and to ascertain that they were not too meagrely supplied with currants. She stood eating a morsel and holding the fragments in her hand, while she counted with the baker the fourteen to the dozen which he threw into great baskets waiting to receive them. And Isabel, as she beheld and considered, wondered for the first time whether the prosperity of the house of Sniffield was mainly due to the husband or to the wife.

That duty accomplished, her aunt turned to her with a keen but not unkindly look—a look, indeed, which seemed to say: 'There's something wrong; I wish we two understood each other better.' What she actually did say was: 'You're not looking quite yourself, Bell. No bad news, I hope?'

'No, aunt,' answered Isabel. 'It's nothing to speak of. It's only a letter that has been forwarded to me from London.'

'Of course,' said her aunt, somewhat dryly, with the clear significance of 'I knew *that*.' But she added: 'I only hoped you had nothing to really worry you. I don't want to pry into your private concerns.'

'I have no private concerns of any consequence, aunt,' she said with a blush.

'Well,' said her aunt, dismissing the matter, 'I want you and Pheney to go into town—the horses are being put into the landau—and order these things'—producing a list from her pocket—'at our drapers', Wigmore & Kendal. You will see the kind of things they have in stock. You know what I like; and if you see they haven't got the proper things, tell them to get them somewhere else, or to get them made. When all the order is ready, tell them the things are to be sent to that address a week hence—Rutland Gate, London, W.'

'Oh, mother!' exclaimed Euphemia, clasping her hands in ecstasy, 'are we really going to London, then, for the season?'

'Yes, my dear,' said her mother, looking on her with indulgent eye, 'we are going to London. Your father has taken the house and most of the furniture over from the Earl of Padiham.'

'What!' exclaimed Euphemia. 'The Earl of Padiham that lives out here on the moors?'

'To be sure, my dear,' said her mother with a laugh. 'You don't suppose the peerage can contain two Earls of Padiham.'

'What! Isn't it big enough to hold two, mother?'

'Don't be a goose,' said Mrs Suffield with a touch of severity; for she suspected her daughter was inclined to jibe, and she caught a twinkle of amusement passing from her niece's eye. 'Now make haste, both of you. The carriage is waiting, I've no doubt.'

'But,' asked her daughter, 'aren't you going to tell me all about our going to London?'

'Tell you all about it! There's time enough for that before we go. One thing at a time.—Be off now and do your business.' They were hurrying away when she called after them: 'You might call at the office of the *Gazette* on your way back, both of you, and bring Mr Ainsworth along: he is usually there, I think, just before lunch-time, and he's capital at amusing children—almost as good as yourself, Bell.'

Isabel accepted the suggestion with silence. She understood completely the intention of her aunt. She had perceived before to-day that her aunt was ever ready to bring Alan Ainsworth and herself together—a readiness which, while partly due doubtless to the liking her aunt had for the young journalist, was much more due (Isabel believed) to the fact that Mrs Suffield had a loftier ambition for her son than he had for himself.

CHAPTER VI.—ALAN AINSWORTH.

The editorial sanctum of a leading provincial newspaper of these days is almost as unapproachable by the vulgar as that of the *Times* itself. It may be set in quite as imposing a building, and may be the centre of almost as great a spider's web of political 'influence,' 'special' correspondence, and news 'agency' as the journal that boasts the largest circulation in the world: that may be taken for granted without further insistence. The terra-cotta palace inhabited by *The Lancashire Gazette* is reckoned an ornament of one of the finest and busiest streets of the city which claims to be the heart and soul of the County Palatine; and the editor's room is the finest, though not the largest, of all the rooms in that palace.

While Isabel and her cousin were busy with their shopping, about that mid-day hour when the growing young men in the office became wistfully interested in the impassive face of the office clock, a somewhat stoutish and florid gentleman stood on the hearthrug of the editorial room in the attitude which none but its master would have ventured to adopt. His hands were behind him, and his coat-tails were parted, though the grate was empty, and he stood squarely and solidly, bearing a little on his toes as he measured out his utterances, and marking the emphasis of his words with that slight motion of the head which is all the reserved and weighty Englishman permits himself by way of gesture. This

was Frederick Smith, the famous chief of *The Lancashire Gazette*. He was an admirable example of the kind of person ticketed by Carlyle as 'Able Editor,' and he was addressing no casual caller, for no such common mortal would be admitted to his presence. Before him paced irregularly to and fro, making occasional pauses for speech, a tall, spare, and broad-shouldered young man, excited and flushed.

'I think, sir,' said the young man, when they had been talking thus for some time, 'that if a critic must not express his honest convictions, you might as well get a reporter to do his work.'

'You are a young man, Mr Ainsworth,' said the able editor, 'and I say this for your good: it is part of the intolerance of youth to be always wishing to utter its "honest convictions," and it is part of the regret of maturer years to know that the "honest convictions" of youth have been only impatient prejudices. That you will discover before you are as old as I am, and I certainly must ask you in the meantime to tone down the severity of your dramatic notices.'

'If I cannot say, sir,' said Ainsworth, 'what I honestly think and feel about a performance, I had rather not do the theatres at all.'

'Very well, Mr Ainsworth,' said the editor; 'that is a point for yourself alone to decide, though I would advise you not to be rash. I like your work; in other respects it suits me completely, and I should be sorry to lose it. Think it over.'

And the able editor took his right hand from behind him, and held it out for Ainsworth to shake. Ainsworth grasped it, dropped it, and went.

For an apparently impetuous man, Ainsworth descended the stairs soberly and slowly. On the next landing he encountered a fellow-member of the staff of the *Gazette*, a dapper young gentleman, who was reputed the most slashing and redoubtable political writer in the Palatinate. Ainsworth nodded to him, and was about to pass on, when the dapper young man stopped and spoke. 'Capital notice that of yours this morning,' said he, 'of the theatre last night. Splendid bit of criticism—straight and clear.'

'I'm glad you like it,' said Ainsworth.

'Yes; I was glad to see it. The play and the players have been too much cockered up by the London papers, and it's an agreeable change to find a critic in the provinces giving them a slating.—How does the chief like it?' he asked with a thin, sly smile.

'The chief,' answered Ainsworth, with reserve, 'cannot be said to be in love with it.'

'I thought not. Neger mind. Bye-bye.'

And the two went their several ways—Ainsworth down into the street, and the dapper young gentleman up into the chief's presence.

When Ainsworth had left the building, he stood a moment in hesitation, and then turned down a side-street as a man resolved upon a certain course. He entered the restaurant where it was his habit to lunch; but, since it was not quite his time for luncheon, and since he felt no pressing demand of hunger—his blood was too much determined to his head for that—he merely stood at the bar to eat a hurried biscuit and drink a glass of soda-and-milk. It was too

early for any of his fellow-journalists and acquaintances to be about, and of that he was glad; for he knew that he must look rather glum and preoccupied, and that if his friends saw him so, he would be beset with worrying questions or gibes. His modest biscuit being consumed, he sallied forth and returned into the main street.

He felt the absolute necessity of doing something: his intense excitement was as the rapid generation of steam, impelling him to locomotion. He must go somewhere; he must walk—walk—to revolve and grind away the grave annoyance and anxiety that troubled him. Where should he go? The town would not do: the pavements were crowded, and the thought of dodging and jostling other foot-passengers was painful to him. While he thus considered, he saw a shining open carriage and pair draw up at the kerb a little way ahead of him. He had a keen eye, and he recognised at once the occupants of the carriage—a regal-looking dark beauty and a fairy-like fair one, both young, and both arrayed in light, summer raiment. They were the daughter and the niece of the excellent Suffield. The tall and stately lady—the niece—descended from the carriage, while the men hurrying by on the pavement cast over their shoulders admiring glances, which Ainsworth resented on her behalf. She stepped into a post-office, over against which the carriage had stopped, and Ainsworth turned away, that he might not be recognised by the other lady, and jumped upon a passing omnibus.

The encounter avoided, he began to think he was a fool for his pains. Why had he shunned a meeting with these ladies, the one of whom he admired as the best read, the most intelligent, and the most beautiful woman he had ever known? Why, except that the trouble which was worrying him drew him away from contact and from speech with friend or acquaintance. The sight of them, however, made him think of his good friend Suffield, and the thought of him suggested a walk in the varied and extensive Holdsworth Park. He had a problem and a corollary to solve, and he resolved on a solitary walk to solve them. The omnibus on which he was riding passed the necessary railway station; so there he descended from the knife-board, and entered and took a ticket for Holdsworth.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT PILCHARDS.

THE day was perfect; autumn once again asserted her pre-eminence among the seasons, and appeared—despite a chill north-easter—the one period wherein it is supremely possible to live. I had crossed the ferry near by Hayle Bar to the Towans, a tract of sandhills overgrown with a turf that keeps perennially short and velvet-like, and with the reedy, gray-green spire-grasses. Presently the sandhills gave place to ruder cliffs, and I struggled through a hazel thicket that covers the slope. For a space I turned aside to look at the wishing-well, where pins without number bore witness to the frequency with which the waters had been interrogated in the summer. Finally, I was upon the open waste again, and found the 'huers' (shouters) watching for pilchards at the white house on Carrickgladden. The boats had been a week in pay, and through-

out that period had taken up their allotted positions daily along the cliff. The season for the coming of the fish was now fully arrived; and on the previous day there had been nought but pilchards taken by the drift-boats that went out after mackerel and herring. The shoals abide but a short time within the limits of the bay, and if they be not swiftly encircled within the seine, they pass out westwards sweeping from the north-east around the bay—and are lost to the fishermen of St Ives. The huers, therefore, scanned the wide bay with unflinching attention; though there was one that found time to discuss with a roaming stranger the mysterious ways of God with man, even while he watched for the appearance of that 'shade upon the waters' which would be the sign of a bank of fish. The wind was unfavourable: it made a turmoil of sand and rotted shale in the shallow water along the shore, and brought to these western shores a part of the red hematite which—coming from the tin mines—perpetually incarnadines a great tract of water along the farther cliffs. These things would render it all the more difficult for the huers to detect the pilchards—should they come—by their colour on the water; and, having in memory the evil chances of recent years, I only pitied them, and the seiners, who awaited their signals, as people unfortunate in expecting overmuch.

But in the afternoon, when there was scarce half an hour to dark, there came a sudden cry of 'Hēva!' (Found) from the white house. Instantly the seiners were on the move, rowing their hardest in obedience to the signals of the huers. Each of these held in either hand a couple of iron rings of about a foot in diameter, set crosswise upon a short handle and covered with cloth, so that they formed white balls, easily visible from sea against the background of heather and sad-coloured grass. In the old days, furze-bushes were used for this purpose; and still, though the white balls are universal, you hear them speak of the 'bushes' of the huers. The code of signals is sufficiently simple: to send the boats east, for example, both bushes are held downwards at arm's length on the left (or western) side; then raised at arm's length above the head on the right. A single bush held in the right hand and swung round in the fashion of a wheel means 'Let out the line;' and, finally, to hold both at arm's length in front, swing them downwards and around over the head to the initial position, then raise a foot or so and bring them emphatically down through the same distance, is to give the exciting order, 'Shoot the seine.' The seineboat and the accompanying towboat have parted company; the line of corks begins to appear on the surface as the net is hurriedly shot. The huers are still waving their bushes—for the fish are invisible except from this height, and it is they who steer the boat—and shouting through huge speaking-trumpets instructions which one must be a fisherman to interpret. At last the order is given to close the seine, and the towboat comes up with the stop-net. While this is being let out and fastened, the men in the two boats are shouting and vigorously splashing their oars, intent upon driving the fish into the curve of the seine and away from its unsecured mouth. Meanwhile, the huers take breath, surveying the

operations below. 'Now bloucers!' says one to the other; and immediately there goes forth from the two speaking-trumpets a great cry of 'Bloucers! Bloucers!' which promptly summons the cobbler from his lapstone, the labourer from the fields, the very baker from his shop, to take part on shore in the securing of what the seiners have captured. The seine was shot unusually late on this occasion—had but the fish come earlier there would have been two or three other seines shot—and though the boat came in as soon as the net had been closed, it was dark when the warp reached the shore. This is a great rope, which is taken in hand by the bloucers and hauled up the steep beach, over the loose dry sand, until it can be attached to one or other of the numerous windlasses which you may find about the coast. The one used was situated in a small plateau upon the face of the cliff, some forty yards above the beach. Hither came all the men of the neighbourhood, footing it delicately in the darkness over a narrow ledge sodden with the drainage of the hills, and here and there broken by a recent fall of the land. The oldsters sat together under the cliff at the back of the ledge, talking philosophy. So long has ill-luck dogged them that their first effort was to put aside all natural hopes. 'I don't take no account of it,' said one. 'Nor me,' said another. A third was lighting a pipe; his face showed a Newlyn picture, without the brushmarks and the inevitable lividness. 'I'm got to that pitch,' he said, when he had secured a light, 'I don't put nothin' on it.' But somehow, though they never ignored their duty of hoping nothing, one learned a good deal as to the benefits which might accrue to them if the seine should tuck well upon the morrow. In a little time the second warp was landed to be connected with a second windlass; and by this means the great seine was slowly drawn inwards to such a position that even at high-tide it would still touch the bottom and afford no way of escape to the imprisoned fish. The men worked bravely and with abundant cheerfulness; but at the end of the evening one remembered chiefly this fact—that they were altogether prepared to find the seine near empty when the time came for 'tucking,' and had a dozen reasons for the catastrophe if upon the morrow it should be found to have happened.

All night the seiners watched by the net, a fire burning with cheerful radiance beneath the awning. The morning showed a sea so enveloped in fog that Godrevy lighthouse—a white tower on an island at the bay's eastern extremity—was scarce visible across the water from St Ives; and it was close upon eight o'clock before the cry of 'Heva!' was heard again. Meanwhile, the tuckers had long been at work upon the first capture. Great black pilchard boats, long past other service, were dragged down by teams of four horses from their accustomed resting-place and towed out to the seine. A smaller net—the 'tuck-net'—was let down inside the seine and closed; then it was drawn to the surface. The fish showed presently as a boiling mass of silver; or perhaps they were more like molten tin when they have plunged into it the sodden log whose moisture, escaping, is to drive all impurities to the surface-scum. The up-flung scales and water stood for the

spitting of the metal. The tuckers stood in their black barges, dipping the fish out by the basketful, and tipping them into the bottom of the boat. Each boat contains when full somewhere over thirty hogsheds—say one hundred thousand fish—and yet in a very few minutes the mass of madly-moving silver had risen to the knees of the men, who stood away from the side and levelled it with the edge of an empty basket, while their companions in labour flung more and more into the boat. Over the tuck-net there was a continual flashing of silver scales cast up, for the fish were well-nigh solid in the net. Now and again a stray fish, not yet within the tuck-net, came slowly towards the surface, too bewildered to be any longer susceptible of fear. The water, when the sun shone upon it, showed a clear green spangled with innumerable scales; and at the line of corks which showed the limits of the seine you could see, looking down into the waters, thousands of pilchards lying dead in the folds of the net, like ingots of silver. There was endless shouting both of comradeship and criticism, and above all, the noise of these innumerable fish, struggling in heaps, and in the tuck-net at the surface. Never a boat went by but had a hundred or two dying in its bows; and all around the central group of boats were men of enterprise who fished with long-handled nets for such fish as had died in the close quarters of the seine.

Meanwhile the huers had twice again raised their cry of 'Heva,' and so there were now three great seines in the water before St Ives, in addition to that which was being tucked to the east, by Carrickgladden. Mounting to the hills above the water, one saw how it is that the presence of pilchards in the bay is detected by the huers; for the fish had packed together in the deeper part of the seine, and showed a reddish black, like a sunken reef. At intervals they appeared to be seized with a sudden consciousness of their predicament, and the water boiled at the surface visibly. On the previous day, and even this very morning, when there was light, it had been difficult for the unpractised eye to detect a sign before the net was closed; and, indeed, the desultory talk of the bystanders was largely of historic occasions whereon a seine which had been shot in water deemed by the majority quite innocent of fish, turned out—to the glory of the huer who had seen the shoal—to be magnificently plenished.

It was good, too, to look back through a glass at the tucking of the first seine. The fog had changed to a beautiful azure mist; the sun shone brightly on a pale smooth sea, whose waves were little more than lines of shadow. Seen against the level light, the boats and figures of the men were of a velvety blackness; but the fish, as they struggled in the tuck-net or poured from the baskets into the boats, shone with an exquisite soft silveriness. And there the men laboured until the turn of the tide, when ten great boats, laden to the gunwale, were towed into the harbour, the further tucking of the seine being left until low water on some future day.

Remains to describe the scene in the harbour, whither the barges were towed, that the fish might be conveyed to the cellars and salted. The boats were moored, and the carts backed into the water,

where the horses stood most patiently—though with a certain look of dejection—while the fish were shovelled out. The 'jowsters'—men who retail the fresh fish throughout the neighbouring country—were buying their stock: his own particular business the one thing in all the world to each. As quickly as possible they are off and away again, and in an hour or two every street in every town for miles will be resounding with wild cries of 'Fresh Pilchar, Pilchar, Pilchar!' while the women will gather bareheaded at the tail of the carts to buy the fish at five, six, seven, or eight a penny; every town a little later will be exceedingly fragrant with the odour of 'scrowlers'—which is to say, fried pilchards.

In the water and upon the gray sands a host of children wandered among their elders, the most of them having each separate finger thrust through the gills of a pilchard. All the tide-mark, also, was strewn with the fish, often near already, by reason of many trampling feet, to a condition of naked skeleton; and a great dogfish, caught and killed yestreen by one of the drift-boats, showed his white belly, rolling with the come and go of small waves: the only impassive thing in all the scene. All the old men of the town were on the sands, uttering conjectures as to the probable number of hogsheads to be taken out of the seines, and enlarging upon the utter worthlessness of the most magnificent captures as prices are in these days. The reason of this falling-off is simple: there is no market, practically, for fresh pilchards; they all go to the cellars, and thence to the Italian markets. Now, in the old time the Italians had to content themselves with Cornish pilchards, or be without fish of any sort; to-day, there is unlimited competition, and even the St Ives man realises that he will not choose 'fairmaids' who can eat his fill of Newfoundland cod. Also, it is said, the Catholic religion loses its hold upon the people in those parts, and they scruple not to taste flesh on Fridays. It is a pity: eaten fresh, the fish is delicious; and there are those that can stomach it when it has been salted. But in neither condition does it find a sale at remunerative prices, though it is possible that, with a railway company resolved to foster, not to hamper and destroy the fishing, St Ives might grow rich by providing cheap fish for the poor of great cities.

The children, however, are bound to profit, and it is by no means the sons and daughters of the poor alone who descend to 'cabin', as they name the practice of stealing fish from the boats or from the carts that convey it to the cellars. One man, manifestly of a temper not too well controlled, was followed at each journey by a score of urchins. Whenever his back was turned for a moment, one of the youngsters would dart forward and with one sweep of his hand send a score of pilchards flying out of the cart. His companions shouted exultantly as they scrambled for a share of the spoil; and the man, divided betwixt the care of his horse and of his load, raved impotently at them, or struck out at some daring girl, who laughed back at him most impudently as she shook the hair from over her eyes. But his strength was spent upon the air, and the fish still came by hundreds out of his cart. Finally, he must mount a steep and narrow lane betwixt two inns of immemorial fame, that

now are annually compelled to find (before the magistrates) excuses for existence. The way was but roughly paven; the fish came by dozens and half-dozens over the tail of the cart, and the children followed tumultuous, cubing now without fear of the driver's lash. When the ascent was made and the driver was at liberty to descend, they were already on their way to the beach again, looking for some new chance of plunder.

There the labour of unloading ceases not, and already they are preparing for fresh ventures, if the fish come again. The thing has in it, surely, the stuff of a picture worth painting, and for decorative quality alone surpasses that frieze of camels whereof so much has been said. Down the gray granite quay, against the bluest of skies, march five-and-thirty tall and resolute fishermen in yellow oilers and great sea-boots. Each walks some three or four yards behind his leader; they bear upon their shoulders a great brown seine, which hangs in regular festoons between them. They are taking it from the cellar to their boat.

Night comes; the bay is filled with lights; and presently the drift-boats come back—their nets all empty—and their owners mingle with the rest. And thus by night and day life takes its course with infinite picturesqueness in the little town, until, at the end of a week, nineteen hundred hogsheads of fish have been landed, and the seines are taken up. And indeed it is good to have shared this life, though merely as a spectator. For though the capitalist has possessed himself of the chief profits of this harvest, as of all others, the event is still for the good of all. For every hogshead of fish which has been taken, the bloucers will divide the sum of two shillings and tenpence between them; and the seiners and tuckers are paid good wages. There is no dweller in the neighbourhood that does not somehow share in the harvest of the sea; and for twenty miles you will hardly find a cottage which has not its store of pilchards, purchased at any price from a shilling a hundred, and now put by in salt for winter use. And, to conclude, these fishermen are of Nature's gentlefolk, and to have moved among them for a space is to have learned a lesson: of courtesy certainly, and perhaps also of patience.

H. D. LOWRY.

ISABEL DYSART.*

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT a strange interruption of the tranquil composure of the little retired country-house would that have been which might have occurred at Wallyford when Isabel walked into it all flaming and throbbing from this encounter, if the atmosphere and the still walls had taken notice of any such things! But they do not, happily for the human creatures who breathe in and inhabit them. The quiet house, and Jenny in the kitchen occupied with her scones, and Mrs Dysart in the drawing-room, who was just turning the heel of her stocking and absorbed in that operation, received Isabel quite unconsciously, without any disturbance in their calm, as if she had come from the prayer-meeting at Inveresk Kirk. It is true that after she had counted her stitches and got that momentous corner right to

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go on with, Mrs Dysart looked up and cried: 'Bless me, Isabel! what a colour you have gotten,' pushing up her spectacles to see the better.

'Yes, mother,' said Isabel; 'I have run almost all the way from Uncle John's.'

'There seems a great charm about Uncle John's,' said her mother; 'it seems to me you are always there.'

'They look out for me passing, and stand at the window and cry on me,' said Isabel; 'but there was a reason to-day; for here's a paper they've sent you, mother, with all the news of that—that terrible thing in Edinburgh.' Isabel held out the paper, turning her head from the light, that the commentary of her agitated face might not be seen.

'Bless me!' cried Mrs Dysart, putting down her stocking. 'But it'll be yesterday's paper: this is not one of the days for the *Courant*.'

'It's a special edition,' said Isabel under her breath; and 'Bless me!' said Mrs Dysart again. 'It's not a small matter they'll print the *Courant* for out of its usual. It'll be something great that has happened.' She paused a moment to add: 'Set John Dysart up with his paper every day! The *Scotsman* is good enough for me.'

Isabel stood for a moment behind, watching her mother draw the nearest candle to her and spread out the paper. The small but clear light shone on Mrs Dysart's eager face, lit up with keen curiosity, and on her white cap and the white kerchief at her throat, and the little thrill in her head and her whole person, of that desire to know which is so strong in the rural quiet. Isabel thought, half indignantly, that her mother would read all that had happened in the papers, but would not, could not, read what had passed in her, Isabel, standing close to her chair. And yet how much more important was the last to both of them! She stole away in the dark once more to her own room to take off her 'things,' and to bathe her face after that habit she had, which Mrs Dysart thought so foolish, coming in from the cold air. She had forgotten all about that spot on her cheek that had so burned and stung the evening before. The greater incident had obliterated the less. But she did not venture to pause in the darkness to think. The current was running too strongly in her veins. She stopped for a moment at the window and looked up at that star which seemed to know all about her, staring so earnestly as if its steady little ray went straight into her heart. She went back to the drawing-room immediately, subduing herself as well as she could, anxious to hear, yet with a feeling that she knew far, far more than could ever be in any paper. Her mother looked up quickly at the sound of the opening door.

'Here is terrible news indeed,' she said with an awe-stricken face. Then quickly changing her tone: 'Isabel, will you never get over that silly trick with the cold water? Your face is just burning like the kitchen fire.'

'I'll try and mind another time,' said the girl, with unusual humility; for indeed it was a great relief to hear so simple a reason for the blaze of excitement on her cheeks. 'But what is the terrible news? They were all speaking of it, all together, and I was not attending. I cannot bear to hear about murders and such things.'

'But this is worse than murder,' said Mrs

Dysart solemnly. 'Oh, Isabel, my heart misgave me! The very way he turned it off when I named the Assistant might have told me. But then I never knew what Professor it was that was implicated. Oh, Isabel, my bonnie woman! I hope, I hope you'll not take it to heart. They say the Assistant was most to blame; and who do you think the Assistant was? Lord bless us! what things there are in this world that nobody would guess; but Bell, my dear, he's not worthy, he's not worthy! Who do you think the Assistant was?'

Isabel raised her head and looked her mother in the face. She had never in her life looked so bonnie, Mrs Dysart thought. Her eyes were shining like two stars, but there was anger and impatience, not wonder or despair, in their look.

'I know very well,' she said almost fiercely, 'who Dr Stokes's Assistant was.'

'My bonnie woman!' was all Mrs Dysart could reply.

'And of course,' cried Isabel, 'they will put it all on him. But why was he to be wiser than his master? If he was the Assistant, he was not the great, great man. They'll break the Doctor's windows, but they'll be wanting the Assistant's life. It is just the way of the world.'

'Oh, my dear,' cried Mrs Dysart, 'how does a lassie like you know the way of the world? You must not speak like that, as if you were full of experience.' She added after a moment: 'Would you not like to hear what the paper says?'

'I care nothing about the paper,' cried Isabel. 'I know more than the paper. Mother, I've seen Willie Torrence. He's away to London—with a great opening and everything before him. And he says he'll be "Sir William" before all's done. And he wants me to go too.'

'The Lord forbid! The Lord forbid! Oh, not that, not that, Isabel; not a man like that!' cried Mrs Dysart, flinging up her arms in appeal to earth and heaven.

Isabel made no reply. She cared nothing now for the burning in her face, for the trembling of her hands, or that she had betrayed herself, and the tremendous ordeal she had just come through. The encounter with such great passions and unknown forces penetrated the girl's slight frame, so that every nerve and every thought was affected. What her mother thought of was that her child loved this man, and was going to fling her fresh and innocent life into the turbid flood of his; or perhaps meant to do that for sheer pity and the passion of self-sacrifice, which is like a fever in young veins.

'Isabel!' she said, 'O God forgive me, you'll think I was always against him; but it's not that now. Isabel! my darling, I'll not say a word. But promise me you will take time to think. You'll do nothing in a moment, nothing rash to bind you for your life. Think how young you are, and what a long, long time you have before you—to repent in, if you take a wrong step just in a rush of feeling—now!'

'Will you let me see, mother,' said Isabel in a constrained voice, 'what the paper says?'

But she could scarcely read the printed words. She knew—oh, much more, how much more! And she did not know what to say, how to answer her mother, who thought perhaps better

of her than she deserved; who thought that she was going to stand by him in his trouble, to be his defender and his consoler, and take that proverbial traditional part of the woman, rallying to the man at his worst, helping him to carry through! Oh, but Isabel was not that woman! and she was ashamed by her mother's instinctive certainty that she was. It would have been a finer, a far finer part, she believed, to play; the instincts of the girl would almost have vanquished her better sense had her excitement and agitation not been so great. She might have made that sacrifice in the rush, not of love, but of the quick sense that it was expected of her, had she not been so shaken by the encounter in the dark with that bold spirit, undismayed and unrepentant, like some great magnetic machine clearing, over everything that lay before it, its own blind determined way.

In the morning early, before the usual time of visitors, some one came to the front door of Wallyford, the door that was never used. Both mother and daughter were still so full of excitement, that the sound of the knocker went through them both as if it had been a summons of death. Mrs Dysart said afterwards that she thought nothing less than that it must be the 'pollis'-officers come there to look for him; they would not have found him at his mother's, and they would hear that he was often at Wallyford, and this would be them. What Isabel thought has never been disclosed; but she grew very pale, and stood stricken dumb in the middle of the room which she had been crossing to her seat in the window. 'Who will that be? God bless us! who will that be?' said Mrs Dysart. But Isabel never spoke a word. It was too much for her. She put her hand to her throat, as if she could not get her breath.

Both the ladies felt that instantaneous relief which perhaps is the most potential sensation of ease and comfort in existence, when the door opened and Mr Murray came in. Mrs Dysart gave a little laugh to herself in the sense of recovered life and satisfaction. 'Come away, Mr Murray,' she said. 'You gave us a fright with your knock at the big door. Most folk that know us well come round by the back door—Jenny's way, as we call it. I am just as glad to see you as the flowers in May.'

'Because I am nothing worse than James Murray,' he said.

'Oh, worse! Mr Murray, you're just joking—there could be nobody better,' said Mrs Dysart. 'Take a seat and tell us all your news. It's a long time since we have seen you here.'

This was not true, indeed, since he had been there the previous day; but in the trouble of her mind Mrs Dysart was not quite sure what she said.

'I am a bearer of tidings now,' he said with a little heightening of his colour. He was very fair, and had a transparent complexion which rose and fell like a girl's. 'I would not have come so early but that I have news. I went in to Edinburgh last night, thinking I might perhaps be of use; and I thought you would be glad to hear.'

'I'm sure it is very kind of you, and done with a most excellent intention,' said Mrs Dysart with dignity; 'but there is no news from Edin-

burgh, I think, that is of that importance to Isabel and me.'

'No?' he said doubtfully, looking from one to another, with a sudden sensation of being stopped short.

'There are none of our family settled there,' said Mrs Dysart. 'I have a daughter married in Glasgow, and one in the Highlands, and one'—

'Mother,' said Isabel, 'will you let the minister speak?' She was sitting very upright, with two red spots upon her cheeks, and her eyes fixed on that messenger of fate.

'Oh, speak by all means,' cried Mrs Dysart with a faint laugh. 'Isabel is always set on the news—whatever it is,' she added nervously.

Mr Murray snatched a glance at Isabel, sitting with her hands clasped tightly and those two red spots upon her cheeks. He said to himself bitterly: 'She can feel like that for him, while I'— And then he began his tale.

'There was something very like a riot in Edinburgh last night: there has not been so much excitement, they say, for many a year. Dr Stokes did not venture to budge from his house. If he had been seen, he would have been torn in pieces, I believe. The populace is a terrible thing. It's like a wild beast flailing its bloody paws.'

He was silent a little after this metaphor, half because of his own excitement, half to witness its effect on his hearers. They rewarded him by that long-drawn breath and shiver of attention which an orator loves.

'There was one that they were harder upon still. And that was—the Assistant, Mrs Dysart. When somebody suggested his name, there was a roar—like savage beasts. The Doctor himself might have been suffered; but him, the other one, they would have rended limb from limb. I was in great terror for—for Torrence, Mrs Dysart. One of our own parish, and—and—and—a man with like passions'—Mr Murray choked a little, and then went on—'a man in many things more fortunate and—gifted than any of us—a man that—I thought it would be a good thing to be there, and perhaps be able to do something for him, or lend a helping hand.'

'Eh, Mr Murray!' said Mrs Dysart with a half-sob.

'You will perhaps think I am making too much of it—but it was a serious moment, a very serious moment. I stayed till it was quite late, and a shower came on, and the people dispersed. Every night that passes is something gained in a kind of natural tumult like that. At last, by God's providence, I met Torrence, Mrs Dysart: and what a thing that it was me, and not some person with an ill meaning that had just to cry his name and get up a crowd in a moment. It was very wet in Edinburgh last night. I made him take my big cloak that I had on my shoulder, and wrap it well round his chin and his mouth. And I walked with him myself to Leith, and saw him safe in the London smack. He has a great deal of courage. He would have faced them all, if I had not held him to his resolution. I saw him safe in the London smack, and stayed till she sailed at five in the morning with a good wind, and the

dawn just beginning to break.—And I thought, he said after a pause, with a break of excitement in his voice, 'that you and Miss Isabel, being old friends, would like to know he was quite safe—and in good spirits, considering all.'

Mrs Dysart was crying quietly, overcome by sympathetic emotion, derived rather from the minister's strained voice and flushed cheek than from anxiety or grief. 'Eh,' she cried, only half articulate—'a friend—that sticketh closer than a brother.'

He lifted up his hand quickly. 'I'm not that kind of friend—I'm not that kind of friend. That's true of One that is the Friend of us all. It was because I thought that to hear of him safe might be—a relief to your minds.'

And then there was a moment of intense silence in the room. It was broken by Isabel saying steadily: 'He will never come to Edinburgh more!'

'Oh,' cried the generous minister, 'do not say that either! It will blow over. When passion's worn out, reason comes in. There are no doubt many circumstances—that we haven't heard. And things will be explained. And if you come to that, Miss Isabel,' he added with a faint smile, 'there are other skies than Edinburgh, and other places—if none so fair. And if a man has them that are faithful to him—to hold by him through all'—

Isabel rose quickly to her feet. 'There will be one that will be faithful to him, and that will be his mother,' she said. 'I hope you went first to her before you came to my mother and me?'

'I—I don't know that I thought of her,' the minister stammered, like a guilty man.

'And you came to us that were strangers to him! Oh yes, we know Willie Torrence well, since we were bairns together. But no more than that. And her that is his mother—his mother! Did you think what that means? You did wrong in that.'

'Isabel, Isabel! And how much more wrong are you, to be ungrateful for the minister's great kindness—all done to relieve our minds.—Oh, you are not to take any notice of what an impatient lassie says! I am truly grateful to you, Mr Murray,' Mrs Dysart cried, 'and so will she be when she comes to herself.'

'Miss Isabel is very right,' said the young minister. 'I am well reprov'd—I see I took a great deal upon myself in thinking—while it's true the mother's the first person, and no doubt about what must be in her mind.'

'The mother is just an auld fool,' Mrs Dysart said, drying her eyes.

'That was too much my opinion,' said Mr Murray, going meekly away.

There was not a word said between them as Mrs Dysart, not Isabel, saw him to the front door, and solemnly closed it upon him when he was gone. He went away shamefaced to the mother, whom he had not thought of, with his news; and she returned almost abashed to the ungrateful girl who had not appreciated his kindness. She found that ungrateful girl sobbing upon the shoulder of the old sofa with her face hidden upon it.

'Oh, I'm glad he's away,' Isabel cried—'I'm glad he's safe away! And he'll get the grand house and the carriage that he promised me, and

he'll be Sir William before he dies. But it's not me that is the faithful woman to stand by him. Oh; you may scorn at me, or you may scold at me, mother! I'm not good enough for that: but I'm too good for Willie Torrence. And that is all that I have to say.'

It was a great surprise, and perhaps a little shock, and yet an unspeakable relief to Isabel's mother. She would have almost liked her daughter to be that faithful woman—though that she should have been Torrence's wife would have filled her with despair.

The excitement blew over, the tumult ceased, the Professor resumed his classes. How far the suspicions of the populace were true or false, who could tell? Some people thought young Torrence had been made the scapegoat, and that if there was blame, it was the master first who ought to have borne the blame. And I believe he did bear it in a life-long prejudice and sentiment of popular dislike, if in no other way. As for Torrence, nothing of the kind could subdue him. He shook off the prejudice as he did the guilt, if there was any, from the buoyant shoulders of a man born to rise in the world. How far he regretted Isabel Dysart I am unable to say. But he was 'Sir William' before he died.

And all Musselburgh was glad in a neighbourly way when it was known, not very long after, that Mrs Dysart's last daughter was to settle so near her as at the Manse. One in Glasgow, and one in the Highlands, and one—

'But Isabel, the Lord be thanked,' said Uncle John and Aunt Mary, 'just a mile or two away.'

THE END.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A FELLOW of the Zoological Society has recently called attention to the fact that the African elephant is inevitably destined to become extinct if ivory traders are not stopped in their work of wholesale destruction of the animal. He points out that this destruction is in reality needless, for the tusks, for possession of which the animal is killed, being solid, can be cut off with a proper saw without pain to their owner. He further says: 'It seems to me that the ivory traders would gain time, save labour, and avoid the criminal folly of exterminating their source of revenue, if they could be induced to resort to this more humane method of obtaining ivory, instead of to the unnecessary and brutal butchery of vast herds of valuable, inoffensive, and tractable animals, which takes place year by year.' The capture of the animal and the removal of its tusks would naturally present difficulties, but these are not insurmountable, and might be disregarded in consideration of the beneficial results which such a course would entail.

Some one has found out that the metal aluminium will leave a mark on a slate, and from this observation has sprung a company in Germany for the supply of aluminium slate pencils. These pencils will be inexhaustible and unbreakable, and will require no pointing, while the

marks which they make can be easily erased with a wet sponge. Another use for the cheapened metal is found in the manufacture of tobacco pipes, the bowls of which are lined with meerschäum. Such a pipe is said to be much lighter than one of similar bulk made of briar root.

A recent and most potent implement of warfare is represented by the Gathmann Torpedo, which is both aerial and subaquatic in its nature—that is to say, when fired from a special form of gun, designed for it, it will travel arrow-like through the air; and should it strike water, its course will be continued in the same direction slightly below the surface. The torpedo is the shape of a cedar pencil, with the addition of wings, which aid it in its flight, and a propeller at its rear end, which is worked by mechanism within the body of the contrivance. It therefore has a source of motive-power besides that conferred upon it by the gun from which it is fired. A twelve-inch torpedo, having a length of ten feet, will carry more than three hundred-weight of one of the high explosives, and is said to have a range of several miles.

Some time has elapsed since any balloon ascents have been made for strictly scientific purposes, and the feat accomplished by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell in 1862, when a height of twenty-nine thousand feet above the level of the sea was recorded by their barometer, has never been excelled. M. Hermite has during the past summer constructed several ingenious self-recording instruments for scientific investigation of the upper regions of the atmosphere by means of balloons; and many of these balloons, which are of small size and carry no passengers, have been sent up from Paris, and have fallen sometimes as far away from the city as two hundred miles. These balloons and their attached instruments are returned to their proprietor in obedience to instructions, printed on an attached card. One of these little balloons lately reached, according to the barometer it carried—to a height of thirty thousand feet; and M. Hermite believes that with a balloon which he is now constructing he can reach to a point nearly ten thousand feet higher.

The occurrence last winter of shipwrecks on our shores, proving unfortunately in a very sad manner the inadequacy of present life-saving appliances, moved the proprietors of one of the London papers to offer a prize of one hundred pounds for a life-saving apparatus which should fulfil certain conditions, one of the principal of which was that by its connection might be made from ship to shore without aid from any one on land. The result of this offer was the presentation of more than two thousand schemes. That which, in the opinion of the judges, was the best contrivance sent in, was devised by Messrs Thompson & Noble of Southampton. It consists of a rocket head, which directly it touches earth expands into the form of a powerful grapnel. One of its chief recommendations is that it can be adapted to the rocket apparatus now in use. The judges conclude their Report on this interesting competition by stating that they believe that if properly conducted experiments were

authorised, a still more satisfactory rocket and grapnel would be evolved. 'We do not think,' they write, 'that finality is yet nearly reached.'

At a recent meeting of the Royal United Service Institution (London), Captain G. S. Macilwaine read a paper on the Ventilation of Ships, in the course of which he urged the importance of fixing a standard of air supply for men and beasts, so that proper ventilating apparatus should be considered a matter of first necessity. He also impressed upon commanding officers the sanitary value of cleanliness among the men, and the constant airing of both bedding and clothes. Various methods of ventilation were described.

The Arcas process of electro-silvering, which is now being worked by a company in London, is said to give a harder and therefore more durable coating of the metal than can be deposited under the older system. It consists in associating with the silver a certain proportion of cadmium. The latter metal is *per se* softer than silver; but the mixture follows the rule with regard to many other alloys in producing a compound which differs in physical qualities from its components. The Arcas process is said to give a coating which does not differ in appearance from one of pure silver, while at the same time it tarnishes less easily, can be more readily cleaned, and adheres with greater tenacity to the metal upon which it is electrically deposited. It is somewhat cheaper, too, than the older method.

The old illusory device known as the Wheel of Life, or Zoetrope, in which a number of figures, changing rapidly before the eye, give the idea of movement, has entered upon a new lease of popularity since it was found possible to replace the rough drawings previously used by photographs taken from living beings. By the photographic apparatus devised by Anchtitz of Berlin, it is possible to take two dozen different pictures of a horseman while in the act of leaping over a hedge, each picture describing a particular portion of his flight. When these photographs are placed in the Zoetrope, the horse and his rider appear instinct with life. Apparatus for showing various moving pictures of this kind, to be set in motion on the penny-in-the-slot principle, are now to be seen in the German capital, and will presently be introduced into Britain. We have recently seen the apparatus in action, and can vouch for its efficiency.

A great extension of electric lighting in private houses may be looked for by the expiry of the patents which refer to the incandescent or glow-lamp system. This will happen, we believe, in about eighteen months' time, and prospective users of this beautiful form of illumination will do well to content themselves with their old lamps for the time being. The cost of renewing a glow-lamp—and their tenure of life is quite uncertain—is at present about four shillings and sixpence. When the patents run out, it is believed that this sum will be reduced to about one shilling, for the cost of making a lamp of this description is below that sum.

In a United States Consular Report appears a statement with regard to the production in England of oil of sweet almonds. It is there stated that the trade is carried on principally, if not only, by two London firms, and that the

method of manufacture is to crush the kernels by hydraulic pressure, and to distil oil from the cake so formed. It is also stated that a similar industry is carried on at Havre, where a cheaper and inferior oil is produced from peach kernels.

Our agricultural readers will do well to note the fact that an official recipe for the compounding of *Bouillie Bordelaise*, which has proved such an effective specific for potato blight, appears in a recent number of the *Kew Bulletin*. As this paper is not readily accessible, we reproduce the directions for its preparation: Forty-five pounds of copper sulphate (blue stone) are enclosed in a bag of coarse canvas, and suspended in a vessel of water (two hundred and twenty gallons). In a separate vessel, twenty-two and a half pounds of quicklime are slaked by added water, and are passed through a sieve into the copper solution. This quantity of the mixture is sufficient for one acre of land.

Some idea of the vast area of the World's Fair buildings at Chicago may be gleaned from the arrangements adopted for painting them. It was found that even if a large army of brushworkers were employed in the ordinary manner, it would be quite impossible to complete the work in time; so human handiwork has been dispensed with, and an ingenious machine has been constructed with the most satisfactory results. This consists of a gas-pipe, flattened at one end so as to form a spray producer, and it is connected with an air-pump driven by an electric motor, and a barrel of liquid paint. By this contrivance the paint is sucked up from the barrel and discharged in a cloud on the surface to be coloured, and by its aid a handful of workmen are able to get over more space in a day than ten times their number could accomplish in a week under ordinary conditions.

The Berlin police have adopted a common-sense method of dealing with persons who advertise harmful and poisonous preparations for sale, which has the merit of not putting in motion the tardy and uncertain machinery of the law. Immediately beneath the objectionable advertisement they publish the announcement that the preparation above named has been analysed, and is found to consist of such and such a composition, its intrinsic value being so much. In this way lately was stopped the sale of a much-advertised cosmetic, the chief component of which was that deadly salt of mercury known as corrosive sublimate.

The inhalation of pure oxygen has proved such a valuable remedy in certain acute stages of disease, and has been so highly spoken of by leading members of the medical profession, that Brin's Oxygen Company—who, it will be remembered, obtain the gas direct from the atmosphere, and can therefore guarantee perfect freedom from chemical contamination—have made arrangements by which a cylinder of compressed gas can be obtained at their works at any hour of the day or night.

Winter has brought the usual protests against, and proposals for the annihilation of fog, to be forgotten for another twelve months as soon as the buds shall begin to show under the more genial skies of spring. It is the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society which has been the first to complain, on the

ground that as London fogs are causes of inconvenience and loss to horticultural interests within the metropolitan area, their chemical composition, amount of sulphurous acid which they carry, and their nature and extent, should be investigated, and they invite the co-operation of other Societies in the work. It is also suggested that the London Council should tackle the fog question in addition to its other multifarious duties. Such an investigation can do but little good, for the causes of these fogs are already well known, and their composition is very apparent to persons possessed of the senses of seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. If the Committee can invent and cause to be adopted a smokeless fireplace, they will cure the evil. There is no other effective remedy.

An interesting account of the Camphor Industry of Japan is contained in a Report by the United States Council at Osaka, which is reprinted in the *Board of Trade Journal*. The camphor tree, a species of laurel, is often of an enormous size, and is of very handsome growth. By a stringent law, any one which is cut down for camphor-making must be at once replaced by a sapling. The wood is cut into chips, which are steamed in a wooden vessel placed over a pot of boiling water, the steam, carrying the oil and camphor, being led by a bamboo pipe to other vessels. By means of this rough still, the oil and crystals of camphor are separated from one another—the former being used by the natives for illuminating and other purposes; while the latter is packed in tubs, holding more than one hundred pounds each, ready for market. There are three qualities of camphor, depending upon the amount of adulteration to which they have been subjected, which consists of the addition of as much oil and water as the buyer will tolerate. Camphor wood has a close grain, and is much valued both for shipbuilding and cabinet-making.

It would seem that the anti-fouling compound or paint available to our naval authorities must belie its name, for from the bottom of Her Majesty's ship *Northampton*, the flagship at the Nore, fifty tons of barnacles have recently been removed. It was remarked during the late naval manoeuvres that this vessel would only steam at about a quarter her normal speed, and now the reason of her sluggishness is apparent.

A new material, which may be described as concrete having a basis of wood instead of stone, is being made in Germany principally from waste products. These consist of wood shavings, sawdust, and chips, combined with lime, glycerine, sodium silicate, and linseed oil. This mortar is pressed in moulds, and left until hard and dry, when it can be turned, sawn, planed, polished, and treated in every way as if it were a close-grained wood.

Those who live in the near neighbourhood of large railway stations know to their cost how the fog signals go on exploding without intermission in thick weather. One railway company uses in a single district about six thousand of these miniature torpedoes during the winter season; their manufacture indeed represents an important industry, carried on chiefly at Greenwich and Birmingham. The fog detonator consists of a waterproof tin box containing a charge of gunpowder and three percussion caps. It is fastened

to the rail by means of lead clips, and pressure of the engine-wheel causes it to explode.

The British Vice-consul at Nicolaieff reports that a Society is being formed in Russia with a view to promote the production of silk in that province. The soil and climate are both admirably adapted for the growth of the mulberry tree, which flourishes wherever it is planted; and it is stated that there are many available tracts of ground now covered with weeds which could be usefully planted with these trees. The Society will endeavour to interest the peasants and poor classes in the matter, and they have every hope of being able in this way to lay the foundation of what may prove to be a large and flourishing industry.

Three very remarkable photographs of Swift's comet were lately taken by Professor Barnard at the Lick Observatory. The pictures were taken at intervals of about twenty-four hours, and it is quite astonishing to notice the changes the comet has undergone in this short interval of time. In each picture the surrounding stars are represented by short white lines parallel to the comet's motion, for the instrument employed in taking it was necessarily made to follow the path of the comet, and not the apparent motion of the stars. Professor Barnard regards these pictures as a revelation, and says that if they 'had been drawn by the most competent observer, most astronomers would probably have attributed their remarkable differences to the unskilful hand of the artist, for there is absolutely no resemblance among them.' This eminent astronomer also believes that the pictures—which, by the way, have been reproduced by our contemporary *Knowledge*—afford some evidence of the possible rotation of the tail of the comet, and this new feature is one to be looked for and determined in future observations.

A renewed outcry has been made about what is called the 'advertising plague,' by which is meant the exhibition in our streets, railway stations, and other public places of advertisements referring to all sorts of commodities. Those who have initiated this protest against what is a very important item in commerce, would do well to confine their objections to the nature of some of the pictorial advertisements rather than to their summary extinction. Some of the productions which we see posted about our streets are certainly most objectionable and inartistic; while others, it must be admitted, are really works of art, which have an educational value. It would be well if some controlling authority were appointed to say what should and what should not appear on a street hoarding; and we should certainly rejoice if the same official were to prevent railway companies from hiding the names of their stations amid similarly lettered labels of mustard, soap, coals, &c. The proverbial needle in a bundle of hay is far easier to find than the name of a railway station among the groceries, &c., with which it is commonly mixed up.

The recent death of Lord Romilly from a lamp accident has again drawn public attention to the unsatisfactory character of the petroleum in common use. A paper read at the last meeting of the Society of Chemical Industry in Glasgow pointed out that Government per-

mitted oil which will explode at a temperature of seventy-three degrees Fahrenheit to be sold to the public; while for use by its own servants it will not accept any oil giving off inflammable vapour under one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit. If our intelligent Government servants are not sufficiently protected unless they have an oil which will not flash under one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit, how, it is asked, are the ignorant poor, who are the largest consumers of burning-oil sufficiently protected by an oil which gives off explosive vapour at seventy-three degrees Fahrenheit? In America, whence most of our petroleum comes, the majority of the States require a flash-point of about one hundred and five degrees Fahrenheit; so that it would appear we accept the inferior oils which are not saleable in the country of their origin. Burning-oil is a necessary of life to the poor; and the artistic forms in which lamps are now produced make it a desirable adjunct to the luxuries of the rich. It is therefore reasonably contended that Government should not allow the importation of oils that will not stand a temperature of at least one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, a condition which has always been maintained by the paraffin oils produced in Scotland.

A MOONLIGHT SURPRISE-PARTY.

Four of us started—two in a light wagon, two on horseback. We were well armed, revolvers and shot-guns, the latter loaded with buckshot. We were bent on rather a doubtful venture—that of intercepting and capturing, if possible, two stock thieves, for whom warrants had been issued by the local Court, and who were known to be in our district, trying to cross into Idaho. These men, father and son, were desperadoes of an average Western type. They were suspected of having been concerned in more than one murder in the past, and their record for years as cattle and horse thieves could not well be improved on. They were desperate men, thoroughly up to every trick in the mountains, were well armed and horsed, and had boasted that they never would be taken alive. The Sheriff, in whose hands the warrants were, had come to us for the information and assistance we had offered. 'We' simply were representatives of a larger number of stock-owners, who had made up their minds that they would free themselves from the domination and severe loss arising from the concerted action of an organised gang of thieves, some of whom we had already sent out of the country, and the very 'head-centre' or chief of whom we were determined to capture on this present expedition, if it was within the range of possibility.

The little village where we met in the afternoon was in a ferment of excitement. Every one knew we were after Old Sam; and out of some seventy souls, over fifty hoped we would not get him. Stock-thieves are more or less popular with the miners; I hardly know why, unless it is because the latter can always buy cheap beef from the former. Strategy was necessary for our purpose, so we carelessly inquired of some luke-

warm friends whether it was true that our men had been seen that morning going in a certain direction, adding that we supposed we should take the same direction in following them. We were confidentially told soon afterwards by another 'doubtful' friend that we were right in our proposed course, and that we should doubtless overtake our men that evening.

Information from our own spies determined us to go in a contrary direction altogether; and so long as we succeeded in throwing Sam's partisans off their guard, believing as they did that we were on a fool's errand, we were satisfied. We did not wish to be followed; and we succeeded so thoroughly in concealing our real intentions, that the loafers, spies, and friends of Sam and his gang retired to the saloon, where they gleefully drank confusion to us and our errand.

At midnight we started, our course lying up a long narrow gulch or ravine, with a solitary cabin at the head. One of our men had told us that Sam's horse was dead lame, that a friend would bring him a fresh horse that night, or morning rather, and that he and his son—a young ruffian of twenty-five years—would rest at the cabin that night. The cabin was occupied by an odd eccentric old man, who cared little for any one or that one's business, provided that he himself was paid for his services. We did not feel sanguine as to the result of our expedition; the least oversight might cause us to lose our game—for they were a wily pair, and sharp and cunning as coyotes (small wolves). Suddenly, a bright gleam ahead loomed out like a brilliant star in the gloom, for the half-moon was only rising. We felt at once we were on the right track, as no one without special cause would have such a light at that hour—now one o'clock A.M. Cautiously approaching the cabin, we fastened the team horses to some willow-bushes. One rider dismounting, the other rode slowly up to the open door, leading the odd horse. Opposite the door stood the hearth, on which was piled a roaring fire of pine-logs, the light from which streamed into the outside darkness, and gave the brilliant gleam we had noticed a mile away. Our plan was to personate the friend who was bringing the fresh horse for Sam to escape on. We were uncertain whether this plan would succeed; but we had little time for consideration, and had to work quickly.

The old man in the cabin hearing the horses' steps outside, came to the door, and with eyes half-blinded by the sudden change from light to darkness, could only see the outlines of the animals and man before him. He said: 'Is that you, George?' not suspecting the ruse being played on him.

Our man in a low tone replied: 'Yes; where are the boys?'—meaning Sam and his son.

'Lying just behind the corral, having a snooze,' was the answer.

To slip off his horse and tie both animals by their halter-straps to the cabin post was but a moment's work, and then, in a low hissing whisper, we heard the words of call: 'Come quick, boys; we've got them.'

We were standing as close in as we dared for the firelight from the open door; we had dashed through a mountain stream in front of the cabin, failing to find the log footway, and were soaking

to our waists; and rushing after our comrade behind the cabin, we found our men curled up in their blankets, but fully dressed and armed. The moon was rising over the hill-range, and threw a weird half-light on the scene—a scene liable at any moment to turn into a tragedy; for Old Sam was like a fox, and rarely closed both eyes at once. He had heard our voices, and instinctively suspecting trouble, had grasped his ivory-handled revolver, without which he never moved, ate, or slept. Another second, and some one would have been hurt; but the Sheriff—a wiry, muscular dare-devil—pointing his gun at Sam—only ten feet distant—said quietly: 'Sam, put that hand down.' Slowly, reluctantly, but surely, did the hand lower, and the muzzle of the pistol with it; for Sam knew his man, and knew that delay in obeying that order meant a load, and perhaps two loads, of buckshot into his beloved body.

Running to the cabin, I seized two candles, and returning with them above my head, threw a brighter light on the most intensely real scene I have ever witnessed: Old Sam surprised in the act of rising from the ground, revolver in hand, but with lowered muzzle; the Sheriff still pointing his gun, with both hammers cocked, and finger on trigger; the son, with uplifted hands, perfectly still, silent, and watchful; the others of our party with pointed guns; myself with carbine in one hand and candles in the other; the murderous look of baffled rage in Sam's eyes; the grim determination on the faces of our party; the strong lights and shadows from the flaring candles, made an indelible picture in my mind, that years have not effaced and never will, I think. Sam was a quick and ready shot, and a second's delay might have made a very different ending to our little expedition. We handcuffed our prisoners, and taking them to the wagon, let them sit down, while two of our party went down the gulch to intercept the friend who was to bring Sam his fresh horse. But we did not find him. Possibly, he saw something wrong on nearing the cabin, and so retired.

Placing our prisoners in the wagon, we started homeward, the riders in front to show the road, as it was now getting very dark, heavy clouds having come up. Suddenly two strange horsemen appeared in front, and they were as suddenly challenged by our riders, ordered to instantly throw up their hands and state who they were and their business. This request was backed up by the presenting of two navy revolvers almost in their faces. Raising their hands, and declaring they were unarmed—which we found to be true, on searching them—they indignantly protested against our high-handed action, claiming their rights as American citizens to traverse the Public Range when and where they pleased. By way of reply we ordered them to fall in behind our wagon, our riders following close behind them, with a hint that attempts at escape might be dangerous. We knew them to be active friends and partisans of our prisoners, and a rescue was quite a possible undertaking; so we felt no scruple about gathering them in and taking them with us to our destination, where we released them with some brief but good advice as to availing bad company in future—advice that did not seem to be appreciated, judging from

the volleys of profanity they hurled at us as they retired. At the village, a friendly storekeeper opened his place, lighted stove and lamps, and there we kept guard over our men till daylight, giving them hot coffee, whisky, bread, and cigars—all we had. Then safely tucking them up in the wagon, handcuffed, and also chained to the seat, under the escort of the Sheriff and two men, we saw them well on their way to the county jail, some twenty-five miles off. Loud was the wailing and gnashing of teeth amongst the friends of the gang next day when they realised our success and their utter failure. Our own satisfaction was not lessened by the reflection that three of our party were Englishmen.

THE WOODLANDS HOAR,

THE heavy rime of a wintry morning lies white and cold on the wide bare fields, that are shrouded in the distance by yet colder volumes of cloudy vapour, that rolls heavily in mid-air as the chill north wind rises and falls in uncertain eddies round the leafless trees. Here and there an old barn or cowshed stands cold and desolate-looking in the misty silence; the fruitful fields, so lately covered with the golden treasures of harvest, are now lying fallow, their ripened crops safely garnered. The laughing brook is transformed into a sullen stream, waiting for the few more degrees of frost to turn it into ice. There seems little inviting out of doors on such a day; one shivers at the drifting mist and long shadowed lanes and stubble-fields, or turnip patches, where a few sheep are huddled in closely. But wait awhile—there is still plenty to interest any one with observant eyes; the lanes are lonely, but the hedgerows are bright with the berries of hips and haws; and in and out amongst the bare thorn-bushes are scores of tits and sparrows, hunting for their food, with busy, restless wings, and quaint little chirpings of exultation and satisfaction.

Now comes a chilly gleam from the pallid sun, and lights up the innumerable crystals clinging to the trees and hedgerows, where yet straggle long trails of blackberry, with four or five brilliant leaves not yet fallen, and some soddened fruit. Down in the sedgy ditch are brilliant orange berries of the wild arum. Farther on, a turn brings us to the woods, where the close undergrowth shelters, snug and warm, so many of our friends of fur and feather, where hares, rabbits, and squirrels burrow in comfortable quarters. Fieldfares and redwings are busy amongst the berry-bearing trees, uttering soft undernotes in call and reply. Flocks of finches rise hastily from the heaps of dead leaves, where their insect and larva food is found, uttering their sharp 'Pink, Pink' as they whirl over the hedge; and the active little tree-creeper 'twits' gaily from the fork of a decayed branch as it digs its sharp slender beak under the mossy lichen-covered bark for the minute grubs and flies it finds there. Under the low-growing branches of the holly there is a covey of partridges hustled close to the ground. As they rise sharply and

'whirl' away, you find the dry moss is warm and soft and sweet-smelling.

The early part of winter was singularly mild and open—very little frost before Christmas; and now, early as it is in the year, faint touches of renewed life are visible in the hardier shrubs and plants—the spines of the beech and birch are brighter: under the dead leaves are green blades of grass; and freshly budded violets, tiny green knots, but still there. Now and then the rooks grow noisy and whirl about the tree-tops.

The sun has disappeared again, and the wind moans fitfully in the hedges; the mist has changed to heavy gray clouds; the atmosphere seems charged with a fine impalpable powder, that falls through the leafless trees with a soft hissing sound: faster it comes down, and lo! in a few minutes the scene has changed; a white cold mantle is over the woods that looked so warm and sheltered; and getting into the lane, the whirling north wind drives round the corner and over the barren uplands, with a keen sharpness unfelt in the morning. The sharp fine snow cuts the face into a tingling glow; but the nerves are braced; and striding quickly homewards through the eddying wind, imagination pictures the warm room and red firelight that will welcome our return the more pleasantly for our brisk, invigorating walk through the rough weather.

OLD VOICES.

ACROSS the seas they come to me,
Old voices of a happier day,
When Love was young and Hope was high,
And flowers grew bright about my way.
I sit within the rose-girt pane,
And watch the tranquil western sun
Dip gently in the golden sea,
And think of friends for ever gone.
And while I gaze and think, to me
There come old voices o'er the sea.

I hear them when alone I stroll
Along the white surf-beaten shore;
They mingle in the fisher's song,
Heard 'mid the lull of ocean's roar:
And when with toilsome steps, and slow,
I struggle up the fern-clad cliffs
Which slope in beauty from the bay,
And watch far off the fading skiffs,
They whisper of old times to me,
These voices from across the sea.

So when night curtains sea and shore,
And white stars gleam across the wild,
And underneath the shadowy limes
With thoughts of other days beguiled
I linger long, too sad to rest,
For in this lonely heart of mine,
There whisper as from long ago
Old echoes that have grown divine;
Old echoes from across the sea,
They whisper of old times to me.

WILLIAM COWAN.

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A CITY OF WISCONSIN.

BY ONE OF ITS CITIZENS.

PERHAPS some of your readers would desire to hear of the rise of a town or city in what, forty years ago, could well be styled the Far West, situated as the site was then in the wilds of Wisconsin. But in a country of the size of the United States of America, where the current of immigration is continually flowing past a certain point towards the setting sun, the inhabitants of the city of Oshkosh think they cannot any longer be classed as residing in the Far West, and they themselves are apt to apply that term to such places as border on the Rocky Mountains, or those States which are bounded by the Pacific Ocean. The name of Oshkosh is so unique and uncommon, that to many residents of distant places in the country it is popularly supposed to be a mythic city, they not even taking the trouble to look the matter up in a gazetteer. In the large theatres of the eastern cities, when the funny man bounces on the stage and is asked where he comes from, if he gives Oshkosh as the answer, he is invariably greeted with the most tumultuous applause, a circumstance which is certain to raise the ire of any citizen of our burgh who may happen to be present. However, there is no question but that our beautiful city really exists, and that of late years it has been coming into prominence, not only as a summer resort, but in various other ways, as we shall see.

The city was originally named after a celebrated chief of a tribe of Indians who made the shores of Lake Winnebago in years gone by their hunting-grounds. The situation is pleasant and well chosen, being on a point at which the Fox River enters the lake. This latter body of water is about thirty miles in length, and from ten to fourteen in breadth. Its depth will not average more than twenty-five feet. It is the largest body of fresh water within the confines of a single State, and its appearance indicates that it

was far larger in former times—a fact which can easily be confirmed by the shells, sand, and drift found at long distances from its present boundaries. Along the ridges and high lands which border the lake, traces of the Glacial Age are plainly to be seen in the boulders, composed of granite and gneiss, which are to be found scattered about, and which vary in size from a foot in diameter to several tons in weight. There are no quarries of any such stone to be found near here, and these wanderers seem to be well rounded and scored from the friction to which they had been subjected.

Oshkosh in former years was a great lumber centre, and nearly all the 'cut'—that is, the daily output of a saw-mill—was then disposed of within the State, to supply the needs of the emigrants who flocked to the land of promise. The supply of standing pine was then situated only at a short distance from the settlement, and the logs which were cut in the winter could be sawn early in the following summer: but now, all is changed; the standing pine is distant from the city over two hundred miles, and it takes a second summer to float the saw-logs to the few mills which are still in operation. Nearly all the saw-mills have been moved up north nearer to the pine, and the few which remain supply the higher grades of lumber for the use of such factories as make sash, doors, and venetian blinds. There are more of these articles turned out in a year here than in any other city of the United States. Some of the factories make as many as a thousand doors, with sash and blinds in the same proportion, in a single day. Oshkosh also possesses the largest match-factory in the country, an establishment which is yearly being extended in size; and if the white pine only holds out, there is no telling what will be its ultimate capacity.

The unit of measure in lumber in Wisconsin, and in fact all over the States, is one thousand superficial feet one inch in thickness. It is sold at so much per thousand, according to grade. The mills in Oshkosh range in capacity from

an output of sixty up to one hundred and twenty-five thousand feet every ten hours, that being considered a day's work; but such capacity or output, great as it seems, is far exceeded by mills in the northern peninsula of Michigan, some of which are able to cut two hundred and fifty thousand feet each day.

Within the past six years, band-saws have entirely superseded the large five-foot circulars formerly in use. The reason of the change is, that thinner saws can be made to do the work better, and with less waste of material, for that which heretofore passed off in refuse or sawdust is now utilised as lumber. 'It would have been well had the change in the cutting of lumber been introduced years ago, for then there would not have been the reckless waste of the magnificent pine forests of this section of the country.

The first or highest class of saw-logs are composed of soft white pine, and eminently suited for the manufacture of sash, doors, blinds, and match-splints. Therefore no logs but of a superior grade are commonly sent for sale to Oshkosh, for the cost of driving or of floating a low class of logs a distance of two hundred miles would not pay expenses; such a class of logs being manufactured into 'culls'—the cheapest class of lumber—and 'common' lumber, near the spot where they were cut; and when manufactured, the lumber is shipped per rail to the various States where there is a demand for it.

But the industry which dwarfs and overshadows all others in our beautiful burgh at present is the cutting of ice on Lake Winnebago. The winter of 1889-90 was a phenomenal one all over the western States. Even in this latitude there were but a few really cold days, and as a consequence, little if any ice could be put up at Milwaukee, Chicago, or other cities. Those companies engaged in the business south of us were therefore compelled to come north to get a supply for the vast requirements of their trade during the coming summer. This state of affairs happened only twice before in a period of seventeen years. It is difficult for a person living in a cool climate like that of the British Islands to realise the magnitude of the ice industry in the United States. What a few years since was considered as a luxury, is now regarded as an article of prime necessity. Its uses are so various, that I do not see how people could get along without it. The daily supply deposited in the kitchens of the rich and poor forms but a small portion of the uses to which it is applied. The demand for it at the breweries, the meat-markets, the creameries, and also in the shipping of fish and fruits in the refrigerating cars, consumes a quantity which is enormous. To stand on the banks of our lake and view the fifteen hundred or perhaps two thousand men together with the large squadron of horses and portable steam-engines, all at work from six o'clock in the morning till ten at night, then a person is apt to realise in a small degree the magnitude of the work, and the vast quantity of ice necessary to carry a few cities safely over our fervid summers.

Oshkosh is only one of the places on our lake where the ice companies work; they are also to be found equally busy wherever there are shipping facilities, or where the various railroads can

run side-tracks to the water. This statement applies not only to Lake Winnebago, but to every body of water all over the North-west from which ice can be loaded on the cars and shipped south. The system applied here to the work reduces the cost of cutting the ice and placing it either in the gigantic stores or on board the cars to from sevenpence to one and sevenpence per ton; and the freight to Chicago is about four shillings more; while speculators in 1890 were buying up all the ice in Oshkosh at from ten shillings to twelve and sixpence per ton—thus giving a handsome profit to the ice-cutters. The quantity cut that year within six weeks and stored here was computed at one hundred and fifty thousand tons; and during that time one thousand cars have been shipped direct, ranging from fifteen to twenty tons each car. The ice on the lake runs from fourteen to twenty inches in thickness; and in exceptionally cold winters it has been as thick as three feet. When an ice-field is chosen for operations, the snow has to be removed with scrapers and dumped into a hole in the water; then a man marks it off with an ice-plough, drawn by a steady team of horses, into oblong squares sixteen by twenty-four inches; and he is followed by the regular ice-ploughs, which cut four inches in depth, and commonly go over the field a second time. The work is now ready for the crew of men furnished with slender steel bars, provided with chisel points, who force the blocks of ice asunder with a single downward stroke; and then they are pushed through a narrow canal by another crew till they are hoisted by the steam-engines, in endless chains, up an inclined plane either into the stores or on board the railroad cars.

The instruments which are used to cut into the ice, although called ploughs, do not bear much resemblance to those used in tillage. They consist of seven cast-steel cutters, three-eighths of an inch in thickness, secured in a plough-beam, and all set on one level. They are kept very sharp, and do the work most effectively. A team of horses draws them along with all the ease possible. Oshkosh has derived a most substantial benefit from this industry, as it comes at a season of the year when work is difficult to procure, and a large portion of the population would otherwise be compelled to pass the winter in enforced idleness.

The companies cutting ice here, besides paying out large sums for labour, buy all their supplies of lumber, nails, and sawdust for packing, at this point, and the city gives in return many acres of frozen water. There is no doubt of it but Oshkosh gets the best of the bargain.

That portion of Wisconsin contiguous to the State of Michigan is rich in iron and copper deposits, nor is it destitute of even veins of silver and gold; but the latter two are not present in such quantities as would be considered worth the cost of development. The State of Michigan is also abundantly supplied with mineral wealth; but in neither case can any of the ore taken out in the State be smelted near the mines, for there is no coal found in either of these States. It is much to be regretted that there is no fuel for smelting purposes; for if there were, this would be one of the greatest manufacturing points on the face of the globe, as the

people have all the vim and push for which the North-western States are famous.

It certainly does seem strange to have such vast bodies of mineral wealth in sight and yet possess no adequate means of utilising it on the spot. The ore has all to be shipped to Cleveland by boat, and to Joliet by rail, as at these points coal is abundant, and there are large smelting-works where the ore can be got ready for the market. The ore is of the richest that is mined, much of it being composed of hematite, and resembles a pure pigment of a deep-brown colour, and is so soft as to be easily crushed to powder under the foot.

The copper mines have every indication of having been worked in prehistoric times, for the galleries of former days are to be seen, and even the tools used in taking out the deposits were found by the miners who now work them. The woodwork of these tools was decayed, and fell to dust when touched, but the metal part was as intact as when formerly used. By whom were these tools wielded? Not certainly by the Indians of to-day, for they had not the industry to use tools, neither did they possess any weapons constructed of metal when they first came in contact with the white races. We find well-constructed copper spears and lances scattered all over the north-western country, but we never for a moment entertain the idea that they ever belonged to the races with whom we have been brought in contact. We know their ancestors must have been too lazy and nomadic to have manufactured such things.

In all human probability they belonged to a race of partially civilised beings, possibly the mound-builders, who certainly antedate the present Indian race. We find evidence even at this late day of the works of this curious people, who covered all the beautiful spots in the West with effigies of their industry, which in many instances have escaped the march of improvement and the plough of the pioneer. These mounds in the early spring attract the attention of even the most casual visitor, who may happen to see in the dark-green grass either the figures of fanciful animals depicted on the tumuli, or else a class which has become, like their delineators, extinct.

To this race also may have belonged the shapely copper spear and lance heads formed with socket joints now to be found in the museums of the country, and also the pieces of pottery, which are daily turned up with the plough as it passes over the sites of their former villages. In this State we often find what is called 'float copper,' which are pieces varying in weight from one to five pounds scattered promiscuously. They are formed of very pure copper, and appear certainly at one time to have been subjected to intense heat. Not unfrequently masses of ore one and two hundred pounds in weight have been discovered, which possibly formed part of a moraine in the glacial age of the world. It is to be regretted that the cupidity of the finders induced them to sell these masses, instead of depositing them in some museum with a short account of their history, so far as known, and other circumstances which might be of interest with regard to them. A few years ago one of these masses was built into a culvert on

the main road in the township of Black Wolf, six miles south of Oshkosh, and it was only when heavy rains had washed away the stiff clay from it that its brightness revealed it to be an almost solid lump of copper.

At the south-western portion of Lake Superior, where it forms the northern boundary of Wisconsin, there is a cluster of islands known as the Apostles Group. These islands are not only rich in mineral wealth, but also possess quarries of a valuable description of stone, of a dark-brown variety, which is largely used in the Western cities as a facing for the more important and expensive buildings. The freedom from flaws or cracks in these quarries renders it possible to obtain stone of almost any size. There is one at present being got out intended for exhibition at the Columbian exposition at Chicago, which stone will be the largest monolith in the world. It is said to be thirty feet longer than the obelisk now in Central Park, New York, which was brought a few years ago from Egypt. Special flat cars will have to be built for the transportation of the stone to the Garden City, and when it is in position on the Fair grounds, it will no doubt attract the attention of the foreigners who will come to visit us. The speed with which it was taken from the quarry bed will serve to show the world that with the appliances of to-day we can in a few weeks accomplish work which would task the ancient Egyptians several years to perform. With the aid of steam, diamond drills, and the electric light, we have of course the Genii in harness of which the Orientals only dreamed. Still, in one thing they will surpass us, for their stone being covered with hieroglyphics, will plainly tell its own story, as it has told it for centuries; ours, being unlettered, will require the aid of the printing-press to tell its history to the passing stranger.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN CORBAN, AUTHOR OF *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER VII.—HOW AINSWORTH SOLVED HIS PROBLEM.

WHEN he was on the platform among a crowd of people, he began to wonder whether the days of the week, as well as he, had gone wrong; by the calendar it should be Wednesday, and yet the show of the platform was as that of Saturday. When he entered the train—he travelled third-class, as every intelligent, humane, and self-respecting young man should travel—and observed that he was in the midst of those who were plainly holiday-makers, he was certain the times must be out of joint. Then, suddenly, he remembered it was Whitsuntide; and that explained all. For Whitsuntide is the great Feast—as it were, the Feast of Tabernacles—of Lancashire. In the south, men forget that it is Whitsuntide after Tuesday; but in Lancashire it is Whitsuntide from Sunday to Sunday. Then manufactures, mining, and handicrafts are mostly idle for a week; then the voice of the cornet and the fife are heard in the land, and then the whole population 'wallers'—like Tom Sawyer—

'in Sunday schools,' Sunday-school treats, and Sunday-school processions.

All these manners and customs of Whitsuntide Ainsworth was well enough acquainted with, but he had forgotten it was Whitsuntide. Now that he remembered, he was struck with its significance. Were it not that he was being whirled to Holdsworth as fast as the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company could carry him, he would have stayed in town; for he was sure that Holdsworth Park would be overrun by the gay and free young Sunday scholars. But he must go on; and he comforted himself with the thought that, at the worst, Holdsworth Park was large enough to afford some seclusion, even after the Sunday scholars had all the elbow-room they wanted.

At Holdsworth not many passengers left the train. They went their several ways, and he alone went on to Holdsworth Park. In the lane leading towards the village he witnessed a scene which reminded him of a similar one in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, a scene which it would be impossible to see enacted out of our dear, delightful, absurd, but good-humoured England. From opposite directions came with brazen bands and flaunting banners the Sunday-school processions of church and chapel; and Ainsworth mounted the bank to witness the encounter; for the lane was not wide enough to permit each to pass the other freely. On they came with clergyman and pastor at their head, like captains of their troop, and with school teachers distributed along their flanks like sergeants and corporals. When they met, however, the one did not pass triumphantly through the other, as in *Shirley*, but each halted. The captain of each troop made a sign for silence to his band; he then approached his *vis-à-vis* with his hat off and shook hands with him, and after that gave the word for the band to strike up again—this time the same sacred tune. The bands played the tune through together, the troops facing each other as much as was possible, while some of the non-commissioned and private on either side looked not too well pleased with the situation. Ainsworth, however, was delighted: if the scene was a trifle absurd, it was friendly and humane; and when, the music in common being played, the two troops filed past each other as best they could, he said to himself: 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! But, if I am not mistaken, the real cause of this display of good feeling is that very kindly gentleman, George Suffield. It is impossible for both parson and pastor to be friendly with him—as I am sure they must be—and not to be friendly with each other. So shines a good man in a naughty world.'

Thus thinking of the admirable Suffield, and all his humane and generous ways, he wandered on into the tidy, trim village and forgot for the time his own anxiety. The village seemed deserted of all save a few of the very oldest and the very youngest of its population. Here and there a gaffer or a gammer sat on a doorstep or on a stool against the wall, blinking and basking in the sun, and holding in a striving youngster with a tether of web selvage and the impassiveness of Fate. Here and there a cat lay on a window-sill, limp with heat, and looking like

a dish-clout flung out to dry; and here and there a dog spread himself at ease in the warm dust of the road, as if he well knew there was no danger to be apprehended from passing carts or other vehicles that day. Through this peaceful scene Ainsworth passed, knowing well its meaning: that all the active population were gone to disport and to feast in Holdsworth Park.

He continued on his way till he reached the lake or dam. He walked to a spot on its bank where grew some alders and threw himself on the turf that sprang soft and green in their shade. Ducks and swans swam towards him in expectation of crumbs; but he had none to give them, and they left him with sounds of derision. Thus undisturbed and abstracted, he at length turned his attention to the purpose for which he had made this excursion. He put it in his pipe with his bird's-eye, and for some time smoked with great deliberation. He had, as I have said, a problem to solve and a corollary, but the corollary proved—like a lady's postscript—to be the more important of the two. Should he—as his editor had desired—'tone down the severity' of his dramatic criticism? Certainly not! What? Write to the prompting of something other than his own judgment!—to the dictation of some one other than himself! Surrender his right of opinion, which any young man in the pit could freely exercise! Of what use was criticism if it was not free? He would maintain the birthright of the critic. That meant, therefore, that he must resign his post on *The Lancashire Gazette*, which implied that he must seek occupation elsewhere. But where? Since ever he had left Oxford and come to Lancashire, he had looked forward to a London career; was the time arrived for that? He doubted it. It would be a perilous thing to launch himself on the wide sea of London journalism with no better recommendation than that he had quarrelled with the editor of *The Lancashire Gazette*. But if he could not risk the resignation of his present post, he must fall in with the wish of his chief, and 'tone down,' &c.—and that, of course, he could not do. Yet— And so the discussion with himself went on in the undecided way we all know.

While he smoked and revolved these things, he let his eyes idly rove about the lake and over the features of a new building which Suffield had reared upon the opposite bank, a building which Ainsworth believed was set apart for some new and secret process of calico-printing. As his eye ranged vaguely from window to window, suddenly he saw as it were a vision of a black face and a white turban. What had overcome him that such a hallucination should present itself to him then? He took his pipe from his mouth, rubbed his hand across his eyes, and looked again. The vision had disappeared; but as he continued looking, slow to believe that what he had seen was merely a creature of his brain, he saw it again at another window—again the black head and neck—with the face half-averted—and the white turban! He looked steadily, and saw the head pass slowly from window to window, as if the person to whom the head was attached were attentively examining everything as he moved along! It was difficult not to believe that he saw a living human being; and yet how was it possible that a black man in a white

turban should be alone in a Lancashire mill? It would not be more strange to see some morning a Moorish Kadi sitting cross-legged on the bench of magistrates of the borough.

He jumped up, determined to have his doubt settled, and made his way round towards the building. He was brought up short, however, by finding that the great gates which admitted to the precincts of the works were firmly closed, as was also the little postern against the lodge. It seemed, too, that the lodge and gate keeper must be making holiday with the rest; for no knocking on his door or on the postern brought any response. Ainsworth therefore turned away, and went back to the spot under the alders, whence he had seen the vision of the black man. He waited for some time, but no black man reappeared: and then he wandered down the clough.

The more he thought of his vision the more it disturbed him. It disturbed him more than it would have disturbed a man of less knowledge and speculation. He knew, for instance, that Suffield had some secret of his business shut up in that building where he had seen the black man; he knew that in the town there were several Parsee merchants, active with real intellectual activity and crafty with true Eastern craft; and he knew that the Parsees of Bombay were at that hour striving their utmost to compete with Lancashire for the cotton and calico trade of India. What more likely, then, than that a creature of theirs should be commissioned to spy out what he could of Suffield's successful methods? He resolved to seek Suffield out and tell him what he had seen.

He crossed the stream by a narrow foot-bridge and climbed the opposite side of the clough to enter the park. He crossed into the park by that stile on which Suffield had sat in the early morning, and then—to his amazement—saw sauntering on before him a man in a white turban and a kind of white blouse girt about with a red sash or *cummerbund*. He quickened his pace to overtake the man. When he had overtaken him he was at a loss what to do. He could not demand brusquely: 'Are you the person I saw in one of the buildings of Suffield's works?' That appeared to him uncalled-for rudeness even to a black man, who is, after all—as the undergraduate said of his tutor—'a man and a brother.' Not knowing what else to do, he was therefore passing on, when the black man made him pause.

'Respectable sir,' said he, bowing low, with his black hands crossed on his white bosom—'fine Englishman, with regards may I say?'

Ainsworth stopped, and the black man smiled upon him in a simple childlike way that should have banished suspicion. But Ainsworth felt a stern sense of duty; moreover, although the man's words were intelligible, his meaning was not; and he consequently did not smile in return.

'Do you mean,' he asked, 'that you wish to speak to me?'

'Sir,' said Daniel—for of course it was he—'you truly mention it. If you look for the parties of amusement, I beg to say they are almost at the dining off the people, and besides several national foods, curries made by me from

fine recipes at your respectable service, sir; hope you like an economical dish which little care and attention is given to it.'

'Thank you very much,' said Ainsworth, feeling that the man meant well, however he expressed himself. 'May I ask if you also belong to the parties of amusement?'

'No, sir,' answered Daniel, smiling again; 'the fact is I myself am servant, cook, et cetera, to the Sahib Raynor, now staying at the great Hall.'

'What! Mr Raynor the traveller? He has come, then?'

'With regard to your speeches, sir, the Sahib Raynor came the day before it was yesterday.'

'And do you,' said Ainsworth, foolishly thinking to catch his black man unawares—'do you often have business down there at the works all by yourself?'

'Sir,' said Daniel, smiling most serenely, 'I take myself all alone for agreeable walks in the scenery; I range my mind; I improve myself in the great England and Lancashire; and I practise the conversations and the ways and the means. Good-morning; good-bye, sir.'

Bewildered to find the right meaning in that maze of words, and rebuffed in his attempt to catch the man out, Ainsworth said 'Good-bye' somewhat gruffly and went on his way. In the park, outside the lawn before the mansion, he saw there was a great tent pitched, towards which streams of stragglers were setting from all quarters, and in and out of which men and women were hasting and flitting, like bees to and from a hive. It seemed the centre of interest and activity, and towards it, therefore, he bent his steps. While he was yet a good way off, Suffield hailed him from the door of the tent.

'Holloa, Ainsworth! Come along, my son; better late than never.' With him stood a young lady in white—his daughter, Ainsworth could see—and when the young man reached him, he continued: 'My little girl here and her cousin called for you at the office to bring you along in the carriage; but you were gone: earlier than usual, eh?'

'I am sorry I missed them,' answered Ainsworth, saluting Suffield's daughter. 'But I dare say I did leave the office a little earlier than I commonly do.'

But Suffield was evidently thinking of something else already: the thought which would always come uppermost in his mind was how he could do a good turn to a friend, especially to the friend that at the moment was by him.

'You've heard of Lord Clitheroe—the Earl of Padilham's son?' said he, laying his hand on Ainsworth's shoulder and speaking in his ear. 'This is him;' referring with his thumb to a tall, full-bearded young man, who stood a step behind him talking with Miss Suffield, with critical but admiring eyes bent upon her. 'He's a clever fellow; you ought to know him: he's a rising politician.' Then turning, with his hand still on Ainsworth's shoulder, he said—before Ainsworth could utter 'Yea' or 'Nay'—'Clitheroe, let me introduce to you my friend, Mr Alan Ainsworth. I think you two should know each other.'

It was done easily, without the slightest vulgar touch of ostentation or obsequiousness, as if George Suffield had been to the manner born; which Ainsworth was inclined to wonder at, till

he considered that, after all, the best prompters of good manners are a gentle heart and a generous nature.

Lord Clitheroe responded to the introduction as it had been made, easily and frankly. 'Oh, yes,' said he; 'I remember Mr Ainsworth at Oxford.'

'Oh, ah,' said Suffield; 'sort of college chums.'

'Scarcely so much as that,' said Ainsworth, with a slight hint in his voice of his appreciation of the difference in their rank. 'I think it was only at the Union that Lord Clitheroe and I met.'

'And bitterly denounced each other's politics,' added Lord Clitheroe.

'That's all right,' said Suffield. 'A good stand-up fight of any sort is the best way of beginning to be friends. But Ainsworth's line is different now: he is great as a dramatic critic. Didn't you read the notice of the play in *The Gazette* this morning, Clitheroe?'

'I did,' answered Clitheroe, 'and liked it very much.'

'That's more than my editor did,' said Ainsworth with a laugh. 'He says I mustn't write like that any more.'

'So ho!' exclaimed Suffield. 'You'll have to cut *The Gazette*, then?'

'I have just been turning the matter over,' said Ainsworth, 'considering what I shall do.'

'You must come to London, my lad,' said Suffield, clapping his hand on his shoulder. 'That's the place for you. I'll manage it for you.'

'You are very good,' said Ainsworth. 'I dare say it will have to come to that.'

'Of course it will.—But now we are forgetting this spread for the folk. I think we must all lend a hand—mustn't we, Phemy?—to get it in order.'

'If you will come with me, Mr Ainsworth,' said Phemy, 'we shall soon get the other things that are wanted. We are going to decorate the tables a little, you know, with flowers: our people love flowers.'

'I'm sure you must have taught them that, Miss Suffield,' said Lord Clitheroe gallantly.

'Oh, no, I haven't,' said Phemy, with a candid look of surprise.

how it came to pass that in a minute or two dwell with Miss Suffield the ample taken, the reattached to the Hall. They had feeling is that when she exclaimed that she had Suffield. It is in

pastor to be friend,' said she, and fled. they must be—and I ordered slowly down between other. So shines a young and richly-scented world.'

Thus thinking of the odour of the bewildering all his humane and gentle his senses. Presently on into the tidy, trim room, which he opened. He time his own anxiety, inner apartment of glass deserted of all save a fat once recognised as the the very youngest of it, annexed to the draw-there a gaffer or a game floor were spread costly on a stool against the wall, there was a small fountain in the sun, and holding it which grew rare specimen with a tether of web served was no sooner in than ness of Fate. Here and in the conservatory or window-sill, limp with hom, he could not tell;

for a big, flowering magnolia prevented him from seeing any person. He turned to withdraw; but the latch had somehow caught, and the door would not open. He had a mind to go forward, when certain words that caught his ear prevented him.

'Hush! There is some one coming,' said one voice—the voice of Miss Raynor. 'I like you very much,' she continued, evidently in reply to something said by another voice; 'but I prefer you to still be my kind cousin, George. So, please, don't speak to me of these things again.'

'Then, Bell,' said the other voice—the voice of young George Suffield—in an aggrieved and somewhat sulky tone, 'there is some one you've got to know in London, and that letter this morning was from him.'

'I think it is unworthy of you, George, to say that,' said Isabel. 'If it were another than you that said it, I should just be silent, and let him believe what he liked. But we are cousins, George; we have grown up together, and I am very sorry I cannot be what you wish; and so I tell you frankly there is no person in London of the kind you mean.'

'If there is not,' urged George, 'why do you refuse to listen to me. See, Bell; I've waited for you ever since I was a little boy; it's not fair—it's not right—of you to say "No" to me so easily and promptly.'

'Oh, George, I don't say it easily nor promptly; I say it reluctantly and I say it with pain. If I were a young, thoughtless girl, and did not believe that a woman should feel towards a man she means to live with always very much more than I feel towards you, I might even have said "Yes."'

'You may say "Yes" yet, Bell. We shall understand each other better after this. Do not answer me at all now. Wait a while; wait a year, if you like. Do that—won't you, Bell?'

'Very well,' said Isabel, after a moment's hesitation. 'If it will make you happy, George, I'll wait.'

'Thank you, Bell. Thank you—and bless you.'

'Don't, George,' said she, as if in repulse of some slight attempt to embrace her. 'Be good, and control yourself.'

Then George withdrew by the drawing-room; and Isabel appeared round the magnolia and stood before Ainsworth, whose thought and pulse were in a turmoil.

'Forgive me,' he stammered with his eyes down: he did not dare to raise them. 'I wandered in here by this door; and when I heard voices and tried to go back, the door would not open; and I could not go on and appear before you.'

She said not a word, nor stirred; and he raised his eyes to look at her. Upon that—as if the expression of his face and the light in his eyes at once betrayed him to her—she was suffused with an overwhelming blush; she looked at the closed door behind him, and turned and fled like a stricken deer.

Yes; Ainsworth now understood, without recognising, himself. The jealousy, sharp and wild, which seized him when he discovered that another man was seeking to win this lady, and the mad suspicion that others also might think

her love worth winning, precipitated feelings which had long been hanging about him like a haze. Now he saw in a burning light that it was a matter of the supremest moment that Isabel Raynor should love him, and him alone. Now he felt himself a new, a stronger, a more resolute, a more clear-seeing and alert man. His problem was solved and its corollary. His way was made plain before him: he must leave Lancashire and *The Lancashire Gazette*, and compel reluctant Fortune to befriend him in that London where Isabel lived and moved and had her being.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH TREASURE-TROVE.

DURING the afternoon of the 21st of July 1892, whilst seated beneath a tree upon Hampstead Heath, a lady was astonished to see protruding from the ground and glistening in the sunshine something which upon closer examination proved to be a portion of a candlestick, with another part lying close beside it. Her little child who was with her proceeded with his spade to turn over the loose mould, the result being the further discovery of two flasks and a smaller portion of a candelabrum. In accordance with an Act passed in the reign of Edward I., it is customary for the coroner of the district in which such objects are discovered to hold an inquiry. The result of the inquiry into the objects found upon Hampstead Heath was to prove that they had been discovered as stated, and constituted what is known as Treasure-trove; as a result, the objects were formally handed over to the Treasury, who in modern times usually give the finders of such trove the bullion value of the material, if such objects are required for public institutions, coins and materials not so required becoming the property of the finder. These objects, forming an interesting section in the history of French art, have been sent to the South Kensington Museum, where they are now to be seen.

The treasure-trove consists of two spirit or scent flasks with screw tops; a small flat cup with handles; two sockets and nozzles of candlesticks; and one small portion, probably the handle, of a cup or a portion of a candelabrum; the weight of the whole being nearly fifty-nine ounces. The flasks are rectangular in form, and are similar in shape to the tea-caddies of the last century. They are both of very massive silver gilt, and are ornamented on the four sides with similar decoration, consisting of a flowing scroll at the base, from which arises a stem with branching floral ornament. The third object consists of a flattened cup, with handles in the form of griffins' heads with attenuated bodies. It has in raised-work around the body a row of acanthus leaf ornament alternating with tongue ornament. The two sockets and nozzles of candlesticks are encircled by acanthus leaves, which appear to have been made separately and afterwards attached to the body.

These objects are very interesting, although it is somewhat difficult to say whether the ornamentation upon them is English or French. The body of the flasks is undoubtedly French, having been made in Paris in 1672; but the ornamentation is made after the style of English work of that

period, similar work being found upon cups and tankards having English Hall marks exhibited near them in the Museum. The decoration appears to have been cast and afterwards chiselled.

Before mentioning the marks found upon these objects it may not be uninteresting to note those which French manufacturers were compelled to place upon their goods. From the year 1506, the makers of plate usually placed their initials upon such pieces, these initials afterwards becoming known as the 'Maker's Mark.' From the years 1275 to 1791, it was necessary to have stamped upon each object the 'punch of the Common Hall.' In 1275, when its use was first ordered by Philip le Hardi, it consisted of a fleur-de-lis; from 1461 to 1783 it was some letter of the alphabet, over which was placed a crown. The letter 'C' was used in Paris in 1671-72.

The sovereigns Henry III. and Louis XIII., in order to increase the revenue, had endeavoured to impose a tax upon plate; but it was not until the reign of Louis XIV. that this tax was successfully imposed by an order dated March 31, 1672. The first mark used for this duty was the Mint letter of the town placed beneath a fleur-de-lis, and was known as the *poignon de charge*, or 'Farmer's Mark,' which letter for Paris was 'A.' Nine years later, a second mark was placed upon gold and silver smith's work, in order that the tax might be more strictly enforced, and consisted of a small mark, such as a human head, or that of some bird or beast. These Farmers' marks lasted until the abolition of all taxes in 1791.

Upon the base of both of the flasks found upon Hampstead Heath is seen the Farmer's mark, being the letter 'A' surmounted by a crown with three fleurs-de-lis, one above the 'A' and one on either side, constituting the mark of Vincent Fortier, the Farmer-general of Duties from October 1672 to October 1680. One of the flasks has also the letter 'A' surmounted by a crown, being the Paris punch of the Common Hall. The second flask has a crown and a part of another letter, probably 'C,' which has already been noted as being the Paris mark for 1672; and also bears the initials 'L. R.' separated by small lines and having two leaves beneath.

In regard to the ornamentation, which has already been described, upon these flasks, it is almost certain that it has been made by some other artist than the person who actually made them, for upon both are found the initials 'P. D. N.' punched into the floral ornament, surmounted by a hanging flower with clusters of fruit in a semicircle, these latter being very minute and indistinct. These initials appear twice upon one of the flasks, whereas upon the base the maker's mark, 'L. R.,' appears, from which it may be inferred that the flask is of French origin, the ornamentation upon it having been cast and chiselled by some English artist.

Upon the base of the cup there is a maker's mark consisting of a 'T' and 'I' separated by two minute tongue-like pieces, being the only mark appearing upon it. It is probably English work of about the year 1685, a church in Gloucestershire having a similar cup bearing this date upon it.

As in all treasure-trove, it is exceedingly difficult to account for its being hidden away. The

objects found upon Hampstead Heath may have been stolen, and then hidden away, the person so stealing dying and leaving no trace of their whereabouts; or they may have been hidden away in order to escape the great destruction of plate which took place in 1697, in the time of William III., or on account of the fear of a French invasion early in the present century. It was stated at the inquiry that the objects may have been immersed in the Thames mud for some time previous to their being placed where they were eventually found.

Many valuable objects of the gold and silver smith's art have been recovered during the present century as treasure-trove: among the most celebrated may be mentioned that known as the Hildesheim Treasure, on account of its having been found near Hildesheim in 1869. Some German soldiers who were at work outside the walls of the city were throwing up a trench for rifle-practice, and unearthed this valuable collection of thirty objects, most of which are Greek and Roman in form. The collection at the present time is to be seen in the Berlin Museum, and consists chiefly of cups, a patera, dishes, stewpans, and plates, together with table and lamp supports. The most important object amongst them is a large bowl standing upon a small foot, and having small handles, probably used for mixing wine and water. It is considered likely that they may have formed the camp service of a Roman commander. Since the Romans had no settlement as far north as Hildesheim, it is difficult to understand how these objects came to be placed where they were found. It is thought that they may have been stolen by or given to some chieftain, who afterwards was compelled to flee, and hid his treasure in the expectation of some day being able to return and unearth it. This treasure-trove probably dates from the first century A.D.

On the banks of the river Argish, a tributary of the Danube, flowing from the Carpathians, some peasants found, in 1837, a very important collection of goldsmith's work of the fourth century A.D., now known as the 'Petrossa Treasure.' Unfortunately, it was hidden away by the finders and broken up; and it was not until some time afterwards that its existence became known to the Government, and steps taken to secure the pieces. Out of twenty-two separate parts about twelve remain, these latter being shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, and afterwards at the South Kensington Museum. The most important objects amongst them were a massive gold dish worth about one thousand pounds, which had been broken up into four portions, happily now placed together again, and a ewer twenty-one inches in height, having an elongated spherical body with a flat lip and handle. These two objects are classical in form, and were probably made in the fourth century. Their origin has given rise to much speculation; by an expert they were thought to have been made for military officers or colonists who had to flee suddenly before some inroad of the Huns, either in the capital of the East or in that of an settling settlement of Hungary, or some Danubian province.

In Spain, at a place near Toledo called La Fuente de Guarrazar, some peasants found, in

1858, a very valuable collection of goldsmith's work and precious stones at a slight distance beneath the surface. They do not seem to have known that they had found anything very valuable, and divided the spoil amongst themselves. At a little later period of time, some person seems to have heard of the find, and purchased all the portions, and joined them together again, and sent them to Paris, where they were purchased by and placed in the Cluny Museum. They are Spanish work of the seventh century, and consist of eleven crowns of pure gold, some set with stones, others chased and worked in *repoussé*, some of the fragments having chains attached to them. Upon one of the crowns in letters appears the name of King Swinthila (621. to 631 A.D.). Most of the crowns were votive offerings, which were usually hung over the altars of the churches. The character of the work is Gothic, most probably founded on Roman art.

In France, near Bernay, a farmer named Prosher Tauxin, whilst working in the fields, found a collection of silversmith's work covered by a Roman tile. This treasure was subsequently purchased by the State, and placed in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. From inscriptions upon the plate it is known that they formed the treasure of the Temple of Mercury Augustus at Caneto, near Bernay, having been dedicated to the gods by various people, among others by C. Propertius Secundus and Q. Domitius Jutus, and appear to have been placed in the spot where they were found some time during the third century A.D. The vases are of different epochs and of unequal merit, the oldest, which are the most beautiful, probably dating from the fourth to the second century B.C., and worked by the most skilful of the Greek chasers. Others are of a later date, up to the second century A.D., and would appear to be Gallo-Roman work.

In Hungary, at Nagy-Szent-Miklos, in 1799, a very curious and interesting set of ewers, vases, cups, and bottles was unearthed, since known as the Treasure of Attila. They are beautifully chased, engraved, and some worked in *repoussé*, and were probably made by some tribes who were settled near the Danube in the fourth century, the workmanship having been assigned to the time of the Eastern Emperor Valens (364 to 378 A.D.); in the fifth century they were presumably in the possession of two chiefs of the 'Gepidae,' that martial tribe who settled on the banks of the Danube, and who were subdued by Attila about the year 450 A.D. They are at the present time to be seen in the Museum of Antiquities at Vienna.

Reproductions of all above objects are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, and some of them also in the Museums of Edinburgh and Dublin and in other local Museums.

Since the beginning of the century many valuable finds have been made, principally in silver, in Wales, the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Shetland Isles, and very generally all along the eastern sea-board of Scotland. The earliest and most noted of those Scottish finds was that of Norrie's Law, Fifeshire, to which a hawker about seventy years ago had made secret access. For many years afterwards he continued to dispose of portions of those silver relics in various quarters. It was not till 1839

that public attention was drawn to this, and a few relics were saved out of the final destruction. These, however, are all well known to archaeologists, having been many times figured and described in the leading works on the subject of antiquities.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

By MENIE MURIEL DOWIE, Author of *A Girl in the Karpathians*.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst,
At the wa'gang o' the swallow,
When the wind grows cauld and the burns grow bauld,
And the woods are hingin' yellow.

LADY GORDON was sitting in the drawing-room, beside the large centre window; she was looking out on the garden, which the last week of a late Scotch summer made very warm and full of colour; but she did not see the Canterbury bells set out like cups and saucers of different tea-sets in all their precious varieties, and she did not notice the tall perfection of the single dahlias. Her face was lightly drawn in lines of perplexity, great distress, and indecision; the eyes always looked out from a consciousness of continual sorrow, but just now there was all the added stress of a fresh difficulty. Rose Gordon was leaning against the back of a chair, her hands behind her, her whole figure rocking now and then upon one heel; she had an expression of severe disapproval, of disgust even; she was, in fact, angry.

'Well, but mamma, if you would speak to him,' she said, very emphatically. 'He should be told! It is nonsense letting him go on like this; and besides,' with added heat, 'it is very unfair! It reflects upon you, upon me, and Willie—the family. It is simply shameful—and very little money would put it right!'

Lady Gordon shook her head. 'My dear,' she said, 'we are so poor.'

'Poor? But not so poor as all that! Of course, I know that we are poor—and I know why: with a lightning flash of her eyes. 'John—— But there is no use going into that! Still, it would not cost much to mend the roof a little; and certainly the expenses of sending Lamont to the infirmary must be paid.'

Rose set the chair down, and began pulling some dead roses out of a bowl on the table with fingers thrilled by the feelings this subject always roused. 'What I feel is this,' she burst out suddenly; 'John may be ill—of course I know he is; but he can occupy his mind with newspapers, he can talk politics, he can play écarté for hours—why can he not listen to a single word about the condition of his tenants, why must one always?'

A man-servant came into the room, and Rose stopped abruptly and bent over the roses.

'Sir John would like to speak to you, my Lady.'

'At once, Jeffreys!—Very well, I will come.' Lady Gordon got up, and the man waited to let her pass in front of him; but Rose intervened.

'Say that her ladyship will be there in a few

minutes,' she said, in her rather imperious way. —'Mamma, do wait a moment!' She ran to the door and shut it. 'Now is your opportunity; do put it to him. Mrs Lamont is waiting in the Servants' Hall; I will go to her and say that you are speaking to John about it, and then you will send down a message!' Rose opened the door for her mother.

'Well, my dear, I will see!—It depends how he is, you know.' The poor worried lady hurried across the hall and down the corridor that led to her eldest son's rooms.

Rose brought her brows sharply together and expressed a little vexed breath; she did not go off at once to Mrs Lamont in the Servants' Hall; she stood there thinking and considering, always with the same indignation against her brother John. The wide outer door was just opposite her, with its steps down to the gravel sweep. Some one was coming up these steps, and a dog flung itself against the glass door, which, not always perfectly closed, would give way against an attack of this kind and admit 'Kate,' Willie Gordon's black spaniel, into the house.

Rose went to meet her second brother. She was too preoccupied to ask him what luck he had, as she was usually ready enough to do, and she hardly watched him even when he pulled a hare out of one of his big sportsman's pockets and two little golden plovers from the other.

'Missed the finest duck I've ever seen,' he said, beginning a little game with Kate and the two plovers. 'Such plumage!—That was you, you silly little idiot,' giving Kate a tap on the side of the head with the plover, and looking at her with the most affectionate smile at the same time. 'What do you think the brute did?' continued Willie, with the eagerness of all sportsmen to recount their exploits.

'What?' said Rose, sitting on the top step and passing her finger softly down the plover's lovely breast, as her face cleared of its late annoyance, and, despite herself, she became full of interest. Willie, however, was quick to notice that she was more silent than usual.

'I say!—Anything happened—h'm?'

'No!—Oh, I declare, I'm forgetting poor Mrs Lamont all this time.'

'What about Mrs Lamont?'

'Only that poor Lamont is to go to the infirmary; it is his only chance! Dr Herries says it is a very poor one; and think of it, Willie, there are seven children and poor Mrs Lamont!'

'I know, I know!' said her brother, frowning and tattooing on the barrel of his gun.

'And if only things had been taken in time. But you know he slept in that damp down-stairs room all winter; by my advice, for I thought it would kill the children.'

'They'd have been much better able to bear it,' Willie Gordon said in an absent-minded way.

'Well, his lungs are terribly affected, I am sure. Then he has been out of work since before haying-time, and they have been fearfully poor; she could earn so little; and I know they haven't had enough to eat, and now he has something the matter with his leg!—Oh, it is a dreadful business.'

Willie drew a long, very deep breath, flung his head up and looked away out to the hills, frowns fleeting across his brow more quickly than the little clouds sailed over their blue points.

'And Mrs Lamont has come up to see if we can help her about sending the poor man to the infirmary; mamma is with John now; I begged her to speak to him'—

'A lot of good that will do!'

'Well—where are you going?'

'Round to the stables;' and Willie Gordon put his gun on his shoulder, caught up his game, whistled to Kate, and strode off frowning. Rose did not wonder that he gave her no sympathy, that he had not more to say; poor fellow, she knew that it was worse for him even than for her, for he could do nothing; he, who was a man and hale and strong, had to stay there calmly on the property that had always been the Gordons, and see the slow ruin creep over wood and village. Trees cut down and sold, land undrained and left a useless marsh, and the poor village a perfect fever-bed, raked at sudden intervals by disease and death.

And he, a second son, could do nothing!

Willie Gordon was twenty-six, and as full of energy as a man of perfect constitution should be: to live on at Foresk House from day to day, shooting, fishing, pottering round his little den in the garden, did not give occupation enough for Willie Gordon. And yet he could not leave Foresk on account of the delicacy of his elder brother.

His presence was chiefly of use to cheer his mother and sister; they felt their burden less when Willie was there to share it, to talk about it, to speak hopefully now and then.

But his position was a very difficult one, and he did not consider himself fitted for it; he was not a miracle of saintly patience; he was constantly irritated and chafed at the contempt he was obliged to feel for his brother.

John had been twenty-four when he came to the title; the flower of a particularly fast set of men at Cambridge, his degree was a matter of small importance to him, yet he got it within three months of his father's death, and came home to Foresk to await the commencement of the shooting season. He was handsome, and, when everything fell out to please him, he was good-natured; but he was also abnormally selfish, and incapable of the smallest sacrifice; and, what was worst of all, imbued with a mean and sceptical view of human nature, which led him to suspect every one of interested motives, and believe nobody incorruptible, nobody single-minded. In the spring-time he left Foresk rather suddenly with the intention of going abroad; and facts which came to light after his departure fully explained its abruptness.

Sir John went to Monaco, and none of the pains and pleasures of gaming passed him by; from that point his career may be imagined; the description of its details could serve no purpose, and would be only painful. He was a young man of great personal attractions and irredeemably ignoble nature; his selfishness was phenomenal, his vice little less; he wrecked the fortunes of the family in six years of unbridled extravagance, and he came home at the age of thirty to 'settle down.'

Yes, thought his mother, he is coming home; these endless calls for money, of which she had heard vaguely from their solicitor, but of whose extent she had not the slightest idea, would cease; perhaps it was to prepare her for the possibility of another Lady Gordon that he was coming, and at this notion her heart felt lighter than it had done for many a day.

Rose was glad to hear of her brother's advent: only Willie, then a great, strong fellow of four-and-twenty, looked rather grave.

Sir John came; he was five days making the journey between London and Scotland, and a telegram arrived on the day he was expected, to say he was passing the night in town and would arrive at noon next day.

Why was he pausing on the very threshold of his home?

Rose drove the phaeton to meet him on the lovely morning of his arrival, and was amazed to see him come out of the station leaning heavily on his servant's arm.

'Here you are! Well, I am glad.—Why, John, you've had an accident, that's why you stopped on the way. Ah!'

'Nonsense; nothing of the kind! Don't make a fuss! Why have you brought that thing? Where do you expect me to sit in it?'

'It's such a lovely day, I thought— Why, you'll sit here; or you can drive, if you care to'—

'Drive? Of course not! Well, I suppose I shall have to make the best of it, as it's all there is: help me up, Jeffreys.'

It was quite a business to get Sir John propped up with air-cushions in the front seat of the low pony-carriage, and he complained bitterly of the roughness of 'these confounded Scotch roads.'

'It's your own road,' said Rose coolly, 'and you can have it re-laid if you please.' And that was all she said.

Lady Gordon was at the front door when they drove up; they had seen her handkerchief waving between certain groups of trees in the avenue. This annoyed Sir John very much; his mother would see his laboured descent from the carriage, and he would have to go through the same scrutiny he had endured from Rose—only worse.

It was very much the same thing, only that Lady Gordon caught sight of his face, a face whose lines, colour, and expression told one story with terrible plainness; and the shock to her heart was such that not many words came.

He had to submit to being kissed, wept over, and commiserated; he had to hear, worst of all!—how soon the air of Foresk would set him up again—knowing all the while that he deserved no pity, that no air would ever set him up—

His brother came into the room.

Sir John was by this time sunk in a library chair, his air-cushions deftly arranged by Jeffreys, and a glass of sherry in his shaking hand.

Willie, in leggings, big boots, and shooting-clothes made of home-woven wools, stood and looked at the worn, ruined, old-young man who was his brother. Sir John was in tweeds; a travelling suit of the most tony appearance; his face, which took a bluish-violet in the shadows, was in sharp contrast to the would-be morning-in-the-country air of his striped shirt;

his eyes, pale and sunken, strangely worsened in expression, strangely tragic in their indication of his character, met the clear, steady glance of his brother. A grave, long glance on Willie's part.

'Well, old man, and how are you?' cried Sir John, with affected heartiness.

'Oh, I'm all right!' said Willie curtly. 'Why didn't you come on last night?'

Sir John laughed nervously, irritably, but with a simulation of amusement.

'My dear fellow, let me explain for the third time! I haven't been very fit lately, and travelling tires me; so I put up at the *Forfochan Arms*, a most confoundingly uncomfortable hole, and came on to-day.'

Such was Sir John's home-coming. Before he had been a week in the house the truth came to Lady Gordon, first about the money affairs, then about her son's health.

He had three rooms arranged for his use, and he lived apart from his family, having his meals, such as they were, at his own hours. He had ruined himself in every way, and was head over ears in debt.

That had all been two years ago.

Willie had since finished his College course and returned to Foresk; there was nothing else for him to do.

He had stood by and seen his brother's tempers; known him when a few days' health led him to believe that in time his constitution would be built up again and he be able to fare once more into that world which was the only place that never seemed to weary him; had seen him again when he crawled back to convalescence after an acute spell of illness, using his first free breath to curse his 'luck.' He had also stood by when racing debts—for Sir John still followed with interest the fortunes of certain stables—had to be paid out of money which should certainly have been applied to the improvement of the estate.

And Willie had no power of his own; he had to stay and see money calmly scattered when half the sum would have enabled Sir John to do his duty as a proprietor and care for the well-being of his tenants: and he could say nothing—nothing, at least, that was listened to; and he could do nothing, nothing of any practical value; and he could earn nothing on his own account. There never was a young fellow in more irksome circumstances than Willie Gordon.

He had left his sister to go to the stable, he said; on his way there he met an under-gardener and gave him his gun and game to take to the house; then, his hands thrust deep in his pockets and Kate at his heels, he walked down one of the wood-paths, stepped over the wire-fencing that enclosed the immediate policies, and took his way towards the river.

He could do no good at home; there was an hour and a half till dinner-time, and another of those painful scenes with his mother or Rose was a thing to be avoided.

It was as well to spare himself the useless chafing of it. He went on his way then, whistling more and more and frowning less. The path, little used save daily by two labourers whose homes lay in the direction he was going, led

straight to the river whirling on its rock-laid way, and the hill-slope was covered with nut-bushes, small oaks, larches, and silver birch; the colouring was not so fine as it would be in three weeks' time, but there was never a day in the year when these woods were not beautiful.

Now and again, through the trees, Willie got a glimpse of a house, and it seemed he knew the points, from which these peeps were to be had, for he looked up and paused a little whenever he came to one. It was a house that stood on a barish, raised table-land across the river; it was the Manse of Ardlach, where lived Mr Lockhart, the Free Church minister, and his wife and daughter.

The Gordons were Roman Catholics, and they knew very little of the Manse people. Rose and Aveline Lockhart knew each other by sight, but they had never spoken, and it had never occurred to them to be friendly; their ways were separate, and the distinct effort it would have required to bring them together was never made by either. Willie knew Miss Lockhart, and their acquaintance had come about in an informal way which took nothing from the pleasantness of it: she had been walking in the woods when he was shooting, and an incident, trifling but sufficient, had arisen which brought them into conversation.

Aveline was a girl who would have been remarkable in any ballroom for the very uncommon charm of her appearance—perhaps she gained a great deal by not being in a ballroom at all, but only in a wild Scotch wood all green with the first passion of spring-time.

Very often since then she and Willie Gordon had come across one another, and nearly always in that tract of woodland between her home and the wild river. She liked to sit upon the bank and watch it raging at the base of some detached rock; she liked it to roar at the very loudest; but, at the quieter parts, where yet was always the steady hum of its current, she could see the trout leap, and send her fresh voice echoing up the hill-slopes in one or other of the sweet old ballads that she loved.

Hers was too wholesome a nature ever to have found life dull at Ardlach; but her friendship with Willie Gordon, a friendship of that kind that has a world of undeclared love just pent behind the lips or half acknowledged in the heart, added immeasurably to the happiness of her days.

At the beginning of life, twenty soul-white years behind her, she was ready to be loved; and Willie would have told her so, but many things hindered him: his life was too unsettled a thing to share with any girl; his home was not the place to bring a wife to; he could not marry in his brother's lifetime, and Sir John might linger on for years. No—he could not ask her for her love; and, in the meantime, this very humble young man comforted himself with the consideration that by never putting the question, he spared himself the pain of a possible refusal.

He had her friendship, and he could love her as much as he pleased; or rather, he could not help loving her with all his strength, for that was the only way he could understand loving.

And now he was at the brink of the impatient river. A hundred yards farther on he heard a voice singing, Aveline's voice; he had heard the song before surely, but never before from her.

He went near enough to catch the words, and the sound of the river covered his footsteps:

Willie's fair, and Willie's rare,
And Willie's wondrous bonnie!

She was sitting on a mossy bank, with her back against a silver birch, all her fair hair raying out from her head the colour of pale starshine, her face wearing a strange expression as she sang; her eyes looking straight across the river and a smile in them—yes, certainly, a smile.

Now, how did that song go on?

Willie had heard Rose sing it—Rose, who sang sweetly enough, but not like Aveline.

He leaned against a tree, gave a restraining word to Kate, and thought steadily.

Aveline hummed the tune right through again, leaning over towards the ground and seeming to collect something with her hands, mosses perhaps.

Suddenly a real, deep blush came in Willie's face and mounted well among his hair; a half-laugh that was not, after all, anything so common as a laugh, seemed to well up from his very heart. His hand went up to his forehead absently, and his eyes darkened with so warm a glow that he could not see the world about him, but only another world that few can hope to see.

He forgot Kate, but she followed him when he turned and went slowly back as he had come.

He had remembered the words of that song, and they had told him a secret.

LOVE-PHILTRES.

AN expedient much practised in bygone years for inspiring and securing love was the Love-philtre, or amatory potion. It has been remarked that one of the grandest musical works in existence would never have been written had not Tristram and Ysonde drank the magic love-potion, which was so strong that it united them even after death; for 'from his grave there grew an eglantine which twined about Ysonde's statue above, and though three times they cut it down, it grew again, and ever wound its arms about the image of the fair Ysonde.' Going back to still earlier times, it is well known that the Roman poet Lucretius took his life in an amorous fit caused by a love-potion; and Lucullus lost his reason in the same way. In the middle ages, love-powders were advertised for sale, the pernicious effects of which became a matter of serious comment. At a period, too, when credulity in all kinds of occult influences taught that enchantment could be introduced into the human frame in the shape of food, or along with it, many an unlucky person was accused of using forbidden charms, and occasionally burnt at the stake as a witch. Indeed, the composition of love-philtres was supposed to be one of the most powerful of

witches' functions, and as such they fell under the legislative ordinances of our forefathers.

But the ignorant empiric, also confident in his own qualifications, never scrupled about the preparation of love-philtres, maintaining that they could be produced by the pharmaceutical art, apart from any mystical process. Hence, relying on his own medical skill, he sold these much-coveted compounds to anxious lovers, who readily paid exorbitant prices for them. As such amatory powders and potions only too frequently contained pernicious ingredients, injurious effects were occasioned by taking them, an abuse which necessitated legal interference. Again, conjurers and mountebanks made a profitable trade of love-philtres at country fairs, enticing the simple-minded folk by rehearsing to them the wonderful properties of their love-producing commodities. Shakespeare has represented Othello as accused of winning Desdemona by such means:

She is abused, stolen from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.

Formerly, too, the village apothecary kept love-philtres among his stock of drugs; and Gay, in his *Shepherd's Week*, relates how Hobnelia was guilty of resorting to this questionable practice:

As I was wont, I trudged, last market-day,
To town with new-laid eggs, preserved in hay.
I made my market long before 'twas night;
My purse grew heavy, and my basket light.
Straight to the 'pothecary's shop I went,
And in love-powder all my money spent.
Behap what will, next Sunday, after prayers,
When to the alehouse Lubberkin repairs,
These golden flies into his mug I'll throw,
And soon the swain with fervent love shall glow.

Similarly, in the *Character of a Quack Astrologer*, published in the year 1673, we are told how 'he induces a young heiress to run away with a footman by persuading a young girl 'tis her destiny; and sells the old and ugly philtres and love-powder to procure them sweethearts.' It will be seen, therefore, from how many sources love-philtres were procurable, a proof of the wide extent to which this curious delusion prevailed in bygone times. Even at the present day it survives in our midst, cases occurring every now and then of persons being fined, in different parts of the country, for either selling or persuading love-sick damsels to purchase various mysterious compounds for influencing the affections of others.

In the preparation of the love-philtre, much importance has from the earliest period of its history been attached to the numerous ingredients used in its composition. Both in ancient and modern days, certain animals and plants have been supposed to be specially adapted for such a purpose, and have long gained a notoriety through being thus employed. Italian girls still practise the following method: a lizard is caught, drowned in wine, dried in the sun, and reduced to powder, some of which is thrown on the obdurate man, who thenceforth is theirs for evermore. A

favourite Slavonic device, writes Mr Finck, in his *Romantic Love and Personal Beauty*, 'is to cut the finger, let a few drops of her blood run into a glass of beer, and make the adored man drink it unknowingly. The same method is current in Hesse and Oldenburg; and in Bohemia, the girl who is afraid to wound her finger may substitute a few drops of bat's blood.' Another form of this mode of procedure current in the Netherlands is thus: Take a host or holy wafer, but which has not yet been consecrated; write on it certain words from the ring-finger, and then let a priest say five masses over it. Divide the wafer into two equal parts, of which keep one, and give the other to the person whose love you desire to gain. Formerly, in our own country, a nest of young swallows was buried in the earth, and such as were found with their mouths shut when disinterred were supposed to allay a lover's feelings. In Scotland, according to Mr Walter Gregor, in his *Folklore of the North-east of Scotland*, two lozenges were taken, covered with perspiration, and stuck together, and given in this form to the one whose love was sought, the eating of them being thought to excite affection. A curious old recipe, once popular amongst the English peasantry, informs us that 'inside a frog is a certain crooked bone, which, when cleaned and dried over the fire on St John's Eve, and then ground fine and given in food to the lover, will at once win his love for the administerer.'

From time immemorial flowers have been much in request as love-philtres, a highly popular one having been the pansy. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon tells Puck to place a pansy on the eyes of Titania, in order that, on awaking, she may fall in love with the first object she meets:

Fetch me that flower; the herb I showed thee once;
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make a man, or woman, madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

A favourite plant with the old herbalists was satyrion, a name applied to several species of orchis. As far back as the days of the Roman Empire, it was commonly supposed that the roots of the satyrion supplied the satyrs with food, and prompted them to commit those excesses for which they became proverbial. Kircher relates the case of a youth who whenever he visited a certain corner of his garden, became so love-sick that he mentioned this strange circumstance to a friend. On examining the spot, it was found to be overgrown with a species of satyrion, the odour of which alone had the effect of inspiring love.

Vervain has long been in repute as a love-philtre, and in many rural districts has the reputation of securing affection from those who take it to those who administer it. Another ingredient of the amatory potion once highly prized was cumin-seed. It is still popular with country lasses in Italy, who endeavour to make their lovers swallow it in order to insure their continued attachment and fidelity. Or, if the lover is going to serve as a soldier, or has obtained work in a distant part of the country, his sweetheart gives him a newly-made loaf seasoned with cumin, or a cup of wine in which cumin has been previously powdered and mixed. Then there is the basil, with its strange mystic virtues, which

in Moldavia is said to stop the wandering youth on his way, and make him love the maiden from whose hand he happens to accept a sprig. Rarely does the Italian girl pay a visit to her sweetheart without wearing behind her ear a sprig of this favourite plant. Hence, it was considered an invaluable ingredient in love-potions. The mandrake, which is still worn in France as a love-charm, was in demand for the same purpose because, writes Gerarde, 'it hath been thought that the root hereof serveth to win love.' He also speaks of the carrot as 'serving for love-matters,' and adds that the root of the wild species is more effectual than that of the garden. The root of the male fern was in olden times much sought for in the preparation of love-philtres, and hence the following allusion:

'Twas the maiden's matchless beauty
That drew my heart a-nigh;
Not the fern-root potion,
But the glance of her blue eye.

Among further plants employed for the same purpose may be mentioned the crocus, purslane, and periwinkle; while the leaves of hemlock, dried and powdered and mixed in food or drink, were said to influence the affections of another. The well-known wild-flowers, Our Lady's Bedstraw and the Mallow were thought to possess the same property; and among the Scottish peasantry the roots of the orchis were dug up, and, when dried and ground, were secretly administered as a potion.

With the Indians, the mango is a favourite plant for the production of the love-philtre. Tradition tells how once upon a time a young girl plucked one of its blossoms and offered it to Cupid, uttering these words:

God of the bow, who with spring's choicest flowers
Dost point the five unerring shafts; to thee
I dedicate this blossom; let it serve
To barb thy truest arrow; be its mark
Some youthful heart that pines to be beloved.

Other plants equally in request are the lotus and the champak, the latter being a plant of the greatest rarity. The jasmine, too, is reputed to be all-potent in love-matters; and it may be remembered how Moore represents the enchantress Namouna, who was skilled in all manner of charms and talismans, instructing Nourmahal to gather at midnight certain blossoms which would have the effect, when twined into a wreath, of recalling her Selim's love. Accordingly, the flowers having been duly gathered as directed, the enchantress Namouna, whilst singing the following invocatory lines, weaves the mystic chaplet which is to have such wondrous influence:

The image of love, that nightly flies
To visit the bashful maid,
Steals from the jasmine flower, that sighs
Its soul, like hers, in the shade.
The dream of a future or happier hour,
That alights on Misery's brow,
Springs out of the almond silvery flower,
That blooms on a leafless bough.

Beans are said to have been accounted efficacious as love-philtres. The case is recorded of an old woman who was scourged through the city of Cremona for having endeavoured to conciliate the affections of a young man through the medium of some beans over which mass had been

celebrated. Indeed, all kinds of ingredients seem to have been used in the preparation of these amatory spells, and it is recorded how a young woman in the seventeenth century was indicted by the legal authorities of Leipsic for administering a love-philtre composed of bread, hair, and nails, to a man, whom it sickened.

Occasionally, in foreign countries, confidence was reposed in the power of written charms, which were administered in drink or food to the person whose love it was desired to secure. In some cases, it would seem, such philtres were considered to have the desired effect without being swallowed. Thus, St Jerome relates how a young man passionately enamoured of a damsel of Gaza, having failed in the usual amatory charms, repaired to the priests of Æsculapius at Memphis, from whom he acquired magical faculties. Returning after a year's absence, he introduced certain mystical words and figures sculptured on Cyprian brass beneath the lady's door. This contrivance had the desired effect, for soon she began to rave on his name, 'to wander with uncovered head and dishevelled hair, for she had become distracted through the vehemence of love.' But in cases of this kind there was not always the same success. We are told, for instance, how a Norwegian peasant whose suit had been rejected sought to inspire the lady he loved with corresponding affection by mystical means. So he carved certain Runic characters on pieces of wood; but not being sufficiently skilful in this mode of talismanic science, instead of furthering his purpose, he did the reverse, and threw the damsel into a dangerous illness. Fortunately, a northern chief witnessing her sufferings, and hearing that Runic characters had been carved, sculptured those that he considered more appropriate, which being laid beneath her pillow, soon restored her to convalescence.

Oftentimes philtres were expressly given to counteract the effects of love, and to soothe the susceptibilities of those who were suffering from misapplied affection. Thus the *Savau Indica*, a species of the willow, one of the sacred plants of India, had the reputation of driving away all feelings of love; and the amaranth was thought to be a good antidote to love. The water-lily was supposed to possess a similar property, and the *Agnus castus* was given to calm despairing lovers. In short, there was no lack of expedients resorted to in bygone years either for inspiring or dispelling love, many an amusing instance being given in our old romances and fairy tales. Such a practice may seem ludicrous in the present age; but it cannot be forgotten how great a hold it once had on the popular mind. How far this was due to the stories circulated, is a matter of uncertainty; but tales like the following one, handed down with every semblance of truth, no doubt largely helped to propagate a piece of folly which was once productive of so many mischievous effects. The story goes that Charlemagne was enamoured of a very unattractive woman, whose corpse at her death he would not quit. Archbishop Turpin, suspecting sorcery, searched the body, and underneath the tongue found a ring. This he put on his own finger, whereupon the monarch became strangely attached to the Archbishop, who flung the ring into the lake

near Aix. But the mysterious influence of the ring did not cease, for the king became so enamoured of the lake that he built a palace on its shore, where he spent the remainder of his life.

'SUMAJH.'

'HENDERSON, what's the meaning of "Sumajh," eh? Early this morning I was wandering about a mile out on the Kistapore Road, just on the edge of the jungle, you know, and ran across some ten or a dozen natives in a ring around a poor wretch of a leper. Ugh! he's the first I've seen, and he made me feel bad, I can tell you; I don't want to see any more.'

'Hah!' broke in Henderson; 'and how do you know the man was a leper, if you had never seen one before, eh?'

'Oh, he was a leper right enough—there was a horrible grayish scaly look about him, and he was bloated, and his arms were only stumps, and'—

'That's enough—I pass,' said Henderson quickly, with a shudder.

'Well, this leper seemed to be asking a great favour of the other fellows—imploring them to do something, you know—and they didn't want to; and the poor chappie turned from one to the other and moaned and cried; and well, upon my word, Henderson, what with the sight of him and what with his pitiful entreaties, I felt—well—I couldn't see quite straight for a little while. And look here; I thought lepers weren't allowed to come near anybody?'

'Hm,' Henderson's face assumed a puzzling expression, half-pitying, half-stern, as he rose from the camp-chair in which he was lolling. Placing his hands on my shoulders and looking into my eyes, he went on: 'So you want to know the meaning of that word, do you?—Let's see; how long have you been grilling in this devil's kitchen, eh?'

'Nearly five weeks,' replied I, surprised at the peculiar hardness of his voice; for Henderson, I had already seen for myself, was big brother to all the children of the cantonment.

'So; five weeks.' His voice assumed a satirical tone. 'Five weeks—and you don't know the language yet! You're very slow for a competition wallah. And what did you understand of the conversation between your leper and his friends, eh?'

'Why,' said I, bridding up somewhat, 'I learned a good bit of the language before I came out, and I know as much of it now, I'll guarantee, as the average man does after he's been here a couple of years.'

'Modest,' dryly ejaculated Henderson, waiting for an answer to his question.

'Oh, I understood it all right enough except that blessed word "sumajh." It was wrapped up in very figurative language—calling the earth his mother, and the sun his father, and all that sort of stuff, you know. He wanted them to do "sumajh" for him; but it seemed as if they were half afraid to do whatever it means. In the end, though, they gave way; and the poor chap was wonderfully pleased, for he held his wasted arms to the sky and invoked blessings on them, and

then crouched down and kissed the earth; and finally burst out into a sort of song that didn't go very far before it faded away into a dismal croak that was painful to listen to. I couldn't stand it any longer, and came away.'

'So; that's all you know about it, is it? Well, youngster, take my advice—and it's good, too—don't poke your nose into the natives' business. Let them alone as much as you can. Cultivate a convenient memory when you're reading the regulations about them. Remember, that the men who make most of those rules don't have to keep them; and between you and me, their knowledge of the theory of government is only excelled by their ignorance of the practice of it. As for that word you're so curious about, forget it, and don't hear it again—understand? With that, he went out abruptly.

I was greatly perplexed. Half the night I pondered over Henderson's strange conduct, and wondered why on earth he should refuse to tell me the meaning of a simple word. I did not care to ask any one else, for fear of its getting to Henderson's ears. Although I was on pretty familiar terms with him, he was my chief, and in addition I had already become much attached to him.

The next morning, I tackled him again: 'Henderson—that word?'

He turned and gazed at me with half-closed eyes, and said deliberately and coldly: 'The keenness of your curiosity would do infinite credit to a corporal's wife.' He cleared his throat and said testily: 'Picnic, picnic; that's what the word means; he wanted them to treat him to a picnic in the jungle; and you say they consented. And—he turned on me quite fiercely—'why shouldn't they? And look here, my boy, if you say one word about it to any one else in the cantonment, I'll make it warm for you.'

I was hurt and angry, and gave Henderson a wide berth for the rest of the day.

In the evening I strolled down the Kistapore Road. It was against the regulations, for the jungle ran right up to the road, and at night there was a certain amount of danger to be feared from the wild beasts that occasionally explored the road almost up to the cantonment. But even in my brief experience I had seen the spirit, if not the letter, of one or two of the regulations ignored; and I wanted to be alone to think out the meaning of Henderson's strange words and manner.

It was almost the last of the few brief moments of twilight, when, being still some couple of miles from home, I quickened my pace. The night was falling as only those can understand who have witnessed a nightfall on the edge of the jungle. No need to tell them how the darkness drops down like a heavy blanket, nor of the startling transformation of the tangled underwood and the gigantic grasses which suddenly become strange monsters endowed with life; moving to and fro, now smoothly, now jerkily; pointing with strange fingers; now uttering husky cries of hate, now gibbering idiot-like. And the wild animals in the thickets of the interior, how they howl, and shriek, and cry, and moan—roars of defiance, screams of pain, trumpetings of victory! All made more intense by being subdued, as if the vegetation were unwilling to let

the outside world know of the scenes enacted in that fearsome place.

I confess I started to run, holding my revolver at the full cock. But my steps were suddenly arrested by the magical appearance, directly in my path, of several lights. I pulled up sharply, and stood stock-still. The lights advanced, keeping time with the thumping of my heart. At last I could dimly descry a body of twenty or thirty natives, several of whom were carrying torches, which they must have just lighted. I awaited their coming not without trepidation, for I could not imagine what they were about. Just before reaching me, however, they turned quickly aside into the jungle. They were not five paces distant from me when they left the road, and I felt some surprise at their not having seen me. By a sudden overpowering impulse of curiosity, I started to follow them, in order to learn the meaning of their strange journey. With as little noise as possible, I swung round, stepping almost in their footsteps. I had little difficulty in doing so, for they followed what seemed to be a beaten track. For some hundreds of yards the strange procession went slowly on. Suddenly I heard a strange noise, that thrilled me through and through. There was something about it, too, that seemed familiar; but my brain was excited and refused to recall the sound. It was a kind of moan, half human, half animal. As the natives and I drew nearer, it took the character of a chant; and then it flashed on me that I had heard the sound before: it was the leper's voice! The poor wretch was crooning a dismal hymn or invocation, just as he had done when soliciting his brethren to do what I was, to my great satisfaction, about to find out. His low, weak cry rang out strangely clear.

'Ohèi, Ohèi. Mother, my Mother. Thou only art merciful. Thou only. Ohèi, Ohèi. Brethren, my Brethren, lead me to our Mother; she only will welcome, she only will give peace. Ohèi, Ohèi.'

The voice died away in a moan, that mingled with and seemed to rise again in the soft whistling of the long grasses, as they quivered with the breath of the wind that presaged the coming rains. I shivered.

The party, having now arrived at a space which had been cleared of the tangle-wood and grass, abruptly stopped and formed into a ring. I pressed forward as near as I dared. Then I saw, in the centre of the ring, a large cavity, perhaps four feet deep, with the earth banked up on either side. The torch-bearers ranged themselves at the head and foot of the hole, which, now that it was in the light, I saw to be of oblong shape, shelving somewhat at the end nearer to me. The other natives stood at the sides, four with tom-toms, and two with little pots of burning incense. Then the leper limped out, from the jungle seemingly, and crouched at the shelving end of the hole. I had expected him to appear on the scene, yet when he did so, I could not help giving a bit of a start. Not one of the natives looked at the leper, nor did he seem to see them. As soon, however, as he approached, the whole of the natives set up a cry—subdued and dismal beyond description. The burden of it was something like this: 'To Thee who art all knowledge, all power, all love, all hate. To Thee, known only of Thy-

self. To Thee who art Life and Death. To Thee we bring our brother. He seeks Thee where Thou art. He comes to Thee. He comes to Thee.' Their voices and the noise of the tom-toms died down; and as they faded away, the leper, who had been beating time by nodding his head, crawled down the slope and squatted down on his haunches at the deep end of the hole. In a shrill, quavering voice that sounded strangely piercing on the electrically charged air, he took up the refrain.

'Ohèi, Ohèi. Fire of the Lightnings, I come. Cloudless brightness of the sky, I come. Winged Messenger of the Mountains, I come. Ohèi. I come!'

Then, amid more chanting and tom-tom beating, two of the natives handed the leper some liquid in a small bowl and some food. After drinking a little of the liquid and eating a little of the food, he cast the remainder into the hole in front of him, accompanying the action with subdued but intense cries.

But now several of the natives retired for a moment, returning with large flat pieces of wood. With these they started throwing earth into the hole. The leper did not move. Good God! They were going to bury the poor wretch alive! The thought in all its hideousness flashed through my brain. For the instant I went as cold as ice, and was unable to raise a finger. Only for a moment, though; and then, acting for the second time that night on the impulse of the moment, I dashed forward, my revolver still in my hand, to do—what, I could not tell. But before I had gone two steps, I found myself seized, disarmed, gagged, and pinioned. I struggled, or, rather, attempted to struggle, for I could neither move nor utter the slightest sound. I gave myself up for lost. I expected nothing but death, and I remember doing what I had not done for years: I offered up a prayer—incoherent and vague; but never was prayer more fervent. Contrary to my expectation, I was only dragged back several paces and tied hand and foot to what I suppose was a small tree. My captors had bound me with my back towards the leper, apparently determined that I should see nothing more of what was going on. However, by screwing my neck round I could just catch sight of the wretched creature in the pit that I now felt certain was to be his grave.

The horrible sight fascinated me. I had no thought for anything else. Even my own perilous situation caused me no more fear or anxiety. The natives, still singing that sad monotonous refrain, were now quickly throwing the earth round the leper. Quicker and quicker they shovelled, louder and louder they sang: 'Ohèi, Ohèi, thy wish is thine—is thine.' The four beating the tom-toms threw them down and joined in. The earth mounted higher and higher round the doomed man. It reached his breast: he waved his poor stumps of arms towards the sky; he patted the earth with them, as if he were fondling a loved one. It reached his shoulders—he bent his head and kissed it passionately.

Oh, that scene!—the natives casting in the earth with frenzied energy; the torch-bearers standing like bronze statues, their torches throwing a red glare on the leper's head, now fast disappearing as if sinking in a pool of blood. Then,

oh God! the earth crept up to his mouth, his nostrils. . . . With a convulsive effort I shut my eyes.

In another moment the noise of the shovelling and singing ceased. My eyes involuntarily opened, just in time to see the torch-bearers thrusting their torches into the earth heaped up over the grave; they gave an angry splutter and then went out. For an instant there was utter darkness and silence. Then came the crowning horror. A vivid flash of lightning lit up the scene. It seemed to hang over the spot. And while the natives were thus enveloped with the ghastly hue of death, I heard—I vow I heard—muffled and faint as the shriek of a gagged man, *the cry of the leper*—the echo of a Voice—the echo of a Life! Louder and louder grew that terrible voice; it roared like a cataract, like a thousand peals of thunder; it became a thing—tangible, palpable—filling the universe, pressing on my brain—crushing it—till at last something snapped, and I knew no more!

Three weeks afterwards I woke up. I was lying on a bed in my quarters. Henderson was bending over me; he raised his hand to prevent my speaking, saying, with a queer little smile: 'Yes, yes—keep quiet; a touch of jungle fever, my boy, that's all—a trifle heady; you'll be all right again in a jiffy.'

That 'jiffy' was nearly three months long.

HER ATTRACTIONS.

SHE has no dazzling charms, no classic grace,
Nothing, you think, to win men's hearts about her;
Yet, looking at her sweet and gentle face,
I wonder what our lives would be without her!

She has no wish in the great world to shine;
For work outside a woman's sphere, no yearning;
But on the altar of home's sacred shrine
She keeps the fire of pure affection burning.

We tell our griefs into her patient ear;
She whispers 'Hope!' when ways are dark and dreary;
The little children like to have her near,
And run into her open arms when weary.

Her step falls lightly by the sufferer's bed;
Where poverty and care abound, she lingers;
And many a weary heart and aching head
Find gifts of healing in her tender fingers.

She holds a helping hand to those who fall,
Which gently guides them back to paths of duty;
Her kindly eyes, with kindly looks for all,
See in uncomeliest souls some hidden beauty.

Her charity would every need embrace;
The shy and timid fear not to address her;
With loving tact she rightly fills her place,
While all who know her pray that Heaven may bless her!

R. MATHESON.

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WINTER FARING.

WHEN the berries glow in the hedgerow and the holly is red, a feast is spread for hungry birds who will be cut off from one of their principal food-supplies while the ground is sealed by winter frosts. The birds that live on the light-winged summer insects are for the most part those small travellers that fly away in the autumn from the changeable climates of northern lands to enjoy the warm winters of the sunnier south—away, away, thousands of miles, not led by any romantic desire for change, as some have thought, nor even, so far as we can read between the lines in the journals of bird-migration, in search of warmth, but driven by the stern necessity of gaining a living to seek those spots where insects come out to be caught by the birds winter and summer alike.

Our summer migrants do not depend on the wild fruits for their winter food, though some of them take a small share of hedge and woodland harvest before they go; indeed, the warblers, the whitethroats, and the blackcaps eat more than their share, considering how important these crops are to those who stay behind. One can scarcely blame them, however, for the thrushes and blackbirds and jays and starlings—birds that will be entirely dependent on these stores when the frost sets in—show them such a bad example. While yet the ground is soft and worms and grubs are to be had for the asking, they begin to make raids upon the berries in a most improvident manner, without a thought of the hard times that are coming. It makes thrifty folk like the butcher-bird and the nuthatch quite angry to see the rowan trees stripped and the elder bushes robbed in the early autumn, and the brown owl and the sparrow-hawk look on with a grim smile; hungry thrushes are very good game later on.

It is only when berries are scarce, though, that the birds suffer for this extravagance; often there is enough fruit to allow of a little recklessness; life is easier low down on the ladder; wild

creatures do not need to take care of the pence. There are some berries that garner themselves for a later store by not ripening until the early spring. Not until the end of February or the beginning of March will the birds begin to eat the bitter black fruits of the ivy and privet, if they can help it; there are often some of these left for the blackcap when he comes home to sing his beautiful song in April; and unpopular fruits, like the spindle-shaped egllets, and the round red balls on the sweet white rose briars, often remain untouched.

Very seldom, indeed, is there famine among birds, the wild harvests are so plenteous in their abundance, the garnerers of wood, hedgerow, and hillside so well stored. There are rich red bunches under the spiked holly leaves, bushels of these in a single copse; there are hips and haws in the tangled hedge, millions scattered and clustered; there are heavy loads of the beautiful pink berries, so strangely shaped, crowning the stiff stems of the wayfaring tree; and the graceful branches of the mountain ash bend under the weight of countless clusters of vermilion beads; there are berries on the mistletoe bough, on the ivy that wreathes the old trees, on the yews, the elders, the privets, the sloes, the junipers; there are barberries, bilberries, cranberries, whortleberries; berries of all shapes and sizes; berries black, purple, blue, white, crimson, scarlet, pink, orange, yellow, green; berries soft and hard, sweet and bitter, early and late. Could a year's produce of berries be gathered and weighed, the sum of them would sound fabulous; it would need all the hill fairies and all the wood-nymphs to gather them, and the giants of old to come back and weigh them out, such hundreds of thousands of tons of berries spread over the country to feed the birds.

Nearly all the birds that spend the winter in Britain avail themselves of this provision, with the exception of those that dwell on the sea-shores and the mud-flats of river estuaries, where the abundant supplies of fish, molluscs, marine insects, and their larvæ, never fail, and are

seldom shut up out of reach of the birds by long-continued frosts. Always there are some birds in the berry-laden trees and shrubs; but when the snow has fallen thickly and wrapped itself round and about every fallow land and grassy field, or a hard frost has set in, and the ice-king has locked up all the birds' earthly feeding-grounds with one turn of his silver key—then, if you would see all sorts and conditions of birds, look among the berries. The thrushes come in from the fields to the hedges and copses in large flocks, and with them bring their Scandinavian cousins, the fieldfares and redwings that visit them every winter. The blackbirds desert the garden beds, where, while the weather was 'open,' they found ample food in the slugs and snails, and fly to the hollies and elders and hawthorns for their daily bread. The fierce and greedy missel-thrushes, who, later on, in the spring will plunder the nests and eat the eggs and the young birds of even their own kith and kin, must content themselves with a diet of rowan berries, and the white balls of the parasitic plant whence their name. If the vegetarian theory of the wholesome moral influence of a vegetable diet is correct, the pugnacious temper of the mistletoe bird should be improved by abstinence; but it is only too evident that he comes forth quite undisciplined by his long fast. Listen to the shrill screams of two of these birds as they wrangle for the biggest berry; it might as well be a fat worm or a young blackbird; but let this pass, or we shall entangle the bird in the vain old disputation of whether circumstances rule character, or character regulates circumstances, and lose him from ornithological circles.

Surely no bird-lover could find fault with any of the interesting family of thrushes: think of how much they contribute to the joy of summer—pouring forth wild imaginings from gracious shades in wild and desultory strains; think of how they enliven the dreary fields and gardens in winter, as in graceful flocks they wander to and fro. Birds, flitting, soaring, wandering birds, so winning, so wonderful in all their ways, appeal to the poetry in us. It would spoil half our pleasure in sweet simple birds to look too searchingly into their moral status or regard them as responsible beings. A thousand apologies to any thrush for having called him anything but a thing of beauty, a joy for ever, when the fields are drear and the berries red.

The ring-ousels leave the bare hillsides when berries begin to ripen, and come to the woods and hedges where they grow. These, like the blackbirds, bear the name of 'merula,' the deserving one, truly merited by their melodious voices; more rich and pure than that of the song-thrush, though not so varying the strain; more powerful than the redwing's, and yet as delicate. There is a ring, a thrill, in the voices of the blackbird and the ring-ousel like the *vox humana* on a sweet-toned organ.

The beautiful jay is fond of berries; and if the supply fails in the woods where he dwells in ambush, he will venture forth into the open country for a meal among the hips and haws in the hedges; or even come to the gardens for the fruits of fancy shrubs. The jay is a shy bird, for all his pert chattering and mimicking; but who can wonder at his startled fugitive flight,

and his timid retreat into the depths of the wood? Is he not one of the pariah birds who hang with the owl, the hawk, the rook, and the magpie, on the keeper's gibbet? Like the others, who are persecuted for an occasional breach of the game-laws, the jay is most useful in keeping in check such truly mischievous creatures as insects, worms, and mice, and should be protected for this as well as for its beauty. It is one of the few brilliantly-coloured birds left to us, and, like the kingfisher and the green woodpecker, is becoming rarer. Once upon a time—it sounds like a fairy tale—there were many such birds among our fauna. The roller, the bee-eater, the golden oriole, the hoopoe are almost gone; surely we should try to preserve those that remain.

The whole tribe of titmice have tried to claim kinship with the jay, on what pretext it is hard to say; but this they have in common—both like berries. Even the rarer marsh and cole tits may be seen on the ornamental shrubs close to a house; the antics of the great tit and the tiny blue-bonnet are most graceful and nimble as they climb from twig to twig, sucking the ripe fruit, and throwing the skins to the ground.

Wherever good cheer is spread, the sparrows go to make the feast merrier. When the wheat-harvest is over and they have gleaned the last grain from the corn-fields, the sparrows desert the open land and the fields where the grass seeds have sunk into the ground, and repair to tree and bramble to eat the wild-fruits. There they find great numbers of their old friends from the chimney tops—the starlings, who depend greatly upon the bountiful store of berries for their winter faring—that is, those who do not get so far as our south-western shores. Enormous flocks of starlings travel westward every winter, and settle in immense numbers upon the coast of Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall. This is one of those partial but regular migrations common to most of the birds who spend the winter in their own country. The starlings that go to the seaside are almost independent of berries, for the abundant supply of marine insects seldom if ever falls short.

Still more hungry birds for the berries to feed. The finches and buntings, some of them like the fieldfares and redwings, bird refugees from the reign of terror in the far north, abound in our fields and lanes. They are easily seen in the leafless trees and the bare thickets as they pick the hips and haws, the elder-berries and the sloes. The fine bullfinch, seldom visible in the thick foliage of summer, is conspicuous in tall hedges, where stripped branches reveal its nest. Wood-pigeons alight in flocks where berries grow; big birds as well as little birds trench on their store; and on the hills where the wild game-birds assemble their thinned ranks, packs of grouse and smaller companies of capercaillie with ptarmigan and blackcock, burrow in the deep snows for fallen bilberries, cranberries, and whortleberries. Some of these fruits—as, indeed, most of the smaller fruits which come under the title of berry—are very acid, and the game-birds are said to grow thin in the districts where these grow in plenty as the season advances, and they are dependent on them for food.

Many berries hang on the trees till the spring, some even longer, like the juniper, which is not

considered fit for flavouring gin until two seasons have gone towards ripening it; even where the plants seem bare there is a goodly supply strewn on the earth.

In the wooded countries bordering on the Arctic Circle, where dense forests stretch unbroken for miles and miles, and thick and varied undergrowths of bush and bramble cast their fruit, silence falls soon after the berries begin to ripen. Nearly all the teeming myriads of birds whose summer home is there have migrated to warmer latitudes, and the field is left to a few fierce eagles and falcons, whose meat is something stronger than berries. The berries are left, and preserved by the covering of thick dry snow, they are kept safe until May or June, when the countless hosts of travelling birds go home again and find them. Many different kinds of birds, and many different in their choice of food in better times, must look to the berries for winter fare, and especially in frosty weather. Even a few of the hard-billed birds, who, like the hawfinch, crack the stones of the hips and haws and eat the kernel, are glad of the berries. It would make a very long list to mention each and all of the plants that bear fruit for the birds. The guelder-rose, the yew, and the skewer tree, whose wood is so hard that the gypsies use it to make pegs, are favourites, as well as those already referred to; and besides all these, many another bush and bramble contribute to the feast.

All through the winter we may look for birds where berries grow, and find them; there is an old saying that on Christmas Day the birds sit in the bush with the bleeding breast; so they do, and in many another fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, when the holly is red in winter-time.

F. A. FULCHER.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER VIII.—AT THE GREAT WHITE FEAST.

IN a few seconds Euphemia came and released Ainsworth from his embarrassing confinement. She laughed at his serious and wondering face, thinking it was due to anxiety lest she should not find him.

'But,' said she, peeping round the magnolia, 'you might have got out through the drawing-room: I see the door is open.'

'Oh yes,' said he; 'I daresay I might have got out through the drawing-room.'

He helped her to collect and to carry out such flowering plants as she selected, but all in so absent-minded a way that still she laughed and chaffed him; and he smiled and bore it, for he was so possessed and interpenetrated with the glow of his new feeling that he was insensible to the shafts of ridicule. He was in love, and love was in him, and he knew it. For let it be noted that there is an important difference in what are called 'affairs of the heart' between most men and women. Man as man is open, direct, and simple in his feelings; woman as woman is secret, involved, and complex. So it comes to pass that when a man is really touched with love's fitful fever he is commonly able to diagnose himself;

he knows what is the matter with him and acts accordingly. A woman, on the other hand, seldom recognises when she is in love; she may be very far gone, plunged beyond hope of recovery, and yet not know it; and even when she may suspect where she is, she clouds, obfuscates, or glosses the fact to herself, and calls it something else—until the man speaks, and then!—

Thus the twinge caused by the talk overheard in the conservatory had made Ainsworth recognise what had happened to him, and, recognising it, he was resolved to win the only assuagement possible: the love of the woman who had touched his heart. Isabel, on her part, was troubled and distressed at what had occurred; she saw no reason, nor had she the inclination, to blame Ainsworth for it; but she began from that hour to take more note of him, to underline, so to say, her interest in him, without in the least suspecting what had happened, or was happening, to herself.

In something less than half an hour Ainsworth's journeyings with Euphemia and the flower-pots to and from the marquise were at an end, the tables were set forth, and the guests were all assembled, and were settling down into their places; then he chanced to glance across a space of table and he suddenly came to himself. He knew that a man whom he felt must have been he, had been for some time hurrying to and fro, but whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, and what he had been doing he could not tell; now, however, he saw plainly where he was and knew clearly who he was; for there, a little way off on the other side of the table, stood she—the one *she* in the world for him!—her face flushed and smiling above her white diaphanous raiment, and her eyes sparkling like glorious jewels beneath her crown of dark hair. She was in reality just as she had been half an hour before, save, perhaps, for the new animation of her bearing; but to Ainsworth's inspired eyes she appeared transfigured into a vision of the supremest loveliness of life and health, of body and mind. The sight of her intoxicated and dazzled him, till she glanced his way and their eyes met, when the frank intelligence and confidence of her look soothed and steadied him.

There was neither time nor opportunity then for other communication; for part of the fun and formula of that feast was that the chief members of the household and the chief guests must act as stewards. At the head of one table Suffield generously carved a great joint of beef; at the head of the second his son carved another joint; and at a third the mistress of the house herself dispensed smaller dishes; while her daughter and her niece, Lord Clitheroe and Mr Ainsworth, the clergyman of the church and the minister of the chapel and their 'respectable' wives—as Daniel would have said—aided the domestics of the house, hung round the tables, and saw that the feasters had what they desired to eat and drink. In passing thus to and fro, Ainsworth hovered near Isabel's sacred presence; yet not too near, nor even as near as he might have gone, for he felt there was a line to pass beyond which would have been familiar, if not rude. The feasters were all heads of households in the village—fathers and mothers, and some grandfathers and grandmothers; for the unmarried and the young were

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still kicking their heels outside, waiting for their turn at the tables, even as they were waiting for their complete innings at life. While the elder people still kept their seats and the younger still lunged outside, a foreman got upon his feet to propose the health of 'oor mester and mistress'; and Suffield responded in a speech which took and held Ainsworth's attention. He had never before had the opportunity of considering his friend as a public speaker, and now as he listened he was surprised and delighted to think he had in him the essentials of a popular orator. He spoke clearly, in simple, straightforward language, with unconscious dignity and sweetness of temper, and with feeling and humour; so that his audience followed him with cheerful understanding, and now felt the springing of moisture to the eyes and now broke into the heartiest laughter. His anecdotes were naturally the best appreciated parts of his speech: to that audience they were as the plums of a pudding; for they were told in the strong and racy Lancashire dialect—which it would be impossible to reproduce here intelligibly—and they were seized on by the untravelled and unlearned natives as their exclusive property. While they roared with laughter, they glanced round upon their attendant superiors with the clear meaning in their eyes: 'What do you think of that for a story? Of course you don't understand it; but we do.'

Ainsworth paid heed to all these things, and in so doing he moved—perhaps not quite unwittingly—closer to Isabel. When the speech was finished and the cheering had ceased, he was fluttered and delighted anew by her turning to him with a gracious smile and a divine blush, and saying on the impulse: 'What a delightful speech! Don't you think so? I had no idea that Uncle George was so good a speaker.'

'Nor I,' answered Ainsworth with pleased alacrity, and his words came in a nervous, hurried stream. 'It is a model speech for the occasion—simple, pathetic, and humorous. And such capital stories he told! I didn't understand them a bit myself—I haven't Lancashire enough, though I am half a Lancashire man—but I saw they were caught and understood by all the folk. An admirable speech! Mr Suffield ought to become a great platform orator.'

'Do you think so really?' asked Isabel with a touch of deference, as if to better-instructed opinion than her own. 'I should like to hear him make a speech in parliament.'

'Ah,' said Ainsworth, 'I believe that's not quite the same thing; I don't know of myself, but I've always heard that. A man may be an admirable platform speaker, and quite fail as a speaker in the House: I can quite understand that; can't you?'

'Oh yes. Just as a clergyman may be a very good preacher, but a duffer—duffer is the word, is it not?'—(He laughed more hilariously than was quite necessary)—'a duffer when he gets up to speak among his brethren.'

'That's it. You put it excellently. Of course I don't mean that Mr Suffield would be a failure; but, as you so well said, success of the one kind doesn't necessarily imply success of the other.'

With a woman's fine intuition, Isabel perceived his nervous eagerness to please, and in a measure understood its cause. She, therefore, became more

self-possessed, indulgent, and expansive, though she did not dare to let the talk drop, for fear of the reflection that might spring up in the pause.

'I can't,' said she, 'know so much of these things as you'—

'But why not?' he interrupted. 'You seem to me to be thoroughly acquainted with everything, and to be able to set men right in many things—you do.'

'Really, Mr Ainsworth,' she laughed—a laugh which showed that the praise, though extravagant, was agreeable—'if I could believe you mean what you say, I should be puffed up with conceit.'

'But I *do* mean what I say—I mean everything that I say,' he urged fervently.

'And so you are waiting to see me puffed up?'—she laughed again.

'No, no, no; you are too wise, you have too much ballast to be puffed up.'

'You mean,' said she, 'that I am too wise to be puffed up, and even if I were puffed up, I have too much ballast to be carried away? Really, really, Mr Ainsworth, your compliment after all proves gross and equivocal!'

'You are right, you are right, of course. But at the same time you prove the truth of what I said—that you can set men right in many things—don't you see?—But you were going to say something when I interrupted you.'

'Oh, I was going to say only that, though I know nothing of politics, I think it is possible that Uncle George may be a success in parliament. He will try hard to be, I know, for my aunt has that ambition for him, and he always likes to please her.'

'That's very beautiful of him, now!' exclaimed she—'after so many years of married life!'

'Yes,' said she, as if she had been suddenly provoked to consider the point, 'I suppose it is.'

'Not many couples, I fancy,' said he, 'have such confidence and belief in each other after a quarter of a century of marriage.'

'No; I daresay not,' said she, and showed an inclination to plunge into a reverie on the matter. But she shook off the inclination, and said: 'That's chiefly why uncle has taken a great house in London.'

'Oh,' exclaimed he. 'Has he taken a house in London?'

'Didn't you know?' said she. 'The town-house of Lord Clitheroe's father, the Earl of Padiham. And the family is going to live there regularly—except George: he is going to remain here and manage all the business, I believe.'

While the conversation had been in progress, faint blushes had been coming and going on Isabel's countenance, but on the chance mention of George's name, a blinding blush swept over her, making her look down in confusion and Ainsworth look away in sympathy. He relieved her, however, by continuing the talk without heeding what she had said of George.

'I'm going to London, too,' said he.

'Are you really?' she asked, with a quick look of lively interest. 'I had not heard of it before.'

'I only resolved on it to-day,' said he; and added hurriedly, on the sudden fear that she would connect his resolution with the scene in the conservatory, 'I've had a word or two with

my editor, and I've practically no alternative but resign my post: I must either change my style of criticism or go. I prefer to go.'

'Of course,' said Isabel, at length showing that unconsciousness of herself which was one of her chief charms.

'I hope,' said he, 'when we are both in London I shall often have the pleasure of meeting you.'

'No doubt we shall meet,' said she, looking thoughtful. 'But—excuse my saying it—I hope you have something in prospect in London.'

'Well,' said he with a laugh, 'I believe there are ever so many birds in the bush, though I confess I have not one in the hand.'

'You have the Lancashire bird still in your hand—have you not?' she said.

'You mean to suggest,' said he, 'that I am not wise in letting it go? There are risks, of course; but every movement is attended with some risk, and'—he continued with intention—'I have reached a point in my life when I prefer to run a risk. But, after all, from my position on *The Lancashire Gazette*, I am not quite prospectless; and Mr Suffield has given me encouragement.'

'Uncle George,' said Isabel, 'is always so good.'

'He is absolutely the best man I know,' said Ainsworth.

And thus the conversation came to an end with the recurrence of their duties as stewards; so that it seemed all the more to Ainsworth like an interlude of heavenly music in the commonplace jangle and dull jar of average daily duty. The second relay of feasters had taken the places of the first while our pair were talking, and now they were completely settled and eager for the good things of the Suffield dispensation to be set before them. The second turn at the tables passed like the first, and then the feasters rose and went forth to play. When they were gone, Ainsworth, finding himself at length hungry, proffered a request to Miss Raynor, near whom he still maintained himself.

'Do you think,' said he, 'that I might have something to eat? I've had no lunch.'

'Certainly,' said she at once. 'I suppose aunt must have thought you had lunch in town. We had luncheon early and quick to be ready for this.'

She ran off to her aunt and presently returned, saying that she was deputed to attend to his wants.

That would be scarcely worth chronicling were it not that 'the green-eyed monster' was looking forth from young George Suffield's countenance, with consequences that shall duly appear. All the while Ainsworth and Isabel had conversed, George had observed them, and thought with a pang that they seemed very friendly and pleased with each other: and now that they went together to a side-table, while all were fast withdrawing from the marquee, and sat down, Ainsworth to eat and drink, and both to talk, the green-eyed monster's warring heart beat in George's bosom in place of the young man's own honest organ. He could hear before he also withdrew that they were only talking of things literary and dramatic, but still they appeared to him more friendly and better pleased with each other than was necessary.

Something less than half an hour later Ainsworth was passing alone from the marquee to where the Whitsuntide revellers were romping and

playing, when he was suddenly reminded of the purpose with which he had entered Holdsworth Park. Amid the new emotions and events of the past hour or two, he had forgotten the existence of the black man, till now he saw him again pass blandly across his vision. He also was moving towards the crowd of holiday-makers; but he halted a little way off and stood with his black hands behind him, smiling and nodding indulgently, like a comment and a query of the ancient and mysterious East concerning the youthful, rude, and noisy West. Ainsworth passed him quickly by; and thinking of what Isabel had told him of George's approaching investiture with supreme authority at the mills, to George Suffield he immediately went. He was somewhat puzzled with his reception. George was commonly very cordial with him; he was now cold: he was commonly frank and talkative; he was now silent and suspicious. But Ainsworth set his changed behaviour down to the account of the scene in the conservatory, and forgave him.

'Do you know,' he asked, 'that black man standing over there?'

'Yes, of course,' answered George; 'he's my uncle's servant.'

'Oh, then,' said Ainsworth, 'perhaps you know of his having been in one of your mills—the special one against the dam—an hour or two ago?'

'Been where?' asked George, at length giving his real attention.

Then Ainsworth related what he had seen; and George without remark and without hesitation called Daniel, who came at once to the summons.

'Where were you two hours ago, Trichy?' asked George.

'Sahib George,' began Daniel, with a careless sidelong regard upon Ainsworth from his fine orbs, 'it is troublesome to remember all and many things; but the same time I must say that I have been taking myself for much interval for agreeable walks in the respected places of interest—in the valley with the waters and the animals with long back legs, etcetera.'

'Have you been in the mill by the lake?—on the brink of the dam?'

'Where is the mill? Where is the lake? Where is the—what?' asked Daniel with a smile—a smile of ingenious Eastern subtlety. 'I am regret to say that an Englishman says "damn" to turn away his feeling, but I am not sufficient to understand the meaning of the other. What is "daim" now?'

'Have you been in any of the mill-buildings in the valley?' asked George weakly.

'With regard may I say—is it able to enter myself in any of your English buildings when they are closed without the key? Have I the favour of the key? So just may I ask where can I be?'

'Answer me "Yes" or "No,"' persisted George: 'have you been in any of the buildings? Yes or No?'

'No, Sahib George,' answered Daniel, directly enough, and with the fullest, steadiest eye imaginable.

'There! you hear,' said George to Ainsworth; and adding with a bitter kind of enjoyment that surprised himself, 'I have no doubt: "Don't you think you might have been mistaken? People are

so often mistaken in what they fancy they have heard and understood; and if the ears should deceive you so much, why should not the eyes?' 'I don't think,' said Ainsworth, the more obstinately because of the singular tone of young Suffield's observation, 'that I can have been mistaken. I saw him as plainly as I see you.'

By that the eager conclave had naturally attracted attention, and seemed likely to attract an audience also. 'Anything the matter?' asked the elder Suffield, approaching with Uncle Harry, the Sahib Raynor. 'Only that Mr Ainsworth,' said George lightly, 'thinks he saw Trichy in the new mill.'

'But how could Trichy get in there?' asked Suffield. 'Ah, how!' asked George, in a semiscolfing tone, which nettled Ainsworth.

'Of course,' said he, 'it does not matter to me; but I thought it of consequence to you, Mr Suffield; and I am completely certain I saw this—er—black—I mean, dark—gentleman in the new mill.'

'This is serious,' said Suffield; this must be inquired into!—What do you think, Harry?' But before Uncle Harry could reply, George had again spoken, out of an absurd desire to oppose by any means, or to mitigate or make of no account, anything that Ainsworth might say.

'If the thing has been done, father,' said he, 'no inquiry can undo it. If the steed has been stolen, no inquiry into the question of whether the thief entered or no can bring the steed back. If Daniel Trichinopoly has been in that mill, then I suggest that the only remedy is to swear Daniel Trichinopoly into our service—to do his duty faithfully and to reveal no secrets of our business or of our manufacture.'

'Ah,' said Suffield, 'that sounds not a bad idea.—What do you think, Harry?' 'Oh,' said Uncle Harry, 'Daniel will swear.' Then he asked Daniel, in the man's native Tamil, if he would like to enter the Suffield service; to which Daniel replied in the same tongue that he would, and that he would be faithful as the ass that treadeth out the corn. ('The seed,' said he, 'of the banyan is small, but the tree gives a great shade.') 'He says he is willing and glad to enter your service, George. Take him by all means—with my blessing. Take him, and swear him in by any oath you like; they're all alike to him.—And,' continued the traveller to Daniel, 'come to me to-night, and we'll settle our accounts.'

'The Sahib,' said Daniel in his Tamil, bowing with his hands crossed upon his breast, 'is wise and comprehends.' Having set out to run, is it well to be behind one who wishes to rest by the way? Moreover, as the Sahib knows, life without action is like a curry without *seerakam*.

'It is well,' said Mr Raynor, also in Tamil. 'See that you maintain the hand of the diligent and the heart of the honest, or you will be as the hare that of its own accord ran into the cook-room.'

Having so said, he turned aside to receive a telegram brought by a servant; and thus on the prompting of a moment of pique and whim, without any reflection, was the dusky and mysterious Daniel enlisted in the service of the great house of Suffield.

Uncle Harry handed the telegram to his brother-in-law: it was an intimation from the Royal Geographical Society that Mr Raynor's promised lecture on his travels had been set down for an early date, and that his presence was desired to make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible. 'I shall go and pack at once,' said Uncle Harry, 'and catch the evening mail.—Come, Daniel.'

'You can surely wait till to-morrow, Harry,' said Suffield. 'I wanted you to make properly the acquaintance of my friend Ainsworth here—have a good talk with him, you know, and so on. And I was looking forward to a nice party at dinner.'

'I hope,' said Mr Raynor, turning frankly to Ainsworth, 'to have abundant opportunity to enjoy Mr Ainsworth's company in London.—And you know, George, I always like to carry out an intention while it's hot.'

'Ah, well,' said Suffield, 'if you must, you must. I know you're as ill to hold as a tewing horse.'

'And in any case, Mr Suffield,' said Ainsworth, 'I couldn't stay to dinner—as you have been kindly suggesting. I must get back to the office to my work.'

'Well, now,' said Suffield, 'this is what I call a miserably docked tail of a Whitsuntide festival.'

Ainsworth was a little sore about young George's behaviour towards him, and presently he said his adieus and departed to the station—not without hope of meeting Miss Raynor as he crossed the park. But, though he lingered and walked as wide as he dared, he saw nothing of her, and he returned to town in a somewhat despondent and lonely mood, but still resolved to sever his connection with *The Lancashire Gazette* at once.

OVENS AND STOVES.

CASTRÉN, the Finnish ethnologist, who travelled among the Lapps, Samoyeds, and Ostiaks, to collect vocabularies and compile grammars of their languages and dialects, describes the two sorts of huts which he found to be employed by the Lapps. One was oblong, with boarded shelves down the sides, that served as beds, and with a fire in the middle, the smoke of which escaped through a chimney in the roof, or rather an opening in the turf or hides with which the quadrangular huts were covered. The other sort of habitation was circular, and had this peculiarity, that the fire in it was lighted, and for a while allowed to burn, then extinguished; and when extinguished, the opening in the roof was closed, and the hut remained heated by the retention within of the warmth generated by the fire, and the exclusion of the cold outer air. In one kind of habitation the fire was kept burning constantly; in the other it was allowed to burn only for a while. Nevertheless, the latter habitation was the warmest of the two.

Curiously enough, precisely these same differences in employing fires exists in Europe. We in the British Isles follow the first method; so also do the French, so also the Italians. But the

Germans heat their houses on the other principle.

There can be no question whatever that the German method is most economical in fuel—not only so, but is the most effective for warming purposes—but then, it is open to the serious objection that it renders the ventilation not only incomplete but non-existent. A German porcelain stove consists of a fire-chamber, and of cells or passages of earthenware, through which flame and smoke are conducted in all directions, till a large portion of the heat is expended, and then the smoke is carried out of the stove into a small flue, that serves for a good many stoves in a good many rooms. A German house has usually but a single chimney, and into this chimney all the flues of the several rooms are carried. But that is not all. The fire is lighted, say, at seven o'clock in the morning, and is allowed to burn to eight o'clock. It is of billets of beechwood; and as soon as the one batch of firewood is consumed and the ashes are fairly dead, a damper is turned, that closes the flue, and the entire porcelain structure is converted into a great holder of hot air, that continues hot and pouring forth its heat into the apartment for some eight or ten hours. Then, when the room begins again to cool, a fresh fire is lighted, that blazes for half an hour, and smoulders for another half; after which the damper is again turned, and the room is hot for the rest of the evening and long into the night.

Firewood in Germany is very costly; coal also. The amount of firewood employed in an open farmhouse hearth in one day would last a German family a week. In Switzerland the same sort of stove is employed, so also in Piedmont. In Italy the only wood burnt is olive-wood, which is very expensive. At Rome a fire is seldom necessary; but it is otherwise at Milan, and at the latter place the close stove is employed; whereas farther south in Italy the open fireplace is usual. In Switzerland, wood is abundant, but it is pine and fir, and that wood is liable to fly and send its sparks over a floor, so that it is dangerous to employ this fuel in an open hearth. Moreover, in the cold of a Swiss winter, some better method of heating is required than the hearth. There can be no doubt that the close stove does economise heat and fuel enormously, but there can also be no doubt that a room so heated is liable to become close. It must become so, for every opening by which the vitiated air may escape is sedulously closed.

Castren in his *Travels* complains of having been obliged, when lodged in one of the 'smoke-huts,' to climb upon the roof as soon as he had let his fire out and plug the chimney with a wisp of rushes. He rejoiced on another occasion when given as his temporary lodging another in which he was able to close the chimney by pulling a rope that passed over a reel, and brought a plug of old rags into the orifice so as to close it. If the opening were not shut the hut chilled down at once. So with a German stove; unless the damper be turned, the room remains cold, all the heat of the stove, instead of radiating into the chamber, is carried up the chimney. We have known English families staying in hotels in Germany who were dismayed at their bill for fuel. A week's fuel equalled what they spent in

a month in England. This was because they kept the fire burning all day in the stove, never let it out, and never dreamed of turning the damper. The servants laughed, and wondered at the wastefulness of the English, and loudly protested it was a sin they were committing in throwing good heat away.

It is, as has been said, true that a German room becomes close where there is a stove. But this is rectified in a fashion by occasionally opening a pane or valve of the window. Fresh cold air rushes in in a moment and expels the heated and exhausted atmosphere. The window is instantly closed again, and in five minutes the room is as warm as it was before, for the stove is still radiating forth its heat.

There can be no question but that the ordinary grate with open fire is a most wasteful method of obtaining heat. That it forms an excellent ventilator of the apartment is a counterbalancing advantage. But the point to which we wish to direct attention is that the oven in which bread is baked, and the German stove, are but reproductions in small of the primitive habitation in which our and the German remote ancestors lived.

There can be very little doubt that the round oven is in miniature the primeval 'smoke-cabin.' It resembles it in shape, and it acts on precisely the same principle. In the 'smoke-cabin' the fire was made to roar in the midst till floor and walls and roof were heated, and then it was extinguished, and the orifice by which the smoke had escaped was closed. Our prehistoric ancestors then laid them down in the heated chamber and slept snugly all night. Probably at that time, if bread was baked, it was baked on hot stones; but when men came to live in better houses than these 'smoke-cabins'—beehive huts—they recalled how hot and baked they had been in them, and they constructed precisely similar structures on a smaller scale to serve for baking their bread and their meat. This is no mere surmise; there actually exist on the Cornish moors, side by side, the circular hut that was domed over and its smoke-hole closed after the extinction of the fire; and the oblong habitation with its rudely constructed ovens, built precisely like the former habitation in every particular save size. Nay, further, in some parts of England earthenware ovens are used in cottages, made in the potteries, on the same principle, and so like the primeval habitations that they might be taken as miniature representations of them. In the Kircherian Museum at Rome are some earthenware representations of Etruscan hovels found in a tomb in Etruria; they show us how the poorer classes made their habitations in a primitive period; it was very similar, with a small smoke-hole, to be closed when convenient. The walls were of clay, apparently; possibly the roof clay-plastered also. If so, the house was an oven in all but size.

The oblong habitation, with a fire kept continually burning, was a great advance on the circular hut. But as in Lapland now, so in the British Isles anciently, both sorts of habitation probably coexisted, and were in use simultaneously. The rich could maintain fires night and day, for they had fuel in abundance and serfs to collect it for them; but the poor man had to

economise his fuel, not so much because fuel was scarce, as because of the labour of felling and cutting timber, that interfered with his search after food.

The chimney is comparatively modern. Up to the period of the Wars of the Roses in England it was exceptional. In the halls the fire burnt on a hearth or in a brazier in the middle, and the smoke escaped through a louver in the roof. It was by this means that the college halls in our universities were warmed till within the memory of man. The louvers remain as ornamental architectural features, of no further practical use.

Old Holinshed says that colds in the head were unknown among the English till chimneys were introduced, which he says was not long before his time, 1570. He assures us that before chimneys were built fires were made against 'rere-dosses,' and the smoke got out how it could.

As already said, both kinds of huts and modes of heating were employed at the same time. Among the Scandinavians, both were employed in the same edifice. An ancient Icelandic house consisted of the hall, in which the fires ran down the middle, with benches on each side; and also of the *stofa*, the ladies' apartment, that was probably heated in the mode of the Lapland 'smoke-cabin.' The name *stofa* is the German *stube*, and the English stove. We have taken the name away from the room and applied it to the miniature representative, the heating apparatus, whereas in Germany and in the Norse countries the name is still applied to the chamber. In Iceland at the present day fuel is so scarce that the inhabitants of the house sit in the *stofa* with no other fire than the train-oil lamp flame; but the opening in the roof with its plug remains, not now to let smoke escape, but to let off the terrible stuffiness of the apartment when it becomes quite unendurable even to Icelandic lungs.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

CHAPTER II.

JOHN GORDON was lying back in his complicated invalid chair, to which appliances of every kind were ingeniously fitted; he was smoking a very small cream-coloured cigarette; beside him, on one of the shelves attached to the chair, was a box of the same kind, aromatic, Russian, dainty in the extreme; and a tall tumbler of some sparkling stuff, neither more nor less than the light, very dry champagne which was chiefly instrumental in keeping him in life, was within comfortable reach of his hand.

Jeffreys was reading aloud from the columns of a pink paper; perhaps he did not read well, and Sir John may or may not have been interested; at anyrate, he lay back with his eyes closed, and the veins in his thin lids were very blue and distinct; he only opened his eyes when he felt for the tumbler, and they came as a surprise in his pale saffron face, for they were a light, limpid sort of blue. His moustache was very even upon his thin, much-curved lip, and, like his hair, was nearly black; his nose, high and fine, a perfect aquiline, was too deli-

cately cut for a man's. His hands, one of his vanities, were too taper and pointed to be either honest or useful; the veins came clearly through their transparent olive pallor, and had that light blue colour that was in his eyes. Sir John's was a really remarkable face, having indeed a great deal of beauty, especially in the modelling of the features; but it was as strikingly unpleasant as it was strikingly handsome.

A face never to be trusted, from which no good might be hoped.

'Read that over again, Jeffreys! I didn't catch it; you've such a confounded habit of mumbling,' he said, in his thin, refined, strangely musical voice.

'His Sire was the great Galopin, and he has many of the qualities of this famous stayer; I heartily congratulate the Duke of — on his purchase; he should be a decided advantage to the Kingsclere stables, and I understand he is to be sent down at once,' the servant duly repeated; and a knock came to the door just as he concluded the passage.

'Now, who on earth is this?' murmured Sir John fretfully as the door opened, and not even raising his eyes to look.

'Mr William, sir,' said Jeffreys, and got out of his chair and waited with the paper in his hand.

'I must beg of you not to distress me with any trivial matters,' Sir John began as his brother came into the room. 'If you will chat peaceably, or have a hand at *écarté* or something of that kind; but otherwise—I have only just begun to recover from an attack from Rose, and I'm not prepared to endure a further edition.'

'If you mean an appeal to you on behalf of any one, you needn't alarm yourself,' said Willie dryly. 'I know your feelings on the subject so thoroughly'—

'Now this is what I simply cannot stand!' whined Sir John, turning his head to and fro on the cushions, as though in great nervous stress.

'Master was very upset before dinner, sir, and he'll have a worse night if he's not calmed down,' Jeffreys whispered rapidly.

'I have that letter of Thomson's in my pocket; you promised you would look into the matter. That's all I wanted to speak about,' said Willie, looking over, from his post by the mantel-piece, from the servant to his brother:

'Jeffreys, I will call you when I leave Sir John.'

Jeffreys vanished into another room.

'Well, I don't think I can bear any scolding,' said the baronet with a little laugh; 'and I am not in the humour for whining over the sufferings of perfectly healthy, sound-conditioned people whose chief enjoyment is the hating of their richer neighbours.'

'We may as well leave that alone in the meantime; we aren't very likely to agree upon it. Here is Thomson's letter.'

'Don't read it; I cannot stand their phraseology! What is his answer?'

'It cannot be done; the money belongs to me and to Rose at our mother's death, and neither you nor I can touch a farthing of it, with or without her consent.'

'I cannot believe that Thomson has come to such an insane conclusion!' Sir John broke out violently.

'Well, here it is in black and white. I told you that *you* could not possibly get the money, and it turns out that I am just as powerless; her ladyship cannot get it herself!'

'There is just this about it, then! You must go to Edinburgh and see Thomson yourself; I would have him here, but his last visit was a trial of the keenest nature. You must tell him the affair point by point. I should be glad if you put yourself out of the question also.'—Sir John's ready sneer came into play—'and represent matters from my point of view; the money is certainly more yours than mine, but you can repay yourself out of the estate later. I cannot last more than a year; Herries said as much this morning; and though he no more understands me than that fool Hutchinson did, he isn't so far out this time!'

Willie frowned and moved his feet upon the rug.

'Then you wish me to go to Edinburgh?'—

'And explain the real urgency of the matter—nothing else. To-morrow?'

'If you give me a cheque, I suppose so; no, not to-morrow; next day.'

'Very well then; now—My God, what's that?'

The sudden cry brought Jeffreys on the scene at once.

'Something touched my hand!' Sir John went on, in high nervous alarm.

'It's Kate! She followed me into the room, I suppose,' Willie explained, with his eye upon the spaniel, whose icy nose thrust, with overweening confidence, into Sir John's moist, delicate hand, was the cause of excitement.

'Kick the brute out at once!' shouted Sir John, with an oath. 'How can you be so inconsiderate as to bring it when you know the state of my head?'

'Sorry you were startled,' Willie said quickly. 'I left her with Rose; but she always sneaks about at my heels. I will say good-night, as that business is settled; you can let me know if you have any other commissions.'

He left Sir John deep in his tumbler of champagne, and strolled out upon the lawn, filling his pipe and talking to Kate as he went.

A few minutes later he tapped on the drawing-room window.

Rose was sitting with her mother, and came at once to speak to him. He was leaning up against the stone sill, his thin black coat open, his hands in his pockets, and his fine face lit with an unconscious smile. He had asked her for her Scotch song-book, and she brought it him.

'What do you want it for?' she said, still holding it, and prepared to look up anything he named.

'Give it here a moment. I want to see the second verse of a song I know; I think it's in this.' And he strolled away with the book, and flung himself on the damp garden seat while he turned up the index. He came on it at once; the ardent Kate leaped up beside him and pushed her fat body close up to his arm; when he had turned up the page, he put an arm round her, and they appeared to read the verses together.

The smile on his face deepened and widened; he read slowly, taking in the sweetness of the lines, turning over the thought they brought him,

half saying the words with his lips, and then staring across the lawn to where the twilight stole slowly from among the dark masses of the yews that were ranged at the foot. The twilight had hidden there all day.

He was almost sure now that Aveline loved him; all the annoyances of his daily life seemed to fall off from him in the presence of that assurance. By-and-by his mother called to him to come in out of the damp; and he knocked his pipe out on the seat, pushed Kate down, and went into the house more refreshed and invigorated than if he had drunk from Sir John's big tumbler.

He was very bright and gay that evening, and even sang for them, a thing he could rarely be induced to do; he told his mother he was starting for Edinburgh in two days' time; and when she kissed him before going up to her room, she patted his big shoulder and said: 'My brave son,' in a voice that affected him very deeply.

He stood a long time at his window thinking: a sense of that friendliness a summer night has always had for lovers was present with him, and helped him to look boldly up to the stars' bright faces with his happiness all lettered in his eyes. He had suffered a great many hard, sore things, and he was going to forget it all in the love that was waiting for him! He had only to stretch out his hand for it, and, in his joy and triumph, he was very humble though very proud.

Kate rubbing against his knees awoke him from his dreaming, and she reminded him he had not spread the rug upon which she slept.

Next afternoon he left Rose packing his portmanteau and went off whistling to the banks of the Erne.

He found Aveline sitting in a patch of shade near where the water was quieter; he had known that he should find her.

She had been singing, reading, dreaming. Her choice of books was not great, and it included no novels or story-books whatsoever. She had *Aurora Leigh*; a *Longfellow*; and a volume or two of Greek philosophy, as personal friends. A little worn copy of the *Antigone* was often her handbook for a week at a time, and all these she knew and recurred to often and often. Where she did not fully grasp the meaning of the words, her fluent fancy skimmed above them in the swallow-flight that is so natural to a picturesque mind, and often superimposed a meaning all her own.

Best of all, she knew the ballads of her country; and the old, old love-songs that gave Burns his inspiration were familiar to her and often on her lips; music was unconscious with her; her clear, tender voice bent to the simple old airs like some silver birch sapling to the summer winds, and she could not have told you what she was singing.

The book beside her was sunk in the green of the mosses; she was looking over to the opposite bank, where a light wood-breath came through the tree trunks and bent the few late scabious blooms that still shone a soft pinkish-purple, though their season was past.

There's many things that come and gae,
Just kent, and just forgotten,
And the flowers that bask a bonnie bae,
Gin anither year, lie rotten!

It was a bit of that sad-sweet song, *It's Dowie in the hint o' Hairst*. She had sung it through, and she had just come to that verse when Willie Gordon appeared upon the path: ah, with Aveline it was all yet to be 'kent'; she was far, very far from understanding that the same flowers do not bloom next year! Flowers of the same kind, in the same places, yes; but, not the same flowers! These were not thoughts for her; a flower herself, who was so ready to bloom; whose dog-rose blushes flaunted flag-like in her cheeks as the twigs crashed for Willie's coming.

Kate bounded in advance and got her greeting, then came the look between the two pairs of eyes; no hand-shake, of course, at these informal meetings.

'You still come to your favourite haunt?' Willie said, when he had seated himself on the big, gray boulder whose scanty mosses he had flattened many times.

'Yes, I am so certain of being quite alone; no one ever comes here!'

'Except me!'

'And you don't always; the other night I was here and you appeared, and—you didn't disturb me!'

'You were singing, and I—'

'Oh, I didn't mean that you ought to have come; I meant that even you do not disturb me always.'

'But you know that I like to come?' said Willie quietly, and searched her face with his frank eyes. 'I am going to Edinburgh to-morrow,' he added abruptly, as she made no response to his tentative advance.

'Yes? For very long?'

'I don't know how long; ten days perhaps.'

'Oh! Not longer?' in a voice whose relief was unmistakable.

'I cannot tell. If I had my own way, I would go away for months, years—and do something or other.'

'You do not like being here?' she asked, surprised at his face and emphasis.

'This sort of life is not full enough for me; I have nothing to do; a great, hulking fellow like me shouldn't eat his head off!'

Her eyes roved over him, his face, his shoulders, his whole figure, with a sort of new shyness thrown over her simplicity of manner; he was conscious of it, and yet he could not catch her eye.

'No; you could work very hard, I'm sure,' was all she said, and she paused long before she said it, having the unreadiness of a transparent soul at flinging some slight, appropriate phrase in front of the deeper thought she could not do other than conceal.

'If I were going out into the world to-morrow, as I wish to God I were going'—Willie began, very gravely—'I should ask you to wish me well, and to think of me sometimes; I should ask you, perhaps, to come *here* and think of me—think of me as if I were some one you loved and cared to watch over.'

Aveline dropped her clear eyes, and looked at the long flower-coloured hands lying idly between her knees; she could quite well hear each soft breath she drew; she could hear the needles dropping from the pines some yards away—even

above the river's waters.—He was looking at her all the time as he had never looked at her before; but she was too startled and surprised to know this.

In raising her head with a nervous gesture to break the strange spell that was falling on her, this glance clashed warmly with her own. Her cheeks defied the dog-rose now.

'Would you do it, do you think?' he said at last. And she had no answer to give him at all.

'But I need not bother you to tell me,' he went on in a different tone. 'I am no more free to go out into the world and work than I am free to'—it seemed he hesitated for a moment or two, then, in a lower voice continued—'than I am free to ask you for your thoughts or your love—because I am not my own master, because I have no life of my own.'

Such a silence fell on them both as only the woodlands can compass, a silence full of long, soothing murmurs, a silence made up of thousands of live, nameless sounds.

A certain colour had flowed to the long hands that lay on her knees, and all Aveline's thought and sense seemed suspended, breathless in the face of a new sensation that was partly pleasure, but so much, oh, so much more pain.

But Willie spoke. 'Sing to me, will you?' he said suddenly, and some emotion made his voice unusual. 'Sing something.'

'It's dowie in the hint o' hairst,

At the wa'gang o' the swallow,

When the wind grows cauld and the burns grow bauld,

And the woods are hingin' yellow.'

'Not that one,' he said smiling, and laying for a second his hands on her knee. 'I love that one, but it's too sad; sing me the one about "Yarrow!"'

She turned her eyes to him full of a startled sort of terror. 'That's a sad one too,' she said. 'You know it goes: "She found him drowned in Yarrow." They are all sad, they— But I'm afraid I must be going home now.'

She got up, and he picked up her book for her.

'Really.' He stood up too; looking so big, so wondrous bonnie, that her heart misgave her more and more.

'Yes, I really must hurry.—Good-bye!' She held out her hand, and when he clasped it, a horrid sort of fear fell upon her: she was parting with him; this was the end of her chance of speaking to him or he to her, and there would be long to wait for another. A vivid light flamed into her face and fear—and something else gave her courage. 'And, Mr Gordon,' she began, hurriedly, while the red glowed to the curls that rayed out from her head, 'even though you are not going away for long years, I—I shall be thinking of you sometimes as I sit here! Do you think it matters?—I mean, I don't think it matters whether one is free or not free, one likes to be thought of kindly all the same; at least, I should'—

She was dreadfully frightened and ashamed as she stood there trying to be true to herself, but to him she seemed only divine.

'You would like to know you had some one's kind thoughts, even if'—

It seemed that either she gave them or he took her hands, then—

'Give me your kind thoughts, Aveline! Give me all that you can without my having to ask for it, because I may not ask as yet. I want a great deal!—And sing the little song about "Willie" sometimes, even though she did find him drowned in Yarrow; you know the one I mean? There is none that suits your voice so well.' He was smiling, but there was a triumph as well as an entreaty in his eyes.—'At least—I think so!

Willie's fair and Willie's rare!
And Willie's wondrous bonnie,
And Willie's hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he marries ony!

He sang the quaint old words to her in his rich Scottish voice, the voice that, when it is tender, is more tender than any other; and he would look at her, right into her eyes, and there was no place to hide her face, because her hands were tight in his, and so she had to hide it on his shoulder.

POEMS ON POEMS.

If it be true, as Mr Russell Lowell asserts, that a highly artificial condition of poetry precedes total extinction the stream of British song must be fast drying up. The revival, by the school of Mr Swinburne, Mr Austin Dobson, Mr Andrew Lang, and Mr Edmund Gosse, of the 'Old French' forms of verse, is one of the most interesting phenomena in recent poetry. Landor said that the writing of epigrams was a degradation of the poet's office. The elder Disraeli classed the literary gymnastics of Villon and his imitators among the Follies of Literature. The Troubadours, the Trouvères, and the early Italians are, it is true, devotedly admired by those who look at them through the gold-rimmed spectacles of antiquarianism; but persons who are not smitten with the black-letter mania regard the ancient makers of ballades and villanelles as the concocters of an elaborate 'code of poetical jurisprudence, with titles and sub-titles applicable to every form of verse, and tyrannous over every mode of sentiment.'

The last clause contains the pith of the whole matter. Do complex verse-forms cramp the expression of poetic thought? If they do, can the use of them be defended? That they are very pretty when skilfully composed, no one will dispute. That the making of them is a charming pastime, no one who has ventured an experiment will deny. But are they fetters on poetic utterance? Perhaps the safest answer is, that some are, and some are not. The sonnet and the rondeau, for example, are capable of as much naturalness of expression as is the form in which Tennyson wrote *The Poet*. The triolet, on the other hand, although a very dainty plaything, is too frivolously artificial for serious use. But even the frailest and most rule-ridden of these forms—such as the triolet, the villanelle, and the kyrielle—may contain a very pretty love-poem or a dainty *jeu d'esprit*.

The employment and enjoyment of such verse-forms do not necessarily denote an insipid dilettantism. The fetters of one's own forging are not always irksome. There is a genuine pleasure in the solution of a self-set puzzle or the accomplishment of a self-imposed task. There

are those 'who feel the weight of too much liberty.' And these words remind us that Wordsworth has, in the sonnet of which they form part, made the best defence of that and kindred forms of verse. This, and the one beginning 'Scorn not the Sonnet,' are perhaps the very best of Poems on Poems. Both are so well known that we need not quote them. We print, instead, a sonnet of similar character, and a not unworthy echo of our greatest sonneteer. It is the work of an American writer, Mr R. W. Gilder, and was published in 1879, in a volume entitled *The Poet and his Master; and other Poems* :

What is a sonnet? 'Tis a pearly shell
That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea;
A precious jewel carved most curiously;
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
From a great poet's ardent ecstasy;
A two-edged sword, a star, a song—ah me!
Sometimes a heavy tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath;
The solemn organ wherewith Milton played,
The coloured glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls:
A sea this is—beware who ventureth!
Fair like a fjord the narrow floor is laid,
Deep as mid ocean and sheer mountain walls.

Sonnets on the sonnet have been written by Dante, Keats, Rossetti, Joséphin Soulayr—whose performance elicited the warmest admiration of Sainte-Beuve—Schlegel, Lope de Vega, Ebenezer Elliott (the Corn-law Rhymier), William Sharp, Theodore Watts, Edith Thompson, Julia Dorr, J. C. Earle, and Anthony Morehead. The works of these writers are within the reach of most of those who feel curiosity enough to consult them. We will not, therefore, quote. But many readers may not have seen the following two burlesque sonnets, which deserve preservation. The first was written by Mr John Adams, the biographer of Camoens, and addressed to the late Archdeacon Coxé :

You said last night that you had tried a sonnet,
Which 'cross the street you'd send to let me see.
Quite lost to guess what subject it may be,
I'm all anxiety that I should con it.
I hope no flea has got within your bonnet
To make you think that you can rival me.
You'll raise my ire, you may depend upon it;
The very thought calls up my chivalry.
Don't mind, however, what above I've wrote;
Its beauties all my wrath may soon assuage,
And if it's good, adieu to all my rage!
And I'll transfer to you the fame I've bought.
Of strictest rule I hope it bears the signs
Right measured verse, and only fourteen lines.

The other appeared in a Dublin magazine which has since ceased :

Well, if it must be so, it must; and I,
Albeit unskilful in the tuneful art,
Will make a sonnet; or at least I'll try
To make a sonnet, and perform my part.
But in a sonnet everybody knows
There must be always fourteen lines; my heart
Sinks at the thought; but, courage, here it goes.
There are seven lines already: could I get
Seven more, the task would be performed; and yet
It will be like a horse before a cart;
For somehow rhyme has got a wondrous start
Of reason, and while puzzling on I've let
The subject slip. What shall it be? But stay,
Here comes the fourteenth line. 'Tis done. Hurra!

The rondeau, roundel, and ballade are, after the sonnet, the artificial verse-forms which have

been most successfully used in our language. English poets have, however, introduced several forms of 'spurious' measure; notably the Swinburnian. The length of the line in Mr Swinburne's 'roundel' makes it much easier to write than the 'genuine' poem. Indeed, it may be laid down as a general rule that the difficulty of these quaint poetical puzzles diminishes in proportion to the lengthening of their lines.

In illustration of the rondeau and its kindred, one need no more than refer to Mr Swinburne's splendid example beginning, 'A roundel is wrought as a ring or a starbright sphere.' Mr J. Cameron Grant has a 'genuine' roundel on the roundel in his *New Verse in Old Vesture*. By the way, Mr Grant is the only English writer who has ventured to compose a volume consisting entirely of 'Old French forms.' The earliest known rondeau on the rondeau is found in a volume entitled '*Rondeaux*'; translated from the black-letter French edition of 1527, by J. R. Best, Esq. It was published in 1838. This poem has very little artistic merit; but it is worthy of mention because it is probably the first of its kind in our language. We cannot refrain from quoting this very pretty rondeau by Mr Austin Dobson. It is paraphrased from a little gem by Voiture, and does not, we believe, appear in recent editions of Mr Dobson's poems:

You bid me try, BLUE EYES, to write
A Rondeau. What! forthwith?—to-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;
But thirteen lines!—and rhymed on two!—
'Refrain,' as well! Ah, hapless plight!
Still, there are five lines—ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would affright
My easy Muse. They did, till you—
You bid me try!
That makes them eight.—The port's in sight;
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now just a pair to end in 'oo.'—
When maids command, what can't we do!
Behold! The Rondeau—tasteful, light—
You bid me try.

Perhaps the best ballade on the ballade is the following, in which Mr Clinton Scolland very ingeniously refers to several of the 'Old French forms':

Of all the songs that dwell
Where softest speech doth flow,
Some love the sweet rondel,
And some the bright rondeau,
With rhymes that tripping go,
In mirthful measures clad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

O'er some, the villanelle
That sets the heart aglow,
Doth its enchanting spell,
With lines recurring, throw;
Some, weighed with wasteful woe,
Gay triplets make them glad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

On chant of stately swell
With measured feet and slow,
As grave as minster bell
At vesper tolling slow,
Do some their praise bestow;
Some on sestinas sad;
But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

Prince, to these songs a-row
The Muse might endless add;

But would I choose them?—No;
For me the blithe ballade!

Mr Augustus M. Moore has written a humorous 'Ballade of Ballade-mongers'; and a witty poet, whose modesty publishes none but the initial letters of his name (G. H.), has printed a ballade entitled 'Malapropos,' in which he is cruel enough to say that 'Rondeau and ballade to the devil drive.'

Of the remaining and frailer forms of verse, the triolet is perhaps the most popular. With its short measure and its refrains, and only two true rhymes for eight lines, it is a most difficult verse to make. However, Mr W. E. Henley says it is easy 'if you really learn to make it':

Easy is the Triolet
If you really learn to make it!
Once a neat refrain you get,
Easy is the Triolet.
As you see!—I pay my debt
With another rhyme. Deuce take it!
Easy is the Triolet
If you really learn to make it.

Mr J. C. Grant, on the other hand, thinks the triolet too delicate for our English climate. So he writes:

Skip, little Triolet,
Back to your Race!
You are no violet—
Skip, little Triolet;
Vainly you say, 'Oh let
Me have a place!'
Skip, little Triolet,
Back to your Race!

About three years ago an American paper published a series of five amusing triolets. We venture to quote the second and third:

The Dictionary teaches me
The triolet receipt:
The verses of eight lines must be:
The Dictionary teaches me
The first line, by the recipe,
Three times I must repeat.
The Dictionary teaches me
The Triolet receipt.

The second line must reappear
To form the final line;
No matter if it soundeth queer,
The second line must reappear;
When poetry is far from clear
It is considered fine!
The second line must reappear
To form the final line.

The villanelle is another form very difficult to manage; but, says Mr Henley, 'it serves its purpose passing well.' Listen while he sings its praises:

A dainty thing's the Villanelle;
Shy, musical, a jewel in rhyme;
It serves its purpose passing well.
A double-clappered silver bell
That must be made to clink in chime:
A dainty thing's the Villanelle.

(These are the first six lines of Mr Henley's villanelle on the villanelle.) We do not know a kyrielle on the kyrielle in English; but there is a very dainty one in French by Theodore de Banville.

But why, one may ask, should the poet cramp his poetry by confining it within such an arbitrary form as that of the triolet or the villanelle?

Why not write a sonnet of fifteen lines, without rhyme, and in any convenient metre? Let us ask this question of two of the most skilful modern users of these forms—Mr E. W. Gosse and Mr Austin Dobson.

Why, Mr Gosse? 'Because,' he replies, 'the history of literature proves that law is better than anarchy, and the exact shape conceded by our ancestors to a form of verse is practically found, in spite of, or because of, its very difficulties, to be productive of a certain kind of art ('A Plea for some Exotic Forms of Verse,' *Cornhill Magazine*, July, 1877).

Mr Dobson thinks the revived verse-forms may add the new charms of buoyancy and lyric freshness to our amatory and familiar verse, which is already too much condemned to faded measures and outworn cadences. Taking a less artistic standpoint, he pleads for them as 'admirable vehicles for the expression of *jeux d'esprit*.' Thirdly, he recommends them to would-be poets, by stating that 'a course of rondeaux, triolets, and ballades' is an excellent training for those ambitious of poetic laurels. Mr Dobson well says that undoubtedly many who read sonnets in the days of Sufrey and Wyatt scorned the mechanical form as a 'new-fangled Italian conceit;' but then, those readers could not foresee Milton's 'Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints.' Therefore, we must not sneer at Mr Dobson when he pictures the Shakespeares of the future 'unlocking his heart' with a rondeau. And even if such quaint measures be but playthings, who, in these dull days, can have the heart to preach seriousness to the frolicsome poets at play?

THE COLONEL'S ROMANCE.

No one who saw Colonel Alured Turner stepping jauntily down St James's Street on a summer's morning could fail to observe that the little gentleman was on very good terms with himself. And indeed the Colonel had everything that makes life worth living. He was just fifty; his liver and his digestion were in good condition; he had a charming set of rooms in Piccadilly overlooking the Green Park; his soldier-servant was absolutely irreproachable; and last, but not least—without which all these advantages would have been as Dead Sea fruit—he possessed a grievance. Being in a double battalion regiment, it had taken the Colonel many years to climb to the top of the Captains, and when he at last drew near the head of the list, great changes were going on in the army, for a reformer had arisen who was about to sweep away the abuses of ages, and make the British army a thing for foreign soldiers to wonder at. And so it happened that in one short month Captain Turner found himself promoted to be Major, and then gazetted out of the service with the rank of Lieutenant-colonel. The Colonel was a smart officer, and loved his profession; but though he might have stayed five years longer with the regiment, he preferred to retire, because, as he declared, he would have had to pass all that time going in for some examination; 'for, by the Lord, sir, these miserable civilians are treating Her Majesty's officers as if they were a parcel of etcetera schoolboys.'

And therefore it was with a feeling of peace towards all the world that Colonel Alured Turner entered his club, the Senior Gravel-grinders. Three days in the week the Colonel breakfasted at his club, and opened his letters whilst sipping his tea; on other days he breakfasted at home; and the incomparable Wilks marched down to the club to get his master's letters, and returned with all the airs of a field-marshal's orderly in mufti.

On this morning the Colonel on turning over his letters came upon an oblong pink envelope adorned with a gilt monogram, and addressed in a nervous feminine hand. As no presentiment warned him of the terrible consequences about to spring from that innocent-looking note, he smiled, for he recognised his sister-in-law's handwriting, and guessed that she was making some bewildered appeal to his knowledge of the world. He opened the pink envelope with the handle of a fork, as was his wont, and read an impassioned summons to call on the writer that afternoon (doubly underlined), as she was in great trouble (trebly underlined), and remained his very affectionate Selina Turner. The Colonel having with some difficulty read between the underlines, made a mental note of the engagement, and proceeded tranquilly with his breakfast and the rest of his correspondence.

About half-past four the Colonel, having enjoyed his after-luncheon cigar and doze, strolled, a rotund and trimly-groomed figure, towards his sister-in-law's house. He found his correspondent bathed in decorous and becoming tears, and she at once opened her heart to him. As usual, and as the Colonel expected, the subject-matter of her complaint was her only son and heir, who was always getting into scrapes, from which his uncle had to extricate him.

'Oh, Alured,' she exclaimed, as soon as she had ascertained that the servant had quite shut the door, 'I am in such distress! That wretched boy of mine!'

'Well, well, Selina,' said the Colonel, 'what has he done? Don't give way.'

'He's done nothing yet,' moaned the widow; 'it's what he's going to do.'

'Come, if he's done nothing, we have that in our favour at anyrate. There will be the less to undo.'

'Oh, but how dreadful it is! Only think, Alured, he's going to be married.'

'What!' said the Colonel, taking his gold-rimmed eyeglass out of his eye in magisterial fashion. 'The young dog! Why, he's not twenty-one yet!'

'No; and that makes it all the worse. Oh, I'm sure he's been caught by one of those designing actresses who are always on the lookout for very young men.'

'But he's got no title, Selina.'

'No; but he will have money, and a very good position for a commoner, and no doubt they know it.'

'And where is this precious scapegrace of yours?'

'At Bognor. He went there for a few days last month, and has stayed there ever since. I wondered what was the attraction, and now I know. It's very hard.'

'It is,' assented the Colonel ruefully, for he

saw that this meant a journey to Bognor for him, and the desertion of London at its best. 'And so he's going to be married?'

'So he says.'

'And who is she?'

'I don't know; except that he declares she is the most beautiful woman in the world, and that he loves her. I think she must be older than he is.'

'That, my dear Selina, goes without saying. Boys of twenty never have violent passions for a woman under thirty. She is older than he is, and cleverer. And where is the young rascal quartered?'

'Here is his letter, Alured. You had better take it. Heaven knows there is nothing private in it.'

'What a hurry the boy is in, to be sure!' went on Colonel Turner, pocketing the letter. 'Why, here am I already perilously near middle age, and I have not begun to think of marriage yet.'

'Ah, Alured,' said the widow, 'we all know your story, and how faithful you are to the memory of your first love.'

The Colonel blushed through the bronze that concealed the pink and white skin of his boyhood. 'Well, Selina,' he replied, 'how do you know that if your boy is disappointed of his first love, he may not do as I have done, remain a bachelor for her sake.'

The archness of the widow faded away into the anxiety of the mother. 'Only rescue him from this woman, and I will risk that.'

The Colonel had got his marching orders; so he rose to go, but with a heavy heart, for London in the season was the breath of life to him; while Bognor and a love-sick nephew in June were by no means to his liking.

He was a simple, straightforward soul, with a great affection for his late brother's widow and her only son, and never thought of hesitating or delaying when his services were needed on their behalf; but for all that, he felt very like a schoolboy whose holidays are drawing to a close. He told the incomparable Wilks while dressing for dinner that they must start for Bognor the first thing the following morning, and then resigned all responsibility. By the time his master returned from the club to bed, Wilks had made every preparation, had chosen the train and hotel, and arranged for the forwarding of all letters.

'Train starts at 11.35, sir. Breakfast here, or at the club, sir?'

'Here,' said the Colonel; 'and we may have to stay a week.'

'Very good, sir.'

And the Colonel retired to rest, leaving everything to his adjutant.

Personally conducted by Wilks, Colonel Turner arrived at the hotel selected for him in time for a late lunch, and then strolled out along the Chichester road to conceit a method of approaching the enemy, while Wilks went out to reconnoitre.

During the last few years the Colonel had extricated his nephew from several boyish scrapes, and had in a general way acted as a second father to him; but this escapade was beyond everything. Look at it how he would, he could see no line

of action that would enable him to take the initiative. He might rush in and forbid the banns; but he was conscious that in so doing he would inevitably look like a fool, and the great aim and object of his later life was to avoid any such appearance of imbecility. The only result of his cogitations was a first-rate appetite; so he returned to his hotel hungry, but still undecided how to act.

After dinner he established himself on a deck-chair in the veranda, and, reverently lighting a Trichinopoly, abolished all thoughts of his nephew, and gave himself up to a lazy contemplation of the effect of the moonlight on the sea. But he was little more than half-way through his first cigar when Wilks marched up, saluted, and came to attention. The Colonel was a little short of breath, especially after dinner, so he merely nodded his head and said: 'Well?'

'Mr Charles is in the town, sir.'

'Ha!' ejaculated the Colonel.

He had said nothing to Wilks about the object of his visit; but it was one of the chief excellences of that incomparable servant that he always managed to hit upon the right sort of information.

'Mr Charles is at the *Porpoise*, sir.'

'Anybody with him?'

'No, sir.'

'Didn't see you, did he?'

'No, sir.'

'Don't let him.'

'Very good, sir.'

The Colonel paused to think over the news. His Trichinopoly was three-quarters gone; so he hurled the stump into the darkness and watched it turn over and over on the gravel, emitting a shower of sparks like a squib. Then he carefully lit another cigar, and, with a deep sigh—for he loved his ease—said: 'Call me at eight to-morrow, Wilks.—Good-night.'

'Good-night, sir.'

Wilks saluted and disappeared in the darkness, his measured step resounding on the gravel like the footfall of a whole company in the silence of the evening.

The next morning Colonel Turner put his poor little plan into action. He was at his wits' end, and could think of nothing better than catching his nephew early in the day and trusting to chance to bring about a crisis. Soon after breakfast, therefore, he appeared on the parade with his patent leather boots and gold-rimmed eyeglass flashing in the morning sun, and took up his position on a seat which commanded, but not too ostentatiously, the main entrance to the *Porpoise*. He had not long to wait. He soon became aware that his nephew was in the hall of the *Porpoise*, giving orders to the porter; and so he rose and strolled gently towards the pier, rightly judging that Charles would not turn to the left and go towards the outskirts of the town, at any rate so early in the day. In a few moments the Colonel turned short round and retraced his steps, and then uncle and nephew met face to face.

'Hullo, uncle!'

'Hullo, Charles! What are you doing down here?'

'Oh, I'm—— Well, I'm staying here, don't you know?'

'I see. Like me, I suppose; taking a whiff of sea-air in the middle of the season. And yet I haven't seen much of you in town, have I?'

The little Colonel was planted fair and square upon his shiny little boots, and looked straight up at his tall nephew, who was shifting uneasily from one leg to the other; for he was as yet young and unskilled to conceal his thoughts in words.

'Why—er—no—not much,' he stammered. 'The fact is—come and have a drink,' he blurted out with the sudden satisfaction of one inspired.

The Colonel was a moderate man, and was doubtful of the quality of the liquor at the *Porpoise*; but he knew that wine warms the heart of boy even more than of man, and he was anxious to obtain his nephew's confidence. The result was exactly what the Colonel expected. They had not returned to the parade long, before Charles, after nervously touching on indifferent subjects, suddenly turned on his uncle with the story of his first serious passion.

'Uncle, I want to get married.'

'Want to get what?' said the Colonel, slightly taken aback at the suddenness with which this piece of information was jerked at him.

'I want to get married,' repeated Charles, getting quite piteous in his excitement. 'Oh, Uncle Alured, I love her so; and I think she likes me, and won't you help me?'

The Colonel consulted the lighted end of his Trichinopoly, as was his custom. 'Where is she playing?' said he, after a pause.

'Playing? She doesn't play.'

'Resting here, I suppose,' went on the Colonel, who was a patron of the drama, and knew something of its vernacular.

'I don't know what you mean, uncle; she's a lady.'

'They all are,' murmured the Colonel confidentially to a distant fishing-smack.

'She's a little older than I am,' went on Charles stiffly.

'Of course,' said the Colonel to the smack.

Charles flushed to the roots of his fair hair. 'This is not a subject for chaff,' he said indignantly; 'when a fellow's awfully in love he's—well, he's awfully gone, you know.'

'My dear boy,' said the philosophic uncle, laying his hand upon his nephew's shoulder, 'take my advice; have as many love affairs as you like, but don't think of marrying before you are thirty.'

'Ah, that is all very fine for you,' replied Charles, somewhat mollified; 'but I've nearly ten beastly years to wait till then.'

'Ten very excellent years,' said the Colonel sententiously; 'mind you do not waste them.'

For a short time there was silence and a feeling of constraint between the two, and then Charles said suddenly, in a tone of suppressed emotion: 'Uncle Alured, there she is. I want you to know her, and she has often asked me to introduce you. Come along.'

The Colonel looked, and saw a tall trim-waisted figure coming along the parade with a light springy step. He felt that the crisis had arrived, so he threw away his Trichinopoly and braced himself for the fray. As his nephew's first love swept gracefully towards them, the

Colonel saw that she was by no means so youthful as the trimness of her figure might imply.

Charles introduced his uncle to his love with an air of proprietorship which could not but have been gratifying to both of them, and the Colonel raised his hat with his most gallant air. But the lady was far from content with so formal a recognition, for she held out both her hands, and said: 'Colonel Turner—Alured—don't you remember me?'

'Georgina!' ejaculated the Colonel, so taken aback that for the only time on record he dropped his gold-rimmed eye-glass.

'Yes, Georgina—or Mrs Marshall,' replied she, smiling at the Colonel's astonishment. 'Did you not expect to see me?'

'Indeed, no,' gasped Colonel Turner; 'most unexpected pleasure.'

'Why, you wicked boy,' said she, turning to Charles, 'didn't you tell me that your uncle had been on the point of coming down ever so many times, and was only prevented by his engagements in London?'

It was now Charles's turn to look foolish, and he did so in the completest fashion, mumbling something about the Colonel's being such a popular man—London season—every one wanted to see him.

Mrs Marshall cut him short. 'I'm very angry with you,' said she, though she did not look it.

Charles fell in by her side with a very sulky expression of countenance, and the three walked on together. It was wonderful what a number of reminiscences Mrs Marshall and the Colonel had in common. They talked about persons of whom Charles had never heard, and of things that happened before he was born, and irritated him extremely by taking it as a matter of course that the beginning of all things worth mentioning did not coincide with his appearance in this world. At last his temper got the better of him. He halted, raised his hat stiffly, and held out his hand to say 'Good-bye,' but the dignity of his attitude was rather spoiled by the fact that neither of his companions noticed his intention, so that he had to follow them hat in hand.

The Colonel at once saw how matters stood, and promptly took advantage of the position. He apologised for absorbing so much of Mrs Marshall's valuable time, told her how charmed he was to meet her again, and trusted that he might have permission to call upon her. In spite of Mrs Marshall's protestations, the little Colonel departed, polite and smiling, promising to call on the following day, and leaving Charles, sulky and scowling and ill-used, to continue the promenade with what grace he might.

Colonel Turner was as good as his word. He called on Mrs Marshall the next day, and on several following days, until at last Charles wrathfully discovered that youth was being distanced by middle age, and that he was being routed on his own ground by the uncle whose airs and graces he despised. He relapsed into a sulky and moody humour by way of ingratiating himself with his lady-love, and became so bearish that his changed state was the talk of the barmaids at the *Porpoise*.

One evening when he called on Mrs Marshall, after having been unable to see her all day, he was told that she was at home, but engaged. He

had frequently been told of late that she was not at home, but never that she was engaged, and the fact that his presence was by implication unwelcome, made him all the more determined to see his faithless love.

The pretty maid seemed very unwilling to admit him, but under the influence of five shillings she decided to risk it and to show him up-stairs. As he expected, he found Mrs Marshall and his uncle quite content with their own company. He accepted their greetings very stiffly, and refused to be seated, for tragedy and a low soft-cushioned armchair are incongruous things. So he remained standing, and steadfastly ignored his uncle.

'You did not expect me this evening?' he began.

'No, Charles,' said the widow. 'You never told me you were coming in; but you are always welcome.'

'I was,' returned Charles, 'until, until a week ago; but now'—His voice failed him, and he paused.

'But now, Charles? You are just as welcome as ever you were, and always will be.'

He shook his head sadly. 'Not as ever I was. Things have changed, and you with them.'

'I do not understand you, Charles.'

'I am afraid you will not; but there must be an understanding between us.'

'Please explain yourself.'

'I will,' replied Charles, rejoicing in his own eloquence, and beginning to enjoy his sufferings, for at twenty it is occasionally pleasurable anguish to place one's finer feelings on the rack, especially before an audience that takes matters seriously and does not jeer at the martyrdom. 'A few weeks ago I was always with you. You were always glad to see me, and never said you were not at home.'

'Very true.'

'And now?'

'Am I any less glad to see you?'

'Am I with you as often as I was? Do I see you as often as I did?'

'I really don't know,' said the widow, looking with a puzzled air at her vehement admirer; 'but if you do not, whose fault is it but your own?'

'My fault?' cried Charles, with a sardonic smile, in which he endeavoured to blend sarcasm, lofty pity, and blighted hopes—'my fault? It is yours, Madam, and his,' turning suddenly on his uncle, who had been sitting all through the interview on the extreme edge of his chair.

Colonel Turner was horribly annoyed at his nephew's proceedings. He detested a scene, and was disgusted to find such a lamentable want of good taste in his brother's son. He wriggled a little nearer the edge of his chair, screwed his eye-glass more firmly into his eye, and began: 'Really, Charles'—

'Ah!' said Charles, luxuriating in the full enjoyment of his wrongs, and piecing together metaphors from many novels he had been reading on the beach of late, 'this is the elderly destroyer of my happiness, the snake in my bower who has cankered my rose.'

'For Heaven's sake, Charles.'

'Till he came,' went on the lover, unheeding, 'I was all in all to you. I loved you as man never loved woman before, and you knew it!'

'Charles,' said the widow, who was beginning to get angry, for she thought the young man had been drinking, 'will you kindly leave off this nonsense, and behave like a rational being? I think we had better defer further conversation until you have got over your present state.' And she turned her back on him in the most stately fashion.

Charles rushed forward, and almost threw himself on the ground at her feet. 'Mrs Marshall! Georgina! You know—you must have seen that I love you, and that I hoped to make you my wife!'

'My dear boy,' said the widow, so taken aback that she hardly knew what to say, 'you surely never thought anything so foolish.—Why, Charles,'—and she could not help smiling, spite of the earnest pleading of his face—'surely you can never have thought in that way of me, a woman old enough to be your'—here she glanced towards the Colonel, and slipped her hand into his—'to be your aunt.'

Charles glared wildly at the pair, and then with all the tragedy oozing out of him, rushed incontinently from the room.

Three days later, the Colonel again entered his sister-in-law's drawing-room, and was received with effusion.

'Oh, Alured!' cried she, 'how can I thank you? I know you have routed this woman, for Charles appeared here in a furious state last Tuesday, and has now gone yachting with a man he hates.—How did you manage it?'

'There was but one way, Selina.'

'And that was——?'

'To marry her myself.'

'Oh, Alured!' cried the mother, sinking into a chair, 'what a sacrifice! And for me! How can I repay you?'

The Colonel smiled, perhaps a little sadly. 'Surely I am in debt to you.'

'And you who were so faithful to your first love! Oh, Alured, could not you get off?'

'Selina,' said the Colonel, 'do not distress yourself on my account. The lady I am going to marry is my first and only love!'

SHADOWS.

SHADOWS come and shadows go—

All the world is full of shadows;

Many hardly deem them so,

And pursue them, two and two,

In the spring-time, through the meadows.

Love is not the only aim

All mankind are seen pursuing—

Pleasure, fortune, glory, fame;

Failing these, the quest renewing

After shadows, just the same.

Shadows come and shadows go;

Sorrow does not stay for ever;

Time rolls on with ceaseless flow,

Pleasures pass; but so does woe;

Go thy way, complaining never.

JAMES ROOK.

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THE JEWS IN PALESTINE.

So much has been heard of late about schemes for the formation of Jewish colonies in the Western Hemisphere, that it will be of interest to show something of the actual position of the Jews in the land of their fathers. It must be said at the outset, however, that the popular idea of the steady set of a Jewish stream towards Palestine is very much of an exaggeration. During the last ten years there have certainly been considerable arrivals of bodies of Jews in Palestine, but there have also been considerable departures. The stream of emigration is a fluctuating one, and is affected by a number of causes; but it has never been so large as is commonly supposed.

Thus, we have seen it stated, with an appearance of assurance calculated to mislead, that the Jewish population of Palestine is now about 150,000. This estimate seems to be about three times too high—to judge from an informal census made a year ago by the American consul at Jerusalem. From this enumeration it appears the Jews are to be found only in nine of the towns, and in these numbers—namely, Jerusalem, 25,322; Jaffa, 2700; Tabreeyeh, 2900; Safed, 6126; Hebron, 1200; Haifa, 1640; Acre, 200; Ramleh, 166; Nablus, 99. Total in towns, 40,353. Add eleven agricultural colonies containing 435 families, 2175. Total Jews in Palestine at end of 1891, 42,528.

With regard to the agricultural colonies, we have reckoned five persons to the family, as customary in England and America; but these Jewish families do not average five, and the probability is that the Jewish population of Palestine does not exceed 42,000—a total which is very far indeed from a re-occupation of the Promised Land.

How, then, has the idea become so general that the children of Israel are crowding back to occupy Palestine, and have already peopled about one-half of the country? A little gleam of explanation is afforded by Consul Merrill in a note which he appends to his Census Report: 'I was greatly

puzzled by the reports which reached Jerusalem every fortnight, if not every week, of the surprisingly large number of Jews that were landed at Jaffa. At last I discovered that the boatmen were in the habit of counting every individual as a "family," so that if thirty Jews arrived in a given steamer, it was announced that "thirty families" had arrived; if fifty souls came, "fifty families" had come; and so on. If the Jews did not originate this vicious method of counting, I feel certain that they encouraged it. As an illustration, they are in the habit of speaking of a cluster of houses, say of four, six, or ten, as the case may be, which join each other, as Jewish houses always do, containing one and possibly two rooms each, as a "colony." If you ask a Jew to state the number of Jewish colonies around Jerusalem, he will give you almost fabulous figures, because of his strange method of reckoning.'

This little explanation certainly throws a great deal of light on what has been very dark and puzzling for those who have attempted to follow the Hebraic movement in the East. But we are enabled to throw a little more light still.

In the first place, then, the main cause of the reported increase of Jewish emigration to Palestine during the last three years has been a 'land-boom' in Jerusalem. And in the second place, the cause of the 'land-boom' has not been a sudden bubbling up of zeal for the 'redemption of Israel,' but the prospects of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, built by Christian capital through a Gentile-governed land. That railway is now completed between the sea-board and the ancient city, the first locomotive having entered Jerusalem on September 13, 1892. It will undoubtedly be a convenience for pilgrims and tourists, however much of an anachronism it may seem, but whether it will ever pay on the existing traffic, or whether it will create new traffic, are matters of considerable doubt.

The first appearance of the engineers on the line of route was the signal for the beginning of such a speculation in Jerusalem as one would look for rather in a Western American

than in an Oriental town. The idea was fostered that the railway would make Jerusalem once more a mighty city and a great centre of population; and this idea at once suggested another, that there would be a great demand for building-ground. Thereupon ensued one of the wildest of 'land-booms,' during which plots of ground changed hands with rapidity, and at constantly increasing prices, until thousands were paid for what hundreds would have readily bought a few years ago. There was no actual demand for the land, it must be observed, but only the hope and expectation of a rush with the railway.

It was to take part in this 'land-boom'—to make hay while the sun of speculation was shining—that many Jews hurried to Jerusalem. About the same time many schemes were being discussed for re-stocking the land with Jewish colonists, and it was a not unnatural desire to be first in the field. If 'the redemption of Israel' was at hand, why should not some of the Children of Israel have a profit out of the transaction?

But it was not to be, inasmuch as the dream of Jewish reoccupation altogether left out of account the fact of Turkish possession. It was absurd to suppose that Turkey would give up the country without money and without price; and it was short-sighted to ignore the right of Turkey to lay down conditions of immigration. When last summer the Imperial firman was issued forbidding the entry into Palestine of any more Russian Jews, a panic set in, and the price of land in and around Jerusalem at once fell about one-third. The Jews who had come with money in their pockets, not to occupy and cultivate the land, but to engage in buying and selling it while the boom lasted, thereupon packed up and departed. Others who went to spy out the land with a view to investment and permanent settlement, also departed on realising how poor were the prospects. These, again, have opened the eyes of the native (Palestine) Jews to the possibilities of life in other countries, especially America, and have stirred up a new emigration. And finally, the government not only forbade the entry of any more Russian Jews, but actually compelled some two hundred families who had entered without visible means of support to leave the country. The country is impoverished enough without the addition of pauper immigrants. There are no mines and no manufactures, the soil is poor, and the Jew is better adapted to trade than to agriculture.

In Palestine the Jews have always most favoured the four cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tabreeyeh, and Safed, and until within the last few years not a Jew could be found residing outside their walls. Even now more than half the Jews in Palestine belong to Jerusalem. They are essentially dwellers in cities, not dwellers in tents, with much talent for traffic, but little for tillage.

This is not to say that some measure of success has not attended the efforts of late years to establish *bond fide* Jewish colonies in Palestine. Notable among these is the colony of Haifa, associated with the name of the late Laurence Oliphant, where a Jewish population of some sixteen hundred is said to be fairly prosperous. This, however, is on the coast, where are oppor-

tunities of gain not presented to inland settlements.

The entire population of the 'colonies,' as distinguished from the cities of Palestine, is estimated at rather less than 2200, and more than one-half of these are actually supported by the Rothschilds. That is to say, in the Rothschilds' colonies an allowance of about sixteen shillings a month is made for each individual, so that a family of five enjoys a joint monthly income of four pounds, in addition to a free house, free schooling, free medical attendance, and free water. The Rothschilds pay for all these things for the colonists, as well as all the needful expenses of the synagogue, the object being to support those who are willing to become farmers while they are learning the business. The object is admirable; but the method is open to this objection, that it removes the spur of personal necessity. No community can attain to thriving prosperity under such conditions.

One reason why so many Jews centre in Jerusalem is that to the Sacred City money is sent by the devout and charitable from all parts of the world. It is a sort of central depot of philanthropy, and in consequence, not a family nor an individual there need be in want. The *haluka*, or portion, allowed to each family, is paid almost as regularly as a dividend, and if it be not enough in itself for comfortable subsistence, it is enough to remove the necessity for industrious work. The Jews in high places are well aware of the demoralising effect on the Jews of Jerusalem of this misapplied philanthropy, and of the attraction it forms for the 'thrifless and shiftless.'

A successful example of colonisation is that of some Germans who have established what is known as the Temple Colony, near Jerusalem. This is said to be one of the most attractive places in Palestine, and it is noteworthy that it has not been established by Hebrews, but mainly by a Lutheran pastor named Hoffmann. They call themselves Temple Christians. Most of the families composing the colony, indeed, were very poor to begin with, and they received no pecuniary help from outside. They had to build houses for themselves, break up ground for cultivation, lay out their gardens, and plant trees. In short, they had to work hard; and this colony is said to be now as flourishing as most of the Jewish colonies are disappointing and discouraging. There are also settlements at Haifa, Jaffa, and Sarona.

The success of the German colonies, however, and of Laurence Oliphant's efforts, would seem to show that the failure of agricultural colonies in Palestine is not so much the result of soil and climate as of the peculiar character of the Jewish people.

With regard to this, the testimony of Consul Merrill may be added. He says: 'I have myself inquired of hundreds of well-to-do Jews in Europe and America if there was any general desire on their part, or on the part of Jews with whom they were acquainted, to remove to Palestine; and I have found that such a feeling exists only to a very limited extent, and that it is confined almost wholly to the poorer classes. As a rule, most Jews in the Western world are so well satisfied with their present condition of prosperity that they would not on any account leave their homes for the hardships and uncertainties of a colonising life in the land that once belonged to

their very remote ancestors. Their mission in the world does not appear to be that of colonisation.'

The experience of Baron Hirsch's colony in Argentina leads to the same conclusion—neither in the West nor in the East do the Jews seem to take with liking to agriculture.

It is estimated on the most recent data that there are altogether about seven, or at most eight millions of Jews in the world. According to the computation we have given—and it is based on the statistics of the secretaries of the various Jewish organisations, on the returns of schools, hospitals, &c., and on the records of the various foreign consuls—only about forty-two thousand of these are settled with any appearance of permanence in Palestine. Thus, only about one-half of one per cent. of the chosen people have yet found a home, and that a poor one, in the land of their fathers.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL*

CHAPTER IX.—WHAT CAME OF A LECTURE AT THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL.

A WEEK later all the Suffield family, except George, were established at Rutland Gate. They had hurried up to London to attend Uncle Harry's meeting with the Royal Geographical Society. That took place in the rooms of the Society on the evening of the day they arrived, and all three were present, agog to listen to their relative's account of his latest travels, and Miss Raynor was also among them; she had been in London attending to her school duties for two or three days already.

'George would have enjoyed this,' said Suffield, looking round upon the more or less distinguished company of ladies and gentlemen. 'It's a pity he couldn't be spared from the works for a day; but he couldn't, you know, at the present time. I say, he couldn't be spared,' he repeated, half-aside to Isabel.

'No, uncle,' said Isabel, feeling compelled to say something to that direct appeal, 'I suppose he couldn't.'

'If Mr Ainsworth is in London,' said Mrs Suffield, giving a glance at her niece, 'he might have come to-night.'

'Has he come to London yet?' asked Isabel, without attempting to conceal her interest.

'No,' answered Suffield; 'not yet. He wrote to me a day or two ago that he would not be up for a week or so.—But here's your uncle going to begin.'

Since this is not a geographical treatise, nor a record of the proceedings in Old Burlington Street, but only a story concerning a few people in whom we are deeply interested, mention is made here of Mr Raynor's address to the Royal Geographical Society only because of one particular and, it may seem, obscure result of its delivery. It marked an auspicious change in the relations between Isabel and her uncle, and by that token it was the determining point of her history. I must not, however, be supposed to mean that Isabel was in any wise more conscious

that she had taken a new departure than is the moorland rill when its course is deflected by a stone, and it thenceforth flows in another direction than that in which it had set out; I merely use the historian's privilege of laying the finger on some small fact which might be impatiently skipped as of no consequence, and saying: 'Note this: it is a point (or an angle) of event or opportunity.'

Isabel listened to her uncle's adventures in the Shan States with unwavering attention. Everything he said was of supreme interest to her, first because she was of the rare kind of young lady that, with a romantic imagination, has an omnivorous appetite for facts, and second, because her uncle had been, like Caesar, 'a great part' of all he related. Moreover, she had a tolerably clear idea of the whereabouts of the Shan States and of their characteristic features, which, it may be cheerfully granted, most of the guests of the Royal Geographers had not. Was it not natural, therefore, that Mr Raynor, casting his shrewd eye round, as his discourse progressed, and remarking the politely-veiled looseness of attention and dullness of understanding of rows of well-dressed people, and even the wandering gaze and the ill-suppressed yawn on those of his own household, should fix his eye with satisfaction and pleasure on the intelligent and unweariedly attentive face of his brother's daughter? The wall of dislike and suspicion which he had built between his niece and himself had already begun to crumble under various influences. The grievance against his brother, which he had nursed and kept warm in his foreign solitude, had been discouraged and refused attention by his kindly brother-in-law, and he had asked himself—on Suffield's suggestion—'Was it, after all, fair that the girl should be held in cold disgrace because of the wrong done by her parents?' Moreover, he was fain to confess to himself, after his few days' close observation of Isabel in Lancashire, that he had been mistaken in thinking her pragmatical, conceited, and ambitious; and since he had come to London he had recalled in the loneliness of his hotel the unconscious, pathetic, gentle inquiry he had now and again seen in her eye—'What have I done that my father's brother should treat me so coldly?'—and he had felt ashamed of himself. Now, on this Royal Geographical evening, Isabel finally conquered, and won her uncle's regard much as Desdemona won Othello's love, by her simple, engrossed attention to his tale of adventure, peril, and discovery. And just in such degree as Uncle Harry had been crabbed, reserved, and suspicious hitherto, he became open, generous, and trusting.

All five rode to Rutland Gate together from Old Burlington Street in the roomy Suffield carriage, and Uncle Harry chaffed his sister and his brother-in-law in remote terms for their inattention to his discourse. He suggested that, being now established in an Earl's house, they felt justified in being supercilious; that they had eaten a dinner of aristocratic length and *bourgeois* substance; that the air of the lecture-room had been soporific, and the dresses of the ladies distracting; and so forth.

'Well, you see, Harry,' said Suffield, 'you struck a note above my understanding rather. I don't know much about geography; and for all

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I know, your Shan States may be next door to Timbuctoo.'

'Ah, but, George,' said Harry, 'you'd have wanted to know where they were and all about them, if you had heard that they grew cotton or wanted calico.'

'I should that, lad,' answered Suffield; 'I should, I confess.'

'You see, Harry,' said Mrs Suffield, 'George and I are both getting too old to care for knowledge for its own sake.'

'That's just it,' said Suffield. 'But here's a young lady'—leaning forward and laying his hand on Isabel's—'that's a regular cormorant for knowledge. Now, *she* listened to you. Didn't you see it? You should be satisfied, I think, if nobody else had heard a word you said.'

'I saw it,' answered Uncle Harry promptly and warmly, but with a touch of shyness, 'and I was more than satisfied; I was flattered.'

'Oh, Uncle Harry!' exclaimed Isabel; she was too surprised and delighted to say more then.

'I believe,' said Aunt Joanna, 'if Uncle Harry were the Royal Geographical Society, he would give you a gold medal, Isabel, for your attention.'

'I would, certainly,' asseverated Uncle Harry.

'I have had some school prizes in my time,' laughed Isabel, 'and I suppose I worked for them; but a gold medal would be the most remarkable and the least deserved of them all. I listened to uncle's lecture because I was interested.'

'You are fond of travel, are you?' asked her uncle.

'I don't know,' she answered, 'because I never have travelled. But I am fond of books of travel'—

'What books are you *not* fond of, Bell?' asked Euphemia from her corner.

'—and I have to teach geography, you know,' continued Isabel.

'Ah, of course, she has!' said Suffield. 'So it's not so much a case of knowledge for its own sake, after all.'

'But I don't suppose, Uncle George,' said she, 'I shall ever be able to use all I've learned about the Shan States from Uncle Harry—though there was one thing I didn't quite understand.'

'And what was that, my dear?' asked Uncle Harry, all agog to explain.

Talking thus, they reached Rutland Gate, and sat down to a morsel of supper; and still Isabel and her uncle—her new-found uncle, it seemed to her—talked; and then they all went to bed very tired, but very happy—none better pleased at the turn things had taken than the excellent Suffield.

Next morning, Isabel had to be off betimes to attend to her duties at the Ladies' College. When she returned weary to her lodgings in the Marylebone Road late in the afternoon, she had an agreeable surprise. On the mantel-piece of her little sitting-room there awaited her a letter. She did not recognise the handwriting on the envelope, but on opening it she found a bank-note for twenty pounds and a note from her Uncle Harry.

'My dear niece,' he wrote, 'I am sending you your gold medal in a handy transmutable form.

You can buy a frock or something with it. I should like to come and drink a cup of tea and have a long talk with you, if I may, to-morrow afternoon.—Your loving uncle, HARRY RAYNOR.'

Isabel sat down for an instant to endure the happiness that filled her. She was of those bright, well-constituted souls that delight to believe all people—especially their kindred and those they must associate with—are more or less good. It had pained her to have to think hardly and grudgingly of her uncle, and now that she could think well of him, she rejoiced all the more because she had formerly thought ill. She did not lay the change in his behaviour to the account of any merit of her own; she did not even stay to remark that he had changed: she only took blame to herself that she had until now mistaken him.

'How good, how kind of him!' she said to herself, glancing again at his note; and she was not thinking of the money he had sent—part of which she had already mentally set aside for her father—but of the disposition that had prompted the gift and the accompanying affectionate expressions.

She at once drew up to the table and wrote a little letter of thanks and of invitation: she would expect, she said, to see her uncle at five o'clock the following afternoon.

And at five o'clock the following afternoon he came. He pressed her hand affectionately, and then he fidgeted about her little sitting-room for some time, peeping into the books on her side-table, reading the backs of the volumes in her bookcase, and looking at the prints on the walls.

'Pretty comfortable, eh?' he asked.

'It suits me very well, uncle,' she answered. 'As well, that is,' she continued with a laugh, 'as my landlady will permit. The tear of reproach is constantly trembling in her eye: she thinks it so improper, poor dear soul, in a young lady—not a young woman: she makes the distinction—to live alone! I have literally had to wring a latchkey out of her. And whenever I come home late, I find her sitting up for me; and she says "Good-night" with such a sigh of relief, that I am tempted to pass up-stairs whistling and bang my door like a man. Poor woman! I am on her conscience, I know; and she tries to get me to believe that I am always trembling on the verge of disgrace or ruin. But it's handy here for the college, and it's cheap.'

'Hum; yes,' murmured her uncle. Then suddenly turning to her and taking her hand he said: 'My dear, I have an apology to make. Down at your Uncle Suffield's place you no doubt thought me very cold and distant to you.'—Isabel blushed and said nothing, though she looked him frankly in the face: she could not deny that she had thought something of the kind. '—Of course you did,' he went on; 'and I was, I know. I haven't much excuse, but such as it is, I give it. You reminded me very much of a woman—a girl—that once—years ago—treated me badly—at least, worse than I deserved. That's all. The impression has worn off: I see you are not like her in the least. So let us be friends, and say no more about it;' and again he warmly pressed her hand.

Isabel returned his pressure, saying: 'I am not sorry you have told me that, uncle; though

I am sorry you have told it me as an apology. Every one has a right to form an opinion of another.'

'Even a wrong one?' queried her uncle.

'Even a wrong one, surely, uncle,' said she—'if it be formed on what appear sufficient grounds.'

'Ah, that's just it,' said her uncle.

She made no other allusion to that past of his of which his words had given her a hint; but henceforward it invested him in her eyes with a new sentimental interest, in which the strongest-minded woman likes to indulge.

And then they sat down to tea and became very friendly. They talked freely and almost without pause of many things, Isabel perceiving that she pleased her uncle both with her opinions and her expression of them, and resuming, therefore, more and more of her bright, fresh self. As they thus talked, he suddenly posed her with a question: 'What would you do if you had a great deal of money?'

'What would you call "a great deal"?' she asked, thinking of her salary, the twenty pounds she had just received, and her father.

'Well, not so much as your Uncle George has tied up in his mills,' answered he, 'but enough, say, to bring a yearly income of about three thousand pounds.—Would you call that "a great deal," or not?'

'I would,' said Isabel, with her eye not really on herself, but on her uncle. 'And if I had so much, the first thing I should do, I believe, would be to make myself very comfortable, especially if my life hitherto had been rather hard, and busy, and bare. If I had a taste for books, I should buy books—beautiful books, and rare books; and if I had a taste for pictures, I should surround myself with fine pictures—not very expensive pictures, necessarily, by famous artists, but pictures that pleased me whether they were by popular painters or no; and so on with furniture, and china, and carpets, and beautiful things of all kinds. And then if I liked good dinners, I should have them.'

'Dinners, too!' laughed her uncle. 'My dear, you will permit me to say that your tastes appear masculine.'

'Well,' she answered, 'is it not of a man I am thinking?'

'I see,' he cried. 'You are thinking of me! But I wished you to think of yourself: I want to know what you would do with so much money.'

'Truly, uncle,' she answered after a moment's consideration, 'if you want a serious answer—I don't know. I should feel it a great, an anxious, responsibility. And, since I haven't so much money, nor am ever likely to have'—had she then been looking at her uncle she might have caught a suspicious twinkle from his eye—'why should I bother to inquire of myself what I should do with it?'

'But,' he urged, 'wouldn't you see that all your own people wanted for nothing that they needed or would like?'

'Of course,' she answered; 'but that goes as much without saying as that I should have my own breakfast and dinner, and buy clothes for myself. One's own people ought, I think, to come before all others.'

'Quite so,' said her uncle.—'Well, now, your aunt told me to bring you along to dinner to-night—if you could spare the time—so, if you don't object, we'll walk to Rutland Gate and talk this matter out by the way.—You like walking, I hope?' he asked, seeing something like hesitation on her face.

'Oh yes, uncle,' she answered; 'I like walking, and I'll go with you. But will you let me write a note first? It will only take me two or three minutes.'

This was the business she had turned her thought on: she had promised when in Lancashire to communicate again with her father—or with the person who represented himself as such—as soon as she returned to London; she had been back several days, but she had been able to do nothing for want of money; now, however, that she had money in abundance, she would let no more days slip by without communicating. She therefore sat down at her side-table and wrote a hasty note to the following effect: 'If you will call at your tobacconist's to-morrow evening about the time of the last post, you will receive something from me.' She was determined to be resolved whether this man who wrote to her was her father or no, and her plan was, not to send money in the letter she promised, but to be in the tobacconist's shop with sufficient money in her hand at the time she named, and to speak to the person who inquired for her letter; if that person could satisfy her he was her father, she knew what she would do: if he could not, she still knew what she would do.

Her note she took out in her hand and posted as she passed along with her uncle. But that very night she had a singular and significant adventure which somewhat modified her expectation of her father.

MARINE STOKERS.

That one half of the world does not know how the other half lives is a piece of proverbial lore, the truth of which is undoubted. It is equally open to demonstration that the major portion of ocean voyagers have little or no accurate knowledge of the circumstances under which the humble Stoker or Fireman pursues his necessary calling in the depths of the vessel. In the remote recesses of the steamer, far below the Plimsoll mark, and completely removed from the ken of the saloon passenger, does this useful but despised member of society practise his art of 'poking,' 'slicing,' and 'pricking' the masses of consuming fuel, in order that he may obtain the maximum of heat from each pound of coal burned. Invisible as he usually is, save to his fellow-workers and the engine-room staff, the passengers sometimes catch a glimpse of him as he comes on deck begrimed with coal-dust and bathed in perspiration, for a breath of fresh air. He is on view, however, but a moment, disappearing with mysterious rapidity towards the scene of his labours among the mighty furnaces below the water-line.

A pretty widespread opinion obtains that a fireman is an unskilled labourer, that any one possessing bodily strength and a good constitution

is qualified for the post. This, however, is a great mistake. There are firemen and firemen. A good man will consume less fuel, and yet produce a greater pressure of steam, than a hand who fondly imagines that piling on fuel is the *ne plus ultra* of stoking up. Coals that cake together require to be judiciously 'sliced.' Dirty coals require to be 'pricked.' Some furnaces in which the tubes require a vast surface of heating power necessitate the creation of as much flame as possible. A careless man when engaged in cleaning out a furnace will rake out the clinkers and refuse and at the same time allow the fire to die down. Then, when the furnace door is opened in order to pile on fresh fuel, the cold air is admitted; and the internal mechanism of the furnace, that a few minutes previously was played upon by gases heated to upwards of two thousand degrees Fahrenheit, is now subjected to a draught whose temperature is but fifty or sixty degrees Fahrenheit. The strain caused by such a thermometric range is of the greatest, and a man who knows his business will always avoid it by cleaning out his furnace without suffering the fire to die down any further than is necessary.

In spite of the importance of a stoker's work—for upon him depends in a small degree the amount of work got out of the engines—he undergoes no special training for his vocation. Many so-called firemen never set foot on shipboard until they were shipped as 'firemen.' In some firms the wise plan obtains of promoting scurfers or scalers—that is, boys or young men employed in cleaning out or scraping the boilers and furnaces of steamers when in port—to the post of firemen. This is a plan that works well, the lads looking forward to the extra remuneration that the work brings with it. Every fireman is given a 'discharge' at the end of a voyage, and, strange as it may seem, the custom is almost universal of marking these discharges 'G.' or 'V. G.'—that is, Good or Very Good, so that they are little or no index to a man's behaviour or competence. It would be little use, in fact, marking a man's discharge with any less criticism than 'G.' or 'V. G.,' for then the holder would simply suppress it, and use an older and perhaps better one. Or he might even borrow or buy a discharge from another sea-goer and pass himself off as its possessor. Not long ago, a large steamer left the Thames which included among its complement of firemen a man who had a whole bundle of 'V. G.' discharges, and according to their and his own account, he was a splendid fireman. Before the vessel reached Dover, however, he was dreadfully sea-sick, and it transpired that he was a runaway soldier, who had never been to sea before.

Engineers when they engage firemen do not attach too much importance to a man's discharges. If he is healthy-looking and strong, he is pretty certain to be shipped; and if asked for his last discharge he can easily say he 'has lost it' or 'left it at home'—stock excuses which are taken for what they are worth. It is thus not too much to say that any person of moderate physique can secure a berth as a fireman. Suppose a crew has signed articles, and that when the vessel is ready to sail, there are two or three deserters—the engineers, rather than sail short-handed; will ship the first man available, arguing

that even if he has not been to sea before, he will soon pick up his business, and will be of some use before the voyage is over. At the close of his engagement, he receives his discharge with the usual 'G.' or 'V. G.' conduct mark, and is thus free to compete with firemen of long standing.

It must not be supposed that on shipboard all firemen are rated at one dead-level. The lowest grade is the trimmer or coal-passer; then comes the fireman proper, who may, if he shows steadiness and aptitude, be promoted to the extra remuneration and the less laborious duties of a cleaner and greaser. The greaser in turn may rise to the dignity of a 'donkey man,' and thus superintend the working of the donkey engine, used in discharging or loading cargo, &c. The engine-room is closed to the fireman; there he may not enter. The rank of engineer is not open to him. The certificated engineer, therefore, is very apt to look down upon the poor fireman; in fact, he is regarded as an Ishmaelite. His hand is against everybody, and everybody's is against him. On river-tugs and steam-trawlers firemen may be promoted to take sole charge of the engines of the vessel. Such men are somewhat contemptuously alluded to as 'shovel engineers.' Such is the jealousy with which the marine engineers proper guard all unorthodox initiations into their craft.

The British public is very fond of flattering itself that its seamen are the finest in the world. Many shipmasters and chief engineers would say that the British fireman is the very worst in the world. They do not mean to say that they are incompetent, though many of them doubtless are. They even admit that in a situation calling for resourcefulness and pluck, the British article is second to none. In this connection a chief engineer tells of the following experience: During a storm in which he saw several vessels founder, they had the misfortune to get about seven feet of water in the stokehole and engine-room, and the fires were put out for eighteen hours. Yet they managed to survive the storm; though, had the firemen been foreigners instead of Englishmen, the chief firmly believed the vessel must have gone to the bottom. The great faults of English firemen are drunkenness and insubordination. Drink they will have; and the drunken orgies into which they plunge after a voyage, especially in a foreign port, are terrible to contemplate.

The reason that they fail to be amenable to discipline is not far to seek. The majority of them have, in sailor parlance, neither 'go to' nor 'come from.' Except in some of the big steamship lines and weekly boats, in which the men are under weekly engagements, the firemen are drawn from the lower strata of society. They have no comfortable home on shore, and but little chance of making one. They become indifferent to their present, and callous to their future lot. The earnings of the voyage are in many cases soon spent in a drunken spree, and the poor fireman must perforce seek another berth or starve. At sea his lot is indeed a hard one. His work is laborious, and performed in a heated atmosphere that renders the task doubly exhausting. From this enervating heat the 'fire-tender' sometimes ventures to the upper deck to cool himself. But even there his hard fortune some-

times pursues him. The weather may be cold and the wind keen and biting, or a green sea may sweep aboard and send the fireman back to his duty a colder and a wetter man. Of the racking a man's constitution must receive by these sudden transitions of temperature it is needless to speak. Or it may be that the sun is blazing down upon the vessel's deck with a tropical fervour, and the stifling air affords but a slight relief to the internal heat of the stokehole. There are probably few sadder pictures than the toil-stained fireman gasping as it were for very breath. Civilisation has brought us many blessings, tempered, however, with sorrow and suffering. Dwellers upon shore are accustomed to compensate themselves for any privation or hard work they may go through by a succeeding period of recreation and leisure. Long ago, Shakespeare remarked that

Some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters
Point to rich ends.

The poor fireman, however, knows no real recreation when his 'watch' is over. His reeking garments must be laid aside in the same quarter where he sleeps. There, too, he must wash himself and eat his food. On the passenger vessels the food is of course varied and well cooked; but on many steamers it is execrably cooked and worse served. The Board of Trade stipulate the minimum of food that each man shall be supplied with, and also the minimum accommodation with which each seaman and fireman must be provided. But the Board of Trade cannot supervise the cooking of the food or compel ship-owners to surround their poorer servants with more humanising environments. The seventy-two feet of cubical space fixed by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 for seamen is quite insufficient for their health and well-being. The confined breathing space leads to an accumulation of foul air which must act deleteriously upon their health. This space is of course curtailed by clothes and various other articles, and the atmosphere is frequently polluted by the cast-off damp garments of the firemen who have just come from duty.

The various port sanitary authorities of Great Britain whose duty it is to inspect shipping were unanimous in adopting a memorial to the Board of Trade that the cubical space per man should be increased to one hundred and fifty feet; that all ironwork in the men's quarters should be covered in, so as to avoid dampness to the bedding, clothing, &c., caused by the sweating of the iron decks; and also that the provision of bath and lavatory accommodation should be made compulsory.

Many steamers are now afloat in which a fireman can have a bath when he is so minded; but it is sad to relate that these efforts for his improvement are not appreciated to the extent they might be. In the words of a chief engineer of great experience: 'Firemen are dirty, and it requires the greatest pressure to compel them to keep their quarters clean and wholesome.' This is a grave charge; but it is one that is supported by the experience of the majority of ship-masters and engineers. It should not, however, discourage humane owners from doing all they can to ameliorate the condition of a neglected but useful body of men.

We have already shown that engineers when they engage their firemen have no *bond fide* evidence either of their character or qualification. The system of discharges at present in operation is a failure. If a man had a continuous record of his voyages which he was compelled to produce before re-engagement, the status of the fireman would be much improved. On all sides the verdict in favour of continuous discharges is unanimously favourable. A man's record of long and good service would then single him out from his inferior comrades, and secure him that higher remuneration and position to which he would be entitled.

Some such method as this has worked very satisfactorily at Bombay. If a man there wishes to become a fireman, he presents himself to the engineers who are likely to have a vacancy. If approved, he receives, on payment of a small fee, a certificate, issued by the shipping-master, bearing on one side a number, his name, place of birth, age, and any distinguishing mark which might be visible upon his person, such as a scar upon the face, a broken finger, or a face badly marked by smallpox, &c. On the other side of the certificate are lines for about eighteen entries, so that the record of the man's services might be read for about ten years when the certificate was full. For protection, this record of character is enclosed in a tin case bearing the same number as the certificate; and at the date of a fireman signing articles, it is placed in the hands of the master of the ship, and given up with the additional entry when its owner is legally discharged at the end of the voyage.

British firemen are said to often succeed in establishing a species of terrorism in the stokehole, and rendering their superior officers thoroughly afraid of them. They own no restraint, and fulfil the terms of their contract just sufficiently well to escape prosecution for neglect of duty. The experiences of many engineers bear witness to the truth of this. These firemen are of course the baser sort, whom engineers, respectable firemen, and ship-masters would be pleased to see weeded out of the service. What troubles the engineers have with their firemen may be easily imagined from the fact that half of a ship's complement frequently come on shipboard totally unfit for duty, and remain unfit until they have recovered from the debauch which signalled the eve of their departure from port.

The engineers have to take this human *olla podrida* in hand, sort them according to their capabilities, divide them into watches, and initiate them into their duties, and, above all, inculcate habits of discipline and obedience. In this last they sometimes fail deplorably; but the fault is not so much in the firemen themselves as in the miserable surroundings which, since the introduction of steamers, have been regarded as good enough for our marine firemen.

John Chinaman makes a capital fireman. He performs his duties with machine-like precision, and is obedient to a degree that is servile. It is doubtless this quality of abject submission to the commands of his superiors that make him such a favourite with marine engineers. Though less turbulent, however, he is less resourceful and plucky than his British *confrère*, and men who know how to rule would rather have English

firemen than a specially selected complement of 'Celestials.' The Chinese give a minimum of trouble. The head man is first engaged, and he brings along with him his own staff, so that the European engineers have that worry taken off their hands. But the Chinaman has practically no individuality. They represent in the aggregate the stoking staff of the ship. Apart from that, they are not considered.

A British vessel trading for fifteen months in Chinese waters had a full complement of Chinese firemen. At the commencement of the voyage, the names were entered on the ship's books. At the end of the voyage the roll was called and each name was responded to. Yet desertions and changes among the firemen had been frequent during the voyage. The mystery was not explained until it became known that each new comer gave up his old name and took that of his predecessor among the stokers of the vessel. He answered at musters to that name, and thus the nominal coherency of the crew was maintained. Italians, too, are much in demand for firemen. They are described as hard-working and respectful, evincing a fondness, however, for wine-drinking when on shore, though it is very rarely that they indulge to such an extent as to incapacitate them for work.

There is an old saw that bears witness to the consequences of giving a dog a bad name. The truth of the adage has been abundantly proved in the history of the British fireman. He has so long suffered under an evil reputation, that by many he is regarded as quite out of the pale of humanising influences. On the whole, however, he has been more sinned against than sinning. His improvidence and insubordination are rather the resultant of a pernicious system of selection, combined with chronic neglect, than his own bringing about. The part he has played in the development of Great Britain's mercantile marine is a most important one, and common gratitude should ensure a more considerate treatment than has been meted out to him. Legislation alone is powerless to heal the sore.

The poet had a consummate knowledge of human nature who sang:

How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

What is wanted is sympathy, real heartfelt sympathy. The fore-castle and the stoke-hole need not necessarily be brutalising and debasing influences. Even from the low stand-point of personal interest it would 'pay' to secure a better class of firemen. Ship-owners who have experimented in this direction by making their seamen's quarters more home-like, are rewarded by attracting to their service a superior class of men. The ship-owning class as a whole is keenly alive to any saving that may be effected by the adoption of improved mechanical appliances; but it seems strange that they should overlook the advantages to be derived from improving their *animated* machines, the firemen. It is by no means a *sine quâ non* that a fireman should be drunken, lawless, coarse, and ignorant. Education will teach him to perform his work in a more intelligent manner. Habits of order and sobriety will remove much of the friction from life on shipboard, and the combined operation

of these kindly influences will do much to make the poor and despised fireman a better workman and a better citizen, and more worthy the great mercantile marine, of whose *personnel* he forms so necessary a part.

'THE HINT O' HAIRST.'

CHAPTER III.

THAT one moment, not longer than any other moment, though so much fuller and more precious, Aveline had given to the Past to keep very carefully, and it was laid away among sweet flowers and scents and sweeter memories.

She had now a sort of right in Willie Gordon; he would write to her, and tell her of his arrival and his doings and the date of his return; it made her happy to know she might feel anxious about his welfare and his comfort; nothing was ever prettier than the little frown of distress she wore on the morning of his departure for Edinburgh. She saw him drive by in the pelting rain and his collar was not even turned up! Silly fellow, to get wet at the beginning of his journey; but then her tender care gave way to pride and glory in her Willie. Rain? Cold? What had weather to do with him? He was one of the people whom storms cannot shatter nor ice freeze! Ah, she was a very proud and happy girl indeed.

She sang a good deal in these days; when she was sure that only the squirrels and the wood-nice could hear her, she sang the little song about Yarrow. Twice she met the postman near the laurel bushes of the Manse Gate, blushing royally when she took her letter from him.

Among certain beautiful things in one letter was the news that Willie was going to London, and would therefore be away three weeks altogether at least; so, as she might not yet take pleasure in the thought of his return, she sat hours by the river thinking over their parting, which had been also their meeting, and dreaming ecstatically of that one moment when he had held her in his arms—a moment that would surely sing through all her life—a moment that could never be forgotten or outdone.

Always a very loving, sympathetic nature, she grew more so; to be loving, to be tender, to be gentle, came easier than ever; and when she sat by sick children in the village, or talked to old women whose sunshine she had been for years, her eyes had learned a smile more winning, her voice had found a note more plaintively wooing than the blue stock-dove's in the high fir-tops on the hill-crest when she plains for her mate.

She was so happy, she knew herself so beloved (Willie had written from Edinburgh), that she wanted to make every sorrowful thing more cheerful, wanted to dry every eye; suffering seemed more than ever wrong and terrible to her; and when she sat smoothing the rough brown hair from Maggie Sinclair's hot forehead the day before the child died, Aveline found herself very bitter against the fate that overtook the little girl and caused her to leave her play-mates and the bright world that was all smiling for her.

To think that Sir John, himself an invalid, fenced in by every comfort, should have so little care for the people who, ill in the midst of their wretched surroundings, saw nothing but a few hours' suffering between themselves and death! As she picked up the little yellow kitten that had been dead Maggie's constant playmate, and looked round the miserable cottage, a feeling of loathing for the selfishness that permitted such things seemed to choke her; Dr Herries, who attended equally the baronet and the villagers, was a toady, and a man with as little sympathy as a block of granite; he would never represent their case to the landlord, as he so easily might have done, because, so far as Sir John was concerned, his practice at Foresk House would have been gone for ever, and with it a good slice of his income.

The cottagers had nothing to hope from Dr Herries, whose assistant put up the same eight-draught bottle of 'Mixture' for a sciatic trouble or a diseased lung—so it had been whispered in the village.

Aveline was sitting in the cottage of a widow woman called Barclay, whose youngest child had fallen sick the day before; she was revolving all these things in her mind, this bright, sunny afternoon, nursing the little four-year-old and singing song after song to it in a hushed voice: but no charm of hers could get the blue eyes to close in healthful sleep, no lullaby calm the fever that burned in the little body, no drink her skilful hands could prepare ease the torture of the small white throat.

That morning her father and mother had been speaking of diphtheria, had been saying that possibly that was what had swept off little Maggie Sinclair; but the minister had declared that the swiftness of the disease bore no resemblance to the action of diphtheria—diphtheria could keep you months wrestling with it, could make you delirious for weeks: no, what they seemed to take in the village was not diphtheria. Mr Lockhart was one of those wise men who never get past a precedent in their own experience; whole volumes of accumulated fact did not have half the value of a single instance which had come under his own observation; consequently, his judgment was apt to be narrow and unsound, for he never counted the exceptions to a rule, the extraneous circumstances, nor the modifying considerations.

How the big sun was shining outside the cottage room! It was one of those autumn days upon which we cannot see him; he had hung, with a certain massive coyness, a curtain of shimmering golden haze before his face, and pale blue rifts of mist floated over the distant woods and stole up the hill-sides to join their fleecy-white sisters on the top.

'Wee Meery,' as her mother called her, was very silent now; the soft hushed groans had stopped, and the breaths came with more and more difficulty. Aveline hung over the child a moment and then decided to get a neighbouring woman: there was Mrs Ballantyne, a few houses down the road, who would come, she knew. As she stopped in the doorway to put on her hat, a carriage and pair passed quickly; it was the Gordon livery, and Lady Gordon and Rose sat in it. Lady Gordon was looking down slightly,

and she had a veil on; Aveline could not see the expression of her face; but Rose was very upright, and with a curiously hard look about her eyes and mouth, which rather marred her resemblance to Willie. Neither of them saw Miss Lockhart; and she herself, as she hurried for Mrs Ballantyne, wondered what could have given Willie's sister that expression; she had no idea what Rose suffered on driving through this ill-treated village, where, on every side, marks of her brother's criminal selfishness greeted her. 'But he will suffer for his wrongdoing!' she said often in her heart, with a rather Scotch sense of the punishment that rarely tarried; 'he will suffer; perhaps that is why he is suffering so. No; now it is only his sins to himself that he is expiating!—Ah, poor John! And no one suffers singly; what he is bringing upon mother and Willie and me!'

Lady Gordon and she were going to make two or three calls upon distant acquaintances, and Rose's thoughts were very stern, and far removed from the ordinary lightness demanded by social intercourse as she drove along.

Mrs Ballantyne was out—Mrs Ballantyne had just gone 'down by.' That meant to the village shop, no doubt!

Should Aveline run there, or would it be better to go back to the child? Yes, decidedly; let her go back to the child; something told her it was dying, poor pretty 'wee Meery'—and nothing could be done for it now. She had seen Maggie Sinclair die three days ago—she knew what they looked like when they were dying. Tears in her eyes and her heart wringing, she hurried back. The cottage door was open, and some one was leaning over the bed—it was the mother, and a sore cry of 'Oh, the wee lambie! Auch the wee lambie!' came at regular intervals as the woman rocked herself to and fro on one knee with the little body in her arms.

'Oh, Mrs Barclay!—I had just run out to get Mrs Ballantyne to come. I haven't been gone five minutes,' began Aveline, shocked to think she had left her post, no matter for what good reason; that Mrs Barclay should have seen the little thing lying there all alone!

For the poor mother, led by some subtle instinct, had come back from the turnip hoeing—and she had found wee Meery dead.

Three-quarters of an hour later, Aveline Lockhart stood on the steps of Foresk House; her excitement was so excessive that it seemed ages to her before any one answered her ring; at last a maid-servant appeared.

'Can I see Sir John?' she asked, in a voice which a very great effort had made calm.

The woman looked at her; the long, quick walk had made Aveline's cheeks rosy and her hair wild; she looked lovelier than usual, but, to the discreet housemaid's conventional eyes, only untidy; besides, no one ever asked for Sir John, and Miss Lockhart was not on visiting terms with the family.

'Master never sees visitors, Miss, unless they are very intimate friends with the family,' said Jane, with a magnificent Servants'-hall snub.

'Will you be good enough to ask if he will see me?—I have no card with me, but say Miss Lockhart.'

Jane sniffed at being offered no card, and held her salver very ostentatiously in front of her; she was not accustomed to opening the door to people who possessed no cards; the few people who did come to Foresk House were country people, hall-marked by their estates, and to them Jane's manner was very different.

'Please go and ask Sir John to spare me five minutes, if he feels well enough!'

While this colloquy was going on, a young man appeared at the window, which, carefully curtained, yet allowed a view of the steps; it was Sir John himself, and he was quite interested and amused. Who was this young woman with the pale golden hair streaming round her glowing cheeks, and a figure as slight and slim as a London lady's? He thought he would send Jeffreys to find out.

Jeffreys, profiting by a rather calmer mood of his master's, had slipped down-stairs to have a chat with the other servants, and was for once not in attendance. Very slowly and carefully, but with pale eyes all lit up, Sir John moved across to the door, and opening it behind its thick portière, called, 'Jane!'

There was a smile on his lips, an alteration in his whole appearance; he felt more as he had been used to feel when he was well, strong, and able to be as wicked as he wished.

The servant came at once.

'Who is that at the door?'

'Miss Lockhart, from the Manse, sir, and she was asking to see you.'

'And you have left her waiting on the doorstep?' Sir John was well aware that he must be overheard, and infused a tone of severe displeasure into his melodious, cultivated voice, a voice that was much softer, much sweeter, most people would have said, than Willie's. 'I shall speak to you another time, Jane; beg Miss Lockhart to walk in.'

He remained near the door, pale, handsome, interesting, and full of a grave, delicate courtesy that had served him so well in other years.

Aveline, in the brown stuff gown and wide brown hat, hair flying, cheeks flushing, and her eyes dark with some emotion as yet unexplained, came in. Sir John bowed with a deference that had never failed to be impressive, as coming from himself, and shut the door behind him, letting the great red portière fall into a sombre background.

'Don't think I am going to ask you why you came to see me; I fear it is only to ask my aid and counsel. I am a parish charity; count on me for that, class of first let me say that to a very dull, disinterested invalid you are the most delightfully men's quarters apparition, Miss Lockhart: my fairy attracting to it has been thinking of me.'

The ship-owner, confused to reply to the elegant to any saving of this speech, Aveline murmured of improvement having ventured to apply to it seems strange that her visit was not inad-

advantages to be de- animated machines, to ring on the bell; and the means a *sine quâ non* tied up by Jane, and only drunken, lawless, coarse, opportunity of seeing tion will teach him to proceed with unaccustomed more intelligent manner. sobriety will remove much of softly, and barely life on shipboard, and the con-

to observe more fully when he came in with the tea.

'Sir John, I have done a very bold thing in coming here like this, and I am sure you will believe that I must have some very strong reason indeed for coming! I have just seen a sight of very great sadness, if you could imagine'— So much Aveline managed to say of the speech she had thought out and rehearsed during her walk to Foresk; so much and no more, for Sir John interrupted her, courteously, even charmingly, but authoritatively. He had scarcely taken in what she said; he only knew she was stating the object of her visit, was, perhaps, about to go into details with regard to this Charity regarding which she had conceived the happy notion of begging personally; she was a Minister's daughter, and should be well up in these things, but they were nothing to him; he supposed he could lay his hand on a five-pound note before she left; but meantime, he wanted the novel pleasure of her visit to be unspoiled by practical considerations.

He was looking at her hair, her colour, the outline of her face, her eyes—by Jove, what eyes!—and her mouth; best of all, her mouth. What a freshness, what a curve, what coy corners it had; how it would lend itself to the saying of everything that was sweet and charming; how suited, too, to kisses. A mouth to fall in love with decidedly! Then the seriousness of the whole face! the earnestness of the straight brows—the Charity was evidently very precious to Miss Lockhart's simple, inexperienced, country soul; and Sir John was immensely amused at what he considered the inappropriateness of her expression. Good heavens, to think of a face like that existing down at Ardlach!

Oh, she must not be allowed to state her case at once, or she would be finished and go away. He smiled whimsically.

'Do you know, Miss Lockhart, I am going to exercise my privilege as an invalid, and I am going to ask you to humour me in something. I don't know when I shall have the pleasure of another visit from you, so I want to make the most of this one: will you please me by trying to imagine you have known me before, will you allow me to treat you as though I had already enjoyed your friendship for some time? I don't know if you'll agree with me, but I always regret the amount of time one is obliged to throw away upon preliminaries; afterwards, when acquaintanceship has ripened to friendship, the preliminaries do seem so *banal*—now, I'm sure you've found that?' he smiled at her with an almost child-like appeal in his eyes.

'Living here, almost alone—for in my state of health relatives prove peculiarly—what shall I say?—trying seems too strong, but at any rate—living almost alone makes me very grateful for an occasion like the present when I am charged with the entertainment of a young lady.'

Aveline had never been spoken to like this before; it made her very uncomfortable; but she told herself that this poor Sir John must have a very dull, wretched sort of life on the whole, and that she ought to say something sympathetic, even if the whole time she were thinking how much more needful of pity were some others....

'I am afraid you must feel it very much, not

being able to go out or—but no doubt you read a great deal?' with delicate tact, pausing in the enumeration of those pleasures he must miss, and going on to the possible advantages of his confinement.

'Yes, I do!—Oh, I read, of course, a great deal!' said Sir John, with a simple disregard of fact that almost caused Jeffreys to blink as he brought in the tea-things.—'Is there no buttered toast?' turning to the servant.—'I confess to the fondness of a schoolboy for buttered toast, Miss Lockhart!'

Jeffreys explained that there was some, he was just bringing it.

When everything was arranged, and the man had left the room, Sir John said: 'Now!'—in a tone of high pleasure—'you will pour out for me, won't you? And open your jacket, for I know this room is very hot! I have to have a fire almost always.'

'I don't think I want any tea, thank you,' said Aveline at last, feeling more and more oppressed by Sir John's possessive manner. 'No, really; I don't feel inclined for any! I have gone through so much this afternoon!'

'Well, then, I shall pour you out a cup, and try and persuade you to take some! After your walk, it will pick you up!' He poured out a cup carefully, smiling at her inquiringly before he put in both sugar and cream; then he brought it over and placed it on a small carved-oak stool, which he moved near her chair. Then he paused just opposite her. 'You are really looking pale and faint,' he said with commiseration, 'and I know exactly what you need! Now you are under orders, Miss Lockhart, I get so much doctoring that I am thinking of taking a diploma myself without further study. Here!'—he had been walking about his room as he spoke, but he came to his place just in front of her holding a very small glass with some clear yellowish-green stuff in it. 'Drink it! you will find it very nice,' he said.

Mechanically, Aveline took the glass, more to break the spell of the strange smile with which his eyes sought and seemed to search her face. She sipped it and put it down. 'Now, you must regard it as medicine, and take it all while we are talking,' he added, still playfully, and seated himself, with a cup of tea, and, this time, in a chair closer to her own.

'How is it, Miss Lockhart, that I have never seen you before? Forgive me, it sounds rude, but I have not even heard of you, except vaguely, and the whole place ought to ring with praises of a face like yours.'

This was too much for Aveline; she felt some half-angry tears coming to her eyes; she put down the half-finished glass of liqueur and stood up. 'I must be going!' she said, almost shyly—she was so confused, she had found everything so different from what she had expected; the burst of feeling that had been strong enough to decide her on taking this peculiar course, on appealing personally to Sir John, had become diffused now in mere excitement and a sort of tremor; if she had been successful, there would have been something to write to Willie, but that he should ever hear of this visit—oh, she must get away! But first, an effort, one effort for the cause she had so at heart.

'Not so soon! Oh, please not so soon! We have not had our chat!' He got up, slowly, and with obvious pain, and took in both of his the hand she mechanically held out to him. He looked at her now with a sort of poetic wistfulness in his eyes. 'Well, if you will go, forgive my asking one question. Tell me your name, will you? Have they given you a name to suit yourself? Do you know, Miss Lockhart'—in a little burst of apology—'I cannot talk to you in the ordinary way; whether it is the unexpectedness of your appearance, or just your strong personal charm, I don't know—but you seem to me to be the heroine, the Lady fair, out of some old ballad or song—you are yourself just a song and a poem!' Nobody could do this sort of thing better than Sir John when he liked; if, owing to unfriendly circumstances, he had to put into a first interview what would have come better in a third, it was not his fault! 'Am I to hear the name?'

'My name is Aveline,' said the perplexed girl, trying to draw away her hand; 'and really, now I must hurry home; but first'—

'Let me at least thank you for coming!'—they were standing up, and he was very near to her, excitement was making him quite strong again, then reflectively, murmuringly: 'Aveline—it is lovely! The Lady Aveline!—Good-bye!—Stay, I may kiss your hand in homage!' He did so delicately, a long, thoughtful sort of kiss, which sent a shiver all through Aveline's frame in spite of the fact—which she had tried repeatedly to remember—that he was Willie's brother. For a moment her head swam, but she recovered herself with Sir John's next phrase: 'You will come again to tell me of the business that is in your mind, for which I am flattering myself that you want my help!—It is too late to-day, and I am perhaps giving myself the excitement of too much pleasure!' This he said cleverly enough. He would appear weary, and then she would not worry him with her charity; if she really cared about it, she could come again; if not, he would have had the small amusement of one visit; he would have enjoyed the near presence of this beautiful woman for half an hour at least.

'It will not take a moment, but I must tell you now!' she said firmly. 'I have come from the village. Have you heard how unhappy they are there?—Oh, Sir John, if you could have seen Mrs Sinclair crying when her little girl died, as I did three days ago—you would have been sorry—oh—sorry! Such a lovely little girl, so fair, so bright—and only eight years old! It was the damp, unhealthy room they had to live in that gave her the disease. Mr Bowers, your factor, is so hard and cruel, and I am sure you never hear of these things yourself, or you would not allow them to go on! So many of them are ill or sickly, and when the bright healthy children die, it is—it is time'—She could not help it; she had seen these things herself, and she was sobbing through her appeal. How lovely she looked with all April in her face! Even if it was the old, tiresome story—it seemed worth listening to in this new form.

'My dear Miss Lockhart!' he said, putting one hand on her shoulder, standing very close, and bending his head quite near to the fair curls—'My dear Miss Lockhart, you must not allow

these things to distress you so deeply! The village people have so many children, you know! Far more than they can comfortably support; it is providential whenever one or two of them drop off early; it saves so much expense!—But really, I cannot bear to see you so unhappy!—Ah! you think me heartless?

'Very heartless, terribly heartless, if you mean what you say!' Aveline said suddenly and in a firmer voice.

'Well, anything to cheer you up, you know.'

'Oh, don't mind about me; what are a few tears from me? If you had seen and heard what I have this afternoon, I think—I think you would have cried too! Oh! poor Mrs Barclay; she is a widow with four children, so hard-working, poor woman, and just because she has no husband to make a fuss, Bowers treats her worse than the others. Her house is a perfect fever den—Dr Herries himself said so; he said only people of their class and rats could live and breathe in such surroundings—I heard him say it. But even he is wrong! and they can't live, poor things. Mrs Barclay's youngest child died to-day, died very nearly in my arms, after being ill only two days! I had been nursing it and soothing it all the afternoon, and'

'What!' cried Sir John on a sharp high note—'what?' He put his hand to his head and reeled back against the black oak cabinet—his face was livid with fright. 'You have come straight from a place where there is fever—typhus, no doubt; you have been hanging over some wretched brat, absorbing all the infection, and you come here—and to me!' He was gasping, pale, hysterical—almost speechless; his voice lost all its melody, and came high and cracked—he leaned there, holding the woodwork with his nervous hands, staring at her in incredulous horror.

'I came to tell you! I thought if once you knew of the sufferings of your poor tenants, you would see that something was done; I only thought that if I could speak to you myself—I who had seen it all, who had seen these poor little things die'

'And you come here to me, in my delicate state of health, carrying death in your garments? Don't you know what infection is?—haven't you heard of typhus fever? Stand away, stand back! You must be mad to do such a thing; you have conspired to kill me, do you hear, TO KILL ME!'

All of a sudden this almost shriek died away, and Sir John tumbled to the floor, foam and blood coming from his mouth. Aveline rushed to the bell and rang it; she had never thought of this; whatever her feelings about Sir John might be, she had never paused to consider the question of possible infection. For herself, she was brave enough; she thought as little of herself as the young baronet had done! But—

Jeffreys' slow, dignified step quickened when he saw his master.

'You had better go, Miss,' he said respectfully, looking up as he knelt above Sir John. 'Master often faints if he is over-excited; I expect that's just what it is; he's not used to seeing people. He'll come round soon; but if I was you, Miss, I'd just go home.'

The man's manner was not offensive, though familiar.

Aveline said a few words in explanation,

expressed a hope that Sir John would be none the worse, and hastily left.

She went home by the woods, and crossed the little bridge. She had made a terrible mistake in her eager, impulsive desire to act decisively, practically in this difficult matter.

What would Willie think of her unwisdom when she came to tell him, or when he came to hear?

About Sir John's unblushing selfishness she never thought for a moment; he was certainly beneath contempt; but for her own rashness she had unstinted blame and deep regret these many days.

THE ANCIENT BOMBARDS OF THE DARDANELLES.

To England, as ruler of the ocean, there are three narrow slips of salt water of inestimable importance—the British Channel, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal; but second only to these three stand the Dardanelles, connecting the Mediterranean with the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus, joining the latter with the Black Sea. In case of a war with Russia and an advance by that power on India, the advantages of being able to operate on the shores of the Black Sea with an open waterway to Cyprus, Malta, and home, seem obvious. The Porte perfectly appreciates the importance to her of these inland waters of the Turkish Empire, and has recently employed General Brialmont—probably the first military engineer on the Continent—to survey and report on the defence of the Dardanelles. His complete scheme, which includes every weapon of modern defence, is probably far too expensive for Turkey; but some modification may be adopted.

The British Mediterranean fleet passed up the Dardanelles without permission in the early part of 1878, and many who served in that fleet will remember the discussions about a certain forty-ton Krupp gun which looked down one reach of the Dardanelles, and was considered as a sort of keystone to the defences. In those days, Russia had no fleet worth mentioning in the Black Sea. But short as the time is since then, every one of our ships and guns that went through the Dardanelles is practically obsolete; the Dardanelles themselves require re-fortifying and re-arming; the Black Sea fleet of Russia is already formidable; and in 1903, Russia will have eight ten-thousand-ton ironclads, with cruisers, gunboats, and many torpedo boats, inside the Bosphorus. There is not on record a more striking example of the rapid changes in modern armaments, accentuating the sharp contrasts between the eager strife in our times for the most advanced weapons and the grim old guardians which forbade the right of way to and from the Mediterranean from the days of Agincourt to the days of the Franco-Prussian War—the Ancient Bombards of the Dardanelles.

General Lefroy, R.A., F.R.S., in an able paper dated June 1868, said: 'The great cannon of the Dardanelles have been a subject of wonder to travellers and of interest to artillerymen from the earliest period. There are no other examples of guns which have remained in use for four

centuries, and are still in a very real sense effective pieces of ordnance. They testify to the former energy and power of the Ottoman race as no other military monument does, and remind us of an event which has had a greater influence on the politics of Europe than almost any other within the same period—namely, the fall of Constantinople. Monuments of the military genius of Mohammed II., they remind us also of the “splendour and the havoc of the East” by their prodigious size and cost and power. As a matter of fact, the batteries at the Dardanelles were unique in having such a number of these immense old guns massed together; but there were single specimens scattered all over the civilised world, among them the great bombard of Ghent, called by medieval writers ‘Dulle Griete,’ ‘Marguerite Enragée,’ or ‘Raging Meg,’ dating from 1430, and weighing thirteen tons. Of this gun, Froissart says that when fired it made such a noise that it seemed that ‘tous les diables d’enfer fussent en chemin.’ The Malik-i-Maidan, or ‘Lord of the Country,’ the great gun of Beejapore, weight forty tons, throwing a thousand-pound ball, and long an object of worship to the Hiadus, who placed money and flowers in its muzzle, was cast at Ahmed-nuggur in 1548. The ‘Czar Pioschka,’ or great gun of Moscow, date 1586, having probably the largest bore (thirty-six inches) of any gun ever cast—as the weapon constructed by Mallet in the ‘fifties’ to be used against Sebastopol was a mortar—was thirty-eight and a half tons in weight. The ‘Dhool Dhanee,’ or great gun of Agra, cast in 1628, and broken up in 1832, weighed thirty tons, and had a bore of twenty-three inches. Two English guns at Mont St Michel are interesting, as they date from before 1423, or from a period coeval with Agincourt, though of small dimensions comparatively, being only of about sixty-six to one hundred and six hundredweight, but of the respectable calibre of nineteen and fifteen inches respectively. ‘Mons Meg,’ or the old gun of Edinburgh Castle, was cast, according to an old legend of Galloway, in 1455; she weighs five and three-quarter tons, and has a twenty-inch bore.

As isolated specimens and survivals, all these old guns are very interesting, and the more so from the fact that they, together with the Dardanelles guns, have a family likeness, and all are probably derived from an original Flemish stock. They were usually cast in two parts, and screwed together, each half being furnished with massive projecting rings with holes like those in a capstan head cast in them for the insertion of levers for screwing and unscrewing. The very large screws used for the joining together of these parts must have required great skill in casting. The process of unscrewing one of these guns was actually performed by the engineer officers of Her Majesty’s Ship *Terrible* in 1868, when one was sent to England as a present to Her Majesty the Queen from the unfortunate Sultan Abdul Aziz.

The Osmanli nation when left alone moves slowly: the writer well remembers to have seen still placed in battery in Cyprus, when that island was taken over by us in 1878, several beautiful brass Venetian guns which had been cast at different dates between 1500 and 1590.

They were ornamented with the winged lion of St Mark; and each, besides its proportion of round and grape shot, had some very curious jointed bar-shot.

The size and power of the Turkish guns, and their liberal supply of ammunition and stores, seem always to have impressed observers. Kritobulos, a Greek, writing in 1467, describes the casting of one of their heavy cannon. The mould was made of ‘very fat clay,’ kneaded for several days, and mixed with linen, hemp, and shreds into a tough compact mass; it was then formed into a very long cylinder as a core or mandrel; and another shape of the same material was prepared hollow, and as if intended as a sheath for the first, but larger, and ‘such as to leave a void space between the two’ to receive the melted bronze when it flowed out from the furnaces to take the form of a cannon.

To load the bombards, the gunners filled the chamber or breech end of the bore, which was smaller than the muzzle end, with the powder. Over the powder went a wooden wad or stopper, which they battered down with iron rammers. Finally, the shot was rammed hard in, so as to make a hollow in the wooden wad. Having laid the gun for the object ‘according to the rules of their art,’ it was wedged in its position by great beams of timber, to prevent it jumping and recoiling. A train was then laid to the vent and fired.

In 1478, or eleven years after the date when Kritobulos wrote, Mohammed II., in forming the siege of Scutari, in Albania, employed fourteen heavy bombards, the lightest of which threw a stone shot of 370 pounds weight, two sent shot of 500 pounds, two of 750 pounds, two of 850 pounds, one of 1200 pounds, five of 1500 pounds, and one of the enormous weight of 1640 pounds, enormous even in these days, for the only guns whose shot exceed the heaviest of these are our eighty-ton gun, throwing a 1700-pound projectile; our 100 ton, throwing one of 2000 pounds; and the 110 ton, throwing an 1800-pound shot with a high velocity. The stone shot of Mohammed’s guns varied between twenty and thirty-two inches in diameter, about the same height as a dining-table; 2534 of them were fired on this occasion, weighing, according to a calculation of General Lefroy’s—from whose valuable paper many of these and following data are obtained—about one thousand tons, and were cut out of the solid rock on the spot. Assuming twenty-four inches as the average diameter of the shot fired at this siege, the total area of the surface dressed was nearly 32,000 square feet. At this siege the weight of the powder fired is estimated by General Lefroy to have been two hundred and fifty tons. At the siege of Rhodes, in 1480, Mohammed caused sixteen basilisks or double cannon to be cast on the spot, throwing balls two to three feet in diameter.

Many travellers have described the guns or bombards of the Dardanelles, which were formerly very numerous. Monsieur Thevenot (1655), though he did not land, says he could ‘privately discern with a perspective glass—on the European side—about twenty portholes level with the water, in which there are guns of such prodigious bore that I was assured that a man might easily creep into them;’ though on the Asiatic side there were

not so many. Bishop Pococke (1740) makes the number twenty-two on the European or north side, and twenty on the south side, stating that there were fourteen large brass cannon without carriages on the shore always loaded with stone balls, ready either to sink a ship refusing to wait and be searched, or to answer a salute with ball. As these heavy projectiles naturally caused damage where they fell, the land opposite paid no rent; the bore was two feet in diameter, the stone ball weighed fourteen quintals (1400 pounds), and the powder-charge weighed 250 pounds. There were eight other cannon to the south. The castle on the Asiatic side had twenty large brass guns, one of which was of great size, but not so large as on the European side. The Bishop particularly noticed two guns—one twenty-five feet long, the other twenty feet, and ornamented with the fleur-de-lis, which was believed to be a decoration employed by the Emperors of the East before the French used those arms. Some of these monsters were perhaps cast at Adrianople, from which city it took two months to transport them to Constantinople, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles.

Baron de Tott (1770), speaking of one of these large guns or bombards, says that it was made of brass in two parts, joined together by a screw; its breech rested against strong masonry: he loaded it with 330 pounds of powder and a globe of stone weighing 1100 pounds, to the terror of the adjacent Turks, who declared that the concussion would shake down the city. On firing, says the Baron, 'I took my station behind the stonework, and felt a shock like an earthquake. At the distance of 800 fathoms I saw the ball divide into three pieces; and these fragments of a rock crossed the strait, covering the surface in a foam, and went bounding up the opposite shore, rebounding from the mountain.' De Hammer says of these heavy bombards: 'I myself have seen one at the Dardanelles: its mouth was so vast that a little while before my arrival a tailor chased by his creditors squatted in it, and there remained hidden for many days.' The illustrious Von Moltke (1829), then a Major, says that there are 'sixty-three kammerlicks or guns which throw stone balls, some of which are 1050 pounds weight. These gigantic guns are some of them 28·8 inches in diameter, and a man may creep into them up to the breech. They lie on ground on sleepers of oak, instead of gun-carriages, and their butts against strong walls, so as to prevent recoil, as it would be impossible to run them forward in action.'

Mr Wrench, Her Majesty's vice-consul at the Dardanelles (1868), gives a list of twenty-one guns, several of which have since been broken up. Eleven stood in Fort Kilit Buhar, on the European side; and ten in Fort Chanak Kalessi, on the Asiatic side. Of those on the European side two threw shot of 1245 pounds; three, of 1000 pounds; and the remainder threw shot diminishing in weight to about 400 pounds. On the south side the guns threw shot varying in weight from 436 to 670 pounds. The powder-charge in the largest guns weighed 70·7 pounds, and decreased to 28·3 in the lightest. Some of the guns are marked by hostile shot, one, a 670-pounder, has eleven shot-marks on it. This one was cast in 1521, and has a second date, 1126 of

the Hegira, or Anno Domini 1714—the period of preparations for war against Venice. Another gun of the same size has six shot-marks; and another, one such mark. The known dates of the casting of these venerable guardians of the Dardanelles are from 1458, nearly contemporaneous with the commencement of the Wars of the Roses, to 1521, or after the battle of Flodden.

The most celebrated occasion when these guns were used in battle was in 1807, and their target was a portion of the British fleet. In 1806, Russia having picked a quarrel with Turkey about the Hospodars of Moldavia and Wallachia, overran the former province, taking Bender, Choczin, and Jassy; and as England was at that time an ally of Russia, it is scarcely necessary to add that Sebastiani, the ambassador of Napoleon at Constantinople, promptly sided with Turkey. As the French had an army of forty thousand men in Dalmatia, Mr Arbuthnot, the British Minister, suggested to Collingwood that the presence of a British squadron at Constantinople would be advantageous. Collingwood, at that time Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, detached Sir Thomas Louis with three sail of the line and a frigate, who went up to Constantinople, and withdrew the British and Russian Ministers, and met Admiral Sir John Duckworth with five more sail of the line, another frigate, and two bomb-vessels, at Besika Bay. The last two gave much trouble afterwards, as they had to be towed through the Dardanelles, and their magazines were above the water-line. The whole squadron were at that anchorage—which is about five miles from the mouth of the Dardanelles to the south—on the 10th February 1807; and there they were detained by strong adverse gales till the 19th. On the night of the 11th, His Majesty's ship *Ajax*, 74 guns (under Captain Blackwood), at about nine p.m. took fire, and in ten minutes was in a blaze fore and aft. Her cables being burned through, she drifted on to the island of Tenedos, where, at five next morning, she blew up: 250 of her 700 men were destroyed. Captain Blackwood had commanded the *Euryalus* frigate at Trafalgar, sixteen months before, and had been 'repeater' of Nelson's signals. On the 19th, the squadron proceeded up the Dardanelles, the *Canopus*—a noble 80-gun ship, taken from the French—leading. At 9.30, the forts fired, and the ships sustained some damage. On the 20th, after some skirmishing, the squadron anchored off Prince's Island, near Constantinople—where, seventy-one years later, the British ironclads, under Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby, anchored. Here a demand was made for the Turkish fleet and arsenal—a demand not complied with—and some letters were interchanged, the time elapsing being employed energetically by the Turks in strengthening all the batteries along the Strait. Finally, the squadron had to retreat, as it was far too weak to enforce its claims. On the 2d of March the squadron left Prince's Island and anchored that night. On the morning of the 3d it weighed and formed line in close order of battle, with the bomb-vessels in tow, *Canopus* still leading. At 10 a.m. the battery on Point Pesques opened fire, which was promptly returned. At 10.40 the castle of Abydos opened on the *Canopus*, and on the remainder in succession. At 11.40 the whole squadron had passed the line of batteries,

and in the evening it anchored seven miles off. It consisted of six line-of-battle ships, two frigates, and two bombs. The action had been short, but our ships had suffered severely. The *Royal George*, 100 guns (flag), had her cut-water partly torn off, and was nearly sunk by an 800-pound shot: she lost three killed, and twenty-seven wounded. The *Repulse*, 74 guns, had ten men killed and ten wounded by another. *Canopus*, 80 guns, had her wheel shot away, and nearly took the ground under the batteries, by another. *Windsor Castle*, 98 guns, her mainmast nearly cut in two by an 800-pound shot, three killed, thirteen wounded. *Standard*, 64 guns, was struck by a single shot from *Sestos*, weighing 770 pounds, which killed eight and wounded forty-nine men. The *Active* frigate was struck on the port bow by a granite shot, which rolled along the deck and stopped at the main hatchway. Another, after wrecking the fore-castle barricade between two ports, destroyed three planks of the deck, and went out through the opposite side and plunged into the sea. A third lodged just above the water-line, and then fell out. Two men were seen to put their heads out through the hole it had made. The *Thunderer*, 74 guns, had two ports knocked into one by a single shot. In this very remarkable engagement the weapons of the Plantagenet and early Tudor periods were pitted against those of the late Georgian era, and certainly did not come off second best!

THE ETHICS OF FOOD!!

SOON after our marriage, my wife, who is somewhat of a stickler for hygiene, found the advertisement of a course of lectures on the Ethics of Food under our knocker, and brought it in to me.

'George dear, isn't it fortunate? You know you were telling me the other day that disease is often communicated by food—and here's the very thing we want. A Course of six Lectures on the Something or other of Food; only a guinea the course, and by Professor Spatling too. Don't you think, as you're always so busy writing, I'd better go and see what the lectures are like? It'll be so useful to know what one is eating.'

The only occasion on which I had spoken on the subject at all was one Sunday afternoon, when I had read from the *British Weekly* a question from a correspondent, 'Whether tomatoes were ever the cause of cancer?' and had remarked on the improbability of such an event. But then I was newly married, and unused to the ways of woman, or possibly unduly tolerant; so I made only a faint murmur at 'the expense.'

'Expense? But wouldn't it be false economy to study that when our health is concerned? Why, we don't know what suffering and disease we may escape by taking a little care.'

Well, the long and the short of it was that my wife was present at the lecture, while I remained by the fireside to thump out on my type-writer an article for the *Olympian Review*. I became so absorbed in this, that when a gust of cool air blew into the room, and my wife, with the usual outdoor smell that one notices in winter about her clothes, came in, it seemed but a few minutes since she had left me.

'Oh, George dear, I am so glad I saw that handbill. It's so *providential*; for if I hadn't gone to-night, goodness only knows what might have happened!'

'What on earth do you mean, love?'

My wife was too agitated to answer, but went into the next room and rang the bell for Pauline. As a matter of fact, Pauline's kitchen is almost as near as the next room, and she might have called her much more easily than by ringing the one perfect bell that we possess. But the principle of style was involved; and to that my wife is ready to sacrifice any amount of personal comfort.

Pauline, after repeated tinklings, 'came up smiling' from a novelette she had just been reading. Pauline is a good girl with a character, which Some Day I intend to work into a novel. But that, as Mr Kipling would probably say, is quite another story.

'Pauline,' said her mistress, 'take that meat away.' The table was already laid for supper, and I attempted a feeble protest against having my meal spirited away thus before my eyes. But my wife was determined, and said: 'Do you know, George, what the consequence of our eating meat may be? It's quite possible that we may go into consumption. Professor Spatling says that meat is a prolific cause of consumption, owing to the capacity of animals to contract that disease. The "basilica," or whatever you call those horrid little insects, get from the meat into our systems, and do the mischief. Jews are much freer from consumption than we are, solely owing to the fact that their food is always rigidly inspected by the rabbis before being used.'

'For human consumption,' I suggested jocularly. But my wife was very much in earnest.

'Then those pickles, too. Pickles are simply poisonous. Sulphate of copper is largely used in their manufacture, accounting for their bright green colours. You can give the beef and pickles to Mrs Priggs to-morrow, Pauline, to take home to the children.'

'My dear,' I ventured to suggest, 'if these are to disseminate the germs of consumption and to poison their recipients, do you think it quite the thing?'

I was going to say, 'to give them to our washerwoman;' but a vision of mothers-in-law flitted across my brain, and I was about to suggest that her mother might be glad of them, when my wife continued: 'Then that bacon—everybody who eats bacon gets trichinosis. And you know you said yourself, George dear, that tomatoes brought on cancer.'

'But my love,' I ventured mildly to suggest, 'if we mayn't eat meat of any kind, or tomatoes, or pickles, what on earth is there left to live on?'

'Oh, heaps of things—eggs, fish, poultry, vegetables, everything almost. And I am sure it wouldn't be right to fly in the face of Providence after Professor Spatling's lecture.'

So for the next week we were living on eggs, vegetables, and fish; and by the time of the second lecture were rather longing for a change of diet.

Pauline had just laid our supper, oysters and sardines, eggs, pastry and cheese, when my wife returned, tearfully anxious.

'George, darling, do you—have you—are there any—any spots about you?'

I said I had no doubt I could oblige her, but could not tell with any certainty. But she was evidently severely serious.

'Please, don't joke, George dear; it's a matter of life or death. Do run up-stairs and see before it is too late.'

So finally, after useless protests, I was sent up to my bedroom with pencil and paper to report on the appearance and location of any 'spots' I might happen to possess.

'Oh, I'm so thankful,' said my wife when she was told that but for a few pimples that had existed long before the era of food lectures, my skin had a clean bill of health. 'I am glad that our folly has not, up to the present, had any serious consequences. Dr Hutchinson, the greatest surgeon in England, says Professor Spatling, has proved conclusively that leprosy is solely caused by eating too much fish; coast-districts are always the parts principally affected. Norway, the only European country where leprosy flourishes to any considerable extent, finds in fish its staple food. And oysters—oysters for supper! Good gracious, George, how could you be so foolish!'

'Pauline brought them in,' I explained feebly, and rather meanly. Of course, I had given Pauline the money.

'I suppose you don't really want to get rid of me, George? I suppose you haven't got them with the deliberate intention of giving me blood-poisoning or typhoid fever? Yet surely you ought to know that Thames oysters always— You haven't any pains about the—the breast, have you, George?'

When I had satisfied my wife on this point, she went over her notes of the lecture, and one by one knocked most of the principal articles off our bill of fare. To cut five lectures into one, week after week she did the same, terribly agitated about the ill effects resulting from this or that article of food, and in mortal fear lest, through our ignorance of the laws of healthy dietetics, typhoid or some other dire complaint should carry us off before the conclusion of the course of lectures.

'It is a comfort to have one's eyes open at last,' she said time after time, as this disease or that frightened her nearly out of her senses by being caused by some corresponding article of diet. After a while she began to take a melancholy interest in discovering fresh facts and arguments, showing some new association of eating and ill-health; and her time was principally spent in comparing the Cookery-book with the Dictionary of Diseases. Pastry was knocked off as bad for the digestion; sugar in any form produced diabetes; jam was simply turnip poisonously coloured; tinned provisions were notoriously dangerous; while any one with sense and a natural desire for good wind and breathing apparatus would avoid cheese like a pestilence. Then butter, according to a medical journal, was known to carry the germs of consumption; eggs were responsible for serious derangements of the liver, and fruit and vegetables meant cholera at the very least.

I bore up as best I could under these deprivations, thinking it wise to humour my wife while the fit lasted; and consoled myself in the mean-

time with the pipe and drinks that had not yet been taken away. But their day was at hand. A special lecture was devoted to these subjects; and immediately after, the corner of my mouth was violently seized and examined by my wife for signs of cancer; blindness was threatened unless tobacco was instantly relinquished; and as for drinks—well, with typhoid caused by milk, gout by beer, loss of nerve-power by tea and coffee, and fatty degeneration by cocon, not to speak of indigestion and sundry other evils, a man would be criminal indeed to run such risk.

For the last week I have been living on bread-and-water and haricots, and even these were not obtained without a struggle. Haricots were conceded doubtfully, with a pensive statement that 'perhaps it might not do any harm, and haricots were certainly very nutritious;' so that since then, this white, fatty, insipid vegetable has made its way to the table in every conceivable form and on every conceivable occasion. Water, my wife thought, we should be better without; the Professor had said 'the less one drinks the better;' and it certainly follows that if one does not drink at all, a condition of perfect health is likely to be attained. With regard to bread, its properties are so fattening, that my wife, who has a slight tendency to 'embonpoint,' and whom I once discovered running surreptitiously up and down stairs with the object of reducing her weight, called upon me on those grounds to relinquish its use, reminding me that, as Byron used vinegar for this worthy object, so ought I to deny myself a little for the sake of health, economy, and above all, as a literary man, the preservation of a poetical and professional appearance. Here, however, I put my foot down, and she did not insist.

To-morrow is the last lecture, and then, after acting for a week or so the part of Succa or of Tanner, we shall probably resume our usual reckless habits. I ventured to remark just now to my wife that our bill of fare was assuming rather narrow limits, and that the morrow's lecture would probably deprive us of even our remaining food. She smiled assent, but then said encouragingly: 'How healthy it will be, though! How perfectly charming to know of one's immunity from disease!'

STARLIGHT.

Now when the day has quenched its lingering light,
The palpitating myriads of space
Throb, glow, and burn, that finite man may trace
The plan of the Almighty in the night.
A charm, begotten of the infinite,
Breathes o'er the listening land; the lone lake's face
Glistens with beauty as the heavens displace
Its native gloom and flood it with delight.

The woods stand tranced in stillness; one ripe leaf
Filters adown the sky through branches bare,
That hang the only witnesses of grief
For vanished summer and the days that were.
Save for the salmon's sudden splash, the stream
Glides still and songless in a magic dream.

THOMAS EDWARDS.

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A DESERTED VILLAGE.

Few people have seen a Deserted Village. In all parts of England, alas! the old-fashioned rural life of which Goldsmith and Rogers sang is fast disappearing; and it is one of the saddest of facts that the growth of the manufacturing industries is being accompanied by a decay in farming and pasturage and the gradual depopulation of many a healthy village. But although most of us know villages whose life is being sapped by the commercial cupidity of overgrown towns, yet few can say that they have seen a *deserted* village—a forlorn gathering of empty, dilapidated cottages, with, perhaps, a ruined chapel and a roofless school-house.

But there is at least one deserted village in England. It stands on the summit of the Brendon Hills, in Western Somersetshire, twelve hundred feet above the sea-level, and overlooking one of the pleasantest tracts of country in all the west. From its untrodden roadside the tourist looks in one direction across a far-reaching, fertile valley, to the coffee-and-cream-coloured waters of the Bristol Channel. Another side of the prospect is bounded by the Quantock Hills, under whose shadow Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey found a temporary home, where they welcomed De Quincey, Hazlitt, Lamb, and other literary friends. 'It is a place,' exclaimed Coleridge, 'to make one forget the necessity of treason.' Within sight, also, is wild Exmoor, and other parts of the romantic stretch of country so graphically described by Mr Blackmore in *Lorna Doone*. In the midst of these charming surroundings slumbers our Deserted Village. The story of its rise and fall is soon told—and and prosaic enough it is!

From time immemorial iron ore has been obtained on the Brendon Hills. We learn from the Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society that certain remains have been discovered there which prove that mines were worked by the Romans, and probably by other

races in even earlier times. About thirty years ago a company was formed to work the Brendon mines, which were known to contain a large quantity of ore. A railway was constructed from the mines to the little seaport of Watchet, whence the mineral was shipped across the Bristol Channel to Swansea. It should be borne in mind that although the railway is but ten miles in length, the terminus at Brendon is twelve hundred feet above that at Watchet. The line is fairly level until it reaches the foot of the hills, when it climbs a tremendous gradient of one foot in four. Of course no locomotive could mount such an incline. The traction-power is supplied by a stationary engine on the summit.

Standing beside the engine-house, the spectator may obtain one of the finest views in the county. The little railroad runs, with mathematical straightness, down a ravine whose length and depth almost appal one, cut through the solid rock-foundation of a forest. Far away, at the bottom of the slope, is the little station at Coombe Row, which looks no larger than a draper's packing-case; and beyond is an immense tract of undulating woodland and heathland, bounded by an indistinct something, which we know to be the sea.

The works and buildings of the new company were very extensive, and, perched upon the highest point in the range of hills, could be seen for miles around. But the enterprise failed. The preparatory expenses had been great; the cost of railway carriage and shipment were very heavy indeed; and at the same time a heavy influx of Spanish iron set in. At any rate, the venture did not repay its promoters, and the company turned its attention to better-paying objects, leaving the newly-erected works to the mercy of the cruel blasts which sweep over this exposed spot. The hundred families of miners who had been attracted to the place speedily left it, and to-day their cottages stand in pitiful rows of dismantled masonry.

A visit to this Deserted Village is not soon

forgotten. The gaunt stone chimneys of the works, the numerous isolated sheds, the grass-grown railway terminus, and the rows of roofless cottages which line the roadside, have a peculiarly depressing aspect. The central building of the works is a ruined mass of stonework, and one can scarcely believe the testimony of the date which decorates the main shaft. It seems impossible that thirty years can have reduced a new building to such a state. One is able to believe, after seeing this, in the stories told of the devastating violence of the 'sou'wester' on these bleak hills. Of the many cottages on the higher and lower roads, about six are occupied; a few are used as stores by the cottagers; the remainder are in ruins.

At the junction of the roads, just outside the village, stands a quaint, square, plain building, over the porched entrance to which are the words 'Beulah' and the date of erection. This is the little chapel erected for the Nonconforming miners. No attempt has been made to preserve it from decay. The pedestrian may stroll in, on a bright afternoon, and find the sunlight streaming through the translucent windows and their borders of red and blue glass, making the interior grotesquely gay. The pulpit and the pews and part of the floor still remain; and not long ago many of the cards affixed to the book-rests, and inscribed with the seatholders' names, were yet to be seen.

About half a mile from this sadly-misnamed chapel is Raleigh's Cross Inn, a large rambling place, once a prosperous roadside hostelry. On a triangular green before the inn is the brown, moss-grown fragment of a pillar, resting on a half-sunken pedestal—all that remains of 'Raleigh's Cross.' The family of the celebrated Sir Walter Raleigh once owned the neighbouring estate of Nettlecombe, and it is said that the cross was erected by them, near its present position, to mark a dangerous bog. Sir Charles Trevelyan, however, has stated that the cross was the monument erected to the memory of his wife by Simon Raleigh, who fought for his country at Agincourt.

The visitor should not leave the Deserted Village until he has ridden on the Mineral Railway, along which two trains are run daily—for passenger traffic only, of course. The primitive condition and arrangements of the line will amuse him immensely. Above all, he should not miss the ride up or down the incline. When the train arrives at the foot of the hill, passengers for the summit are transferred to an uncomfortable truck, and drawn by the fixed engine to their elevated destination. The sensation during the ascent is a most peculiar one, and the passenger has to be careful lest he tumble headlong into the rear of his uncouth conveyance. But the discomfort of the ascent is thoroughly atoned for, not only by its novelty, but also by the

glorious breeze on the hill-top and the magnificent view, to say nothing of the melancholy satisfaction of having seen a really Deserted Village.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER X.—'THE ONLY WOMAN IN THE WORLD.'

WHEN about ten o'clock that night the great front-door of the house in Rutland Gate was swung open by the attendant footman to permit Miss Raynor to pass out, it was discovered that the weather was wet. It had been a cold day for June, with the wind from the north-east, and now the wind had shifted into the south-east, bringing a little warmer air laden with fine rain. Seeing that, Mr Raynor, who had accompanied his niece to the door—her other uncle was already become sedulous in the House of Commons—wished to send her to her lodgings in a cab, which the attendant footman professed a desire to call; but Miss Raynor insisted on going home afoot.

'I prefer to walk,' said she, 'and by myself, thank you, uncle. I shall not get wet; I am shamefully well protected from the rain, with both umbrella and mackintosh.'

So she had her way, and the door closed behind her. She had something of her uncle Suffolk's habit of quoting to herself scraps from her reading—scraps which sounded more or less applicable to the occasion. As she departed from the house, holding her skirts as free of her heels as possible, she quoted with a low laugh to herself: 'Go, call a coach; and let a coach be called; And let the man that calleth be the caller.'

'Cab, miss,' said the driver of a loitering hansom, as she crossed to enter the Park by the Prince of Wales's Gate.

'No, thank you,' she cheerfully replied; and the cabman drew up his horse to see her disappear into the comparative darkness of the Park, and said to a comrade who had loitered up with another cab: 'P'raps she can afford a keb, and p'raps she can't. P'raps she's a lady, and p'raps she ain't nobody in particular. Anyhow, she's a fine young woman, and she 'adn't ought to be a-walkin' in the Park all alone by herself. 'Swelp me! If I 'adn't my keb I'd offer to escort her myself.'

Isabel had quick ears. She overheard, but she was only amused; and she held on her way to the right. Her nearest route—and despite the dark and wet she saw no reason for diverging from it—was round the eastern end of the Serpentine, and thence directly to the Marble Arch. She had passed the Serpentine—thinking how like an enchanted lake it looked in that half-light that hung over London, and with the soft and velvety blackness of the trees that begirt it—and was stepping briskly along the narrow path that led to the great Archway, when a poor, meagre creature shuffling by suddenly snatched her umbrella from her easy hand and fled over the grass.

'The scoundrel!' exclaimed a man who almost

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as suddenly appeared before her and dashed after the thief. In a few seconds he was up with him, had caught him, and was leading him back to Isabel, himself carrying the recovered umbrella. The victorious stranger had led his captive but a few paces when he wrenched himself free and again fled over the grass. The stranger hesitated an instant whether he should again pursue him, but Isabel called: 'Please let him go!' and he returned, carefully carrying the closed umbrella as if it were of the most precious and fragile nature.

'Madam, permit me,' he said in a rich, genteel voice, which, though somewhat shaken and husky, had the exactitude and modulation of an elocutionist's. He put up the umbrella and handed it to her with a bow of great propriety.

In the dim light she could only see that the polite stranger had a very red and rather puffy face, that his ungloved hand trembled a good deal, and that his spare figure was closely buttoned in a frock-coat against the weather.

'Thank you very much,' said she, 'for your bravery and your kindness.'

'Madam,' said he with solemn deliberation, 'I can never bear to see a lady in distress.'

'Oh, but I was not at all in distress, thank you,' said she. 'If any one is in distress it must be that poor man, and he has lost his plunder after all.'

'He may have been a deserving man,' said he; 'but I need not remind you that appearances are frequently deceitful, madam. Meanwhile, may I accompany you to the broader, better-lighted, and more frequented thoroughfare: it is not wise—if you will permit me to say so—in a lady to perambulate these unfrequented paths alone.'

The man was polite, and seemed harmless, and she thought it would be sheer rudeness to refuse his request, especially since the broader thoroughfare was but a few yards off; so she assented by turning off in that direction. Walking by her side he seemed to halt a little and to lean hard upon his cane.

'I hope,' said she, 'you have not hurt yourself in running after that man?'

'No, madam,' he answered. 'It is only a touch of rheumatism that occasionally supervenes in such weather as the present. I have travelled the round earth over, and have passed through numerous hardships, but I never knew what rheumatism was until a year or two ago when I was camping out in the wilds of America.'

'The round earth over,' where had she heard that phrase? It sounded as if it had once been spoken in her ear. And the man's voice with its cadences and its superfluous fluency: did not that also sound familiar? But the frequented thoroughfare was now reached, and she stopped and signified that there they must part.

'I am exceedingly obliged to you,' said she, tempted a little to imitate his grandiloquence, 'for your polite attentions;' and she bowed, and was passing on.

'Madam,' said he, 'grant me a moment.'

'Yes?' said she.

'You are well protected against the weather, madam,' said he with a bow, doffing his hat—and then she saw he was partially bald, and that he had a moustache as fiercely and inconsequently

bristling, and over it a nose as fiery as Bardolph's own, while his dark eyes shone with a wandering but not unkindly light.

'Yes; I am,' said she.

'You perceive I am not;' and he showed the thin and frayed skirt of his frock-coat.

'I am sorry,' said she, 'that you are likely to spoil my opinion of you.'

'You cannot, madam,' said he, 'be sorrier than I. But I can conceive you are generous and sympathetic, and by no means prudish.'

'Well, what then? What do you wish of me?'

'Between ourselves, madam, I should like to achieve some refreshment. A bottle of Burgundy is excellent, but failing that a glass of Scotch whisky—with water—is not to be despised.'

Isabel found her pocket and her purse, and gave him a shilling.

'Madam,' said he, accepting it and again doffing his hat, 'you are the only woman in the world.'

'Thank you, sir,' said she, and turned and passed on her way.

She was pained and humiliated more than she could have believed possible. Could an educated gentleman really descend to so low and shameless a condition as that? And through what? Suddenly—she knew not at the moment quite why—she thought of her father. Considering all she had heard and guessed, was it within the range of possibility that he could become such a poor creature as that she had parted from? The phrase 'the round earth over' still hung in her ear, and the turn of the man's voice, and she remembered what they reminded her of—her father's last letter, or, at least, the last letter of the man who represented himself as her father. She was struck stock-still an instant, and then she ran back to where she had left the man, and still on; but she did not find him. She returned and passed out of the Park and home to her lodgings by Portman Square and Baker Street, with her thought cast forward to the meeting she had arranged for the following evening; would she then see the man she had encountered that night, or another?

She sat down to read to allay such thoughts, and she accomplished her end; but when she at length went to bed very late, and with her brain made wakeful by the effort of her reading, her ugly and anxious thoughts returned upon her with redoubled force. If her father were really such a one as that man, or perhaps that very one, what should she do? She asked herself—'What if she found he was that very man?'—and she was appalled and ashamed, to think that no affection would spring in her heart towards him, and that she would father he were dead. But her father might not be like the man she had met, or at least not so wretched a creature as he—and then—then she prayed God that she might learn what duty and love would teach. When at length she dropped asleep, she conversed with men with Bardolphian countenances, who all somehow were her uncles; and after a period of tangled discussion with them and uncertainty about the colour of their eyes, she would start awake, and again think of her father.

Next day passed with her usual duties; and in the evening, after she had gone through and marked a pile of her pupils' exercises—she had

been asked to go again to Rutland Gate, but she had excused herself—she set out to find Mrs Ackland Snow's, Tobacconist, near the New North Road. She had discovered that the last delivery of letters in that region, as in her own, began about nine o'clock, and by that hour she intended to be at the door of Mrs Ackland Snow. She had already looked at her map of London, and now she took the train to King's Cross, whence she rode by omnibus to her destination. It was scarcely dark, and she found without difficulty Nelson Street. It was a quiet street, of which she was glad, and it contained only such two- or three-storeyed houses as are peculiar to certain quarters of London, and as appear always striving, but without conspicuous success, to look genteel. Such houses are commonly found to be let in tenements and to swarm with children—the one possession in which the poor are rich. The aspect of the houses, however, cheered Isabel's heart a little; for she thought whoever lived there could not be absolutely sunk to the lowest ebb. She found the shop of 'Ackland Snow, Tobacconist;' but she did not enter at once: she walked slowly up and down on the other side of the way, waiting for the postman to appear; while boys and girls loitering along the pavement with the supper beer wondered why a veiled lady, tall and grand-looking as a duchess, should be 'hanging about' their street. Isabel was beginning to find such notice somewhat embarrassing, when her attention was fixed by the approach of the postman. After a rat-tat here and there, he went to 'Ackland Snow's.' A bell tinkled as he opened the door, which plainly signified that little business was done, and that there was not always a person in attendance in the shop. Isabel crossed the street to enter, but she was no earlier than a man who hurried along the pavement with the aid of a stick, and whom, with some amazement, but no difficulty, she recognised as the man she had met the evening before. Seeing him, she drew back a little, and let him enter first. She therefore neither hindered his question nor was too late to catch it.

'Has that letter come for us to-night, Mrs Snow?' he asked.

Mrs Snow, a stout and comfortable-seeming person, handed him a letter without a word, and at the same moment Isabel stepped forward and put up her veil. The man looked, and his jaw dropped. He turned, took off his hat, set it on the counter, and sat down in a chair with gloomy and tragic resignation.

'Mrs Snow,' said he, frowning and pursing his lips, 'I believe I have got them again!'

'Oh, dear—oh, dear!' said Mrs Snow in a soothing tone. 'Don't say that, Mr Doughty!'

'It grieves me to say it, Mrs Snow,' said he, folding his arms; 'but I believe I have!'

'Please, Mr Doughty, then,' said Mrs Snow, 'like a good man, which you are, don't go and 'ave 'em here.'

'Is your name "Doughty?"' asked Isabel: having heard the name twice, she was now pretty certain of its sound.

'She speaks!' he muttered aside, unfolding his arms and relaxing somewhat the ferocity of his aspect. 'It is—it must be she!' And he slowly turned his eyes on her, and rose. 'Madam,' said

he, 'I am the miserable individual baptismally named Alexander Doughty, at your service.'

'Let me ask you, then, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'how it is I find you receiving a letter addressed to Mr Raynor?' And she pointed to the letter lying, face upward, on the counter.

'Mr Raynor is his friend, ma'am,' said Mrs Snow, 'as he fetches and carries for, and as he has been that kind to nobody knows!'

'A truce to compliments, Mrs Snow,' said Mr Doughty. 'You are trenching on my private affairs; you should not do it, Mrs Snow; you must not.' Then turning to Isabel, he said: 'I am a journalist, madam, and Mr Raynor is my chief.'

'I wish to see Mr Raynor,' said Isabel. 'Will you take me to him?'

'Your desire to see the chief, madam,' said Mr Doughty, 'is natural, and even laudable, but'—And Mr Doughty for once seemed at a loss for a word.

'You wonder,' said Isabel, 'why I should wish to see him: that letter to him is from me: I am Isabel Raynor.'

'Land of Goshen!' exclaimed Doughty. 'The only woman in the world is Miss Raynor, and I never guessed it!—Let us withdraw, Miss Raynor, and speak of this. I perceive an explanation is due to you.' Then as he approached the door he turned and said to her in a low voice: 'I must tell you he does not know of this.—Good-night, Mrs Snow,' he said aloud, as he held the door open.

Isabel passed out, and he followed her, buttoning up his frock-coat.

(To be continued.)

A BRAZILIAN CONVICT ISLAND.

THE island of Fernando Noronha, lying in the Atlantic Ocean, about two hundred miles from the north-east coast of Brazil, and three degrees south of the equator, is a fairly familiar landmark to English seamen. A large number of sailing-vessels sight it on their outward voyage to India and the colonies, running so far to the westward in order to make the most of the trade-winds. The majority of steamers, too, bound for either the east or west coast of South America pass within view of it on the outward and homeward journey. Few English ships, however, in either the naval or mercantile marine have ever called there; for the Brazilians, to whom it belongs, have made it a penal settlement, and being only a small island—some five and a half miles long by a mile and a quarter broad—it possesses no opening for trade. In 1827, when His Majesty's ship *Chanticleer* visited it, the inhabitants numbered only two hundred, and of these, sixty were the soldiers of the garrison. In 1832 Darwin, in the course of his voyage in the *Beagle*, spent a few hours there, but only gives a short notice of it from a naturalist's point of view. In 1871 H.M.S. *Bristol* paid a visit to the island, one result of which was a fresh Admiralty chart in 1872. In 1873 the *Challenger* anchored off the island in order to collect specimens of its fauna and flora; but having, unfortunately, neglected to obtain permission from the administrator of the

province of Pernambuco, within whose jurisdiction it lies, the Governor would not take upon himself the responsibility of authorising the collection being made. The convicts at that date numbered fourteen hundred, while there were one hundred and sixty soldiers in the garrison. Finally, in 1884, there is the account given by the officers of H.M.S. *Amethyst*, according to whom the number of the convicts had risen to two thousand two hundred and fifty, and of the soldiers to two hundred and fifty. Since that date there is no record of any English ship having visited the island, till the cable-laying steamer *Silvertown*, on board of which was the writer of this paper, anchored off there in September 1891.

The *Silvertown* was sounding along the proposed route of the cable which has just been laid from Pernambuco in Brazil to St Louis, Senegal, touching at Fernando de Noronha on the way; and it was, in consequence, necessary to go ashore there to make the requisite arrangements for its reception. Before noon, on the morning of the 18th of September, the island was sighted. As the ship approached from the south-west, sounding as she went, the curious peak, a thousand feet in height, and visible for thirty miles around, rose slowly up, like a huge column above the land, and from this direction appeared to be leaning slightly on one side. The island at a distance seemed perfectly barren, not a patch of green being anywhere apparent. Soon after four o'clock, the anchor was let go off the settlement on the northern shore of the island, and under a cliff, surmounted by a fort commanding the small bay where landing is effected. The gig was manned at once, and Mr M. H. Gray, the engineer in charge of the expedition, who had provided himself with the necessary papers from the Governor of Pernambuco, put off for the shore, accompanied by the captain and myself. It was a lovely afternoon, the heat of the day being tempered by the fresh south-east trade-winds. The principal buildings of the settlement, made of stone and whitewashed, stood out clear and distinct in the transparent atmosphere; but we looked in vain for the dense woods described by former visitors as clothing the island down to the water's edge; not a single tree was visible. Rounding the base of the steep fort cliff, a little cove opened out, and a group of men ashore beckoned to us to beach the boat where they were standing, for there was no landing-stage or pier of any kind to be seen. As we drew near this spot, three men on horseback came cantering down from the town, and dismounting, hastily directed those already assembled there—evidently convicts—to assist in beaching the boat, and then awaited our arrival bareheaded, in the courteous Brazilian manner. The boat was quickly run ashore, and after exchanging salutations with the three horsemen, the eldest of whom proved to be the second in command on the island, we began to ascend a pathway, made for the most part of rough stone steps and leading to the settlement.

A few remarks were exchanged in Portuguese; and then, half-way up the hill, a convict dressed in ordinary European attire, but with a sergeant's stripe on the arm of his holland jacket, made his appearance, hat in hand; and as soon as he spoke, it was evident that he was an Englishman, and had been summoned to act as interpreter

between us. He was the only English convict, we were told, on the island, and indeed the only European, with the exception of a German, who found his way there for forging paper money in Rio de Janeiro. The Englishman's crime was murder, having killed a Brazilian railway official. He was thin and worn, and his features bore traces of the suffering and hardship he had undergone in the early part of his imprisonment. Being informed of the reason for which he had been summoned, he accompanied us, still bare-headed beneath the rays of the tropical sun, up the hill; but his services were not often required, for the ascent was steep, and little breath was left for talking. At length we had climbed up to the settlement, and reaching the central square, entered the Governor's house. Here we were ushered into the reception room, a somewhat bare-looking apartment, with a sofa on one side of it, and two rows of chairs running from either end down the centre of the room, and facing each other.

The Governor, a fine-looking man of about fifty years of age, soon made his appearance, and welcomed us courteously. Several of his staff, including the secretary, doctor, and three or four officers, accompanied him, and we were invited to sit down. The Governor's wife and two daughters, merry, dark-eyed young girls of about fourteen and fifteen years respectively, shortly joined us; and after their introduction, the discussion of business was commenced. The English convict, who had entered with us, stood behind the Governor, and conducted the interpretation, eliciting several merry peals of laughter from the young ladies by the mistakes he made in the discharge of his unaccustomed office, occasionally explaining a remark to the Governor in English and to us in Portuguese. The conference was soon concluded, for the points at issue were few, and then the Governor proposed to show us one of the prisons, while horses were being saddled to take us into the interior of the island.

Leading the way, he conducted us across the square formed by the Government offices, the chapel, storehouse, and workshop, till we reached the penitentiary—a large structure, with heavy doors, barred and bolted. The majority of the convicts, we were told, are allowed their personal freedom, living in huts made by themselves, while the prisons are reserved for unruly characters. The doors of the penitentiary were opened by a dark-skinned, half-caste warder, himself a convict—the best behaved are entrusted with such offices—and we passed under an archway leading to an inner court. In this archway, on the left-hand side, there was a heavy door, for which the jangling keys were again required, and we entered a chamber from which all light had been excluded. The warder, however, loosened and threw back a pair of iron shutters guarding a barred casement, and a solitary occupant was revealed, lying in a half-recumbent position on the stone floor in the centre of the chamber. The light seemed to bewilder him, and he looked from one to the other of us with a dazed expression. The prisoner was a well-made, almost pure-bred negro, apparently about forty years of age, with curly hair, sinewy neck, and a curiously puckered forehead, giving him a puzzled look, as if life had proved an unfathomable problem to him. When

we became accustomed to the light, we saw that he was secured, his right wrist and right ankle being shackled together in an iron frame chained to the bottom of a stake fixed firmly in the flooring, so as to leave him hardly any freedom of action. The Governor made a sign, and his manacles being undone, he was invited to move to the casement and enjoy the light of day. But his confined position had sadly cramped his muscles, and it was with some difficulty that he dragged himself to the barred window. Here he took a seat on a rough grass mat he carried with him, and proceeded to watch us with a vacant curiosity, while every now and then his frame was shaken with a racking cough, for the wind blows strong and almost chilly towards sunset in this ocean island, and he was scantily clad. The Governor drew our attention to several rude sketches scratched on the wall, representing daggers, knives, and such-like murderous instruments. These were the prisoner's handiwork. It appeared that he was subject to fits of madness, during which, unless pinioned, he was dangerous to himself as well as to his warders. As soon as he recovered, he would be set at liberty again to work in the fields. He had lately been thus engaged when one of his fits seized him, and he had all but murdered a fellow-convict; hence the necessity of the shackles with which we found him secured.

On the other side of the archway we were shown into a large ward, with a row of cells built down one side of it. These were reserved for the most refractory characters. The warder opened the door of one of them, which proved to be completely dark, and very little more than six feet high by three feet wide. The Governor called on its occupant, who was invisible, to make his appearance; and after a short interval, a fine negro at least six feet high stepped sullenly out. He was magnificently made, his figure being displayed to full advantage by a scanty waistcloth. Unarmed though he was, he looked as if he could overpower half-a-dozen men of like build to his warder. He had always been a most troublesome prisoner, we were told, and could only be reduced to submission by two or three days' solitary confinement in a dark cell. After a few questions had been addressed to him, which he answered in sulkily monosyllables, he was allowed to withdraw; and we passed on through the other portions of the building containing the less serious offenders, till we entered the square again.

Here we found some six or seven hundred convicts, drawn up in as many columns, to attend roll-call and a short evening service. The roll-call had been read, and the prisoners were now singing an evening hymn. It was a striking scene, and one to which the time and place lent a certain impressiveness. Men of all ages, some with gray hair, some in the full flush of youth, were to be seen in the convict ranks. The majority were dark-complexioned, with a large preponderance of the negro element, for the lower Brazilian classes have intermingled a good deal with the native Africans originally imported into their country as slaves. Their dress consisted of old and faded European clothes, or soiled and tattered cotton garments, worn in native fashion. The hymn which they were singing with the African's nasal

and metallic intonation, struck the ear like a plaintive dirge raised by a band of men marooned upon a silent and deserted ocean island. At the conclusion of the hymn, the whole company knelt down while the priest pronounced a short blessing, and then the convicts were dismissed to their habitations.

On returning to the Governor's house, we found the horses ready saddled, and started off, a party of twelve, to visit another prison two miles inland. The sun had sunk by the time we reached the prison, a low, one-storeyed building, erected on the top of some rising ground in the centre of the island. Dismounting, we were conducted through the outer door under an archway into the courtyard beyond. On the left-hand side of this courtyard, the windows—mere barred casements without glass—of an ill-lighted ward were visible, and from them proceeded the confused noise of high-pitched voices. These, however, were suddenly hushed as the door leading into the ward was opened and the Governor entered. We followed him, and found ourselves in a long chamber, the darkness of which seemed to be rendered only more apparent by two or three ill-burning oil lamps suspended from the ceiling. Most of the occupants were gathered at a table running down the centre, but several were stretched on rude construction on either side, serving the purpose of beds. All were silent, and regarded us with listless curiosity.

'Where is Pedro?' asked the Governor. Pedro, we were informed, was one of the worst characters on the island. He had been banished there for a peculiarly brutal murder, having tied his wife up in a sack and stabbed at her through the material with a large knife till she expired. Since his arrival at Fernando Noronha, he had killed two of his fellow-convicts.

We were curious to catch sight of so incorrigible a malefactor, and expected to see him dragged from a solitary cell, bound hand and foot. Presently, however, a man perfectly unfettered, about fifty years of age, somewhat under medium stature, with stooping shoulders and grizzled hair, made his appearance, and we were told that this was the notorious criminal. When he had come to a halt in front of us, he smiled somewhat fatuously, and blinked with his bleary eyes. He was of negro origin, and suffering from the weak sight often observable in his race in later years. In response to one or two remarks addressed to him by the Governor, he smirked, as if he felt he was a credit to the settlement, but disclaimed such public recognition of his merits, and then he was dismissed; and after a short inspection of the rest of the building, we returned to the stone-paved terrace in front of the prison. Here, in the light of the full moon which had just risen above the hills to the east, we sat down on some benches brought out for us, and were served with coconuts freshly gathered from a neighbouring palm.

On our way back I learned something of the penal settlement and the management of its inhabitants. The trees, I was told, which, as late as the visit of H.M.S. *Amethyst* in 1884, covered nearly the whole island, had been cut down within the last few years, partly to leave more ground clear for cultivation, and partly to withdraw from the convicts the means of making boats in which to escape. With the exception of some

cocoa-nut groves, which were carefully tended, only isolated bunches of trees were now left standing. This wholesale denudation has produced some marked effects, beneficial and the reverse. On the one hand, the ground reclaimed has proved so fertile that the island is able not only to produce enough to support all its inhabitants, but also to grow castor and cotton plants in large quantities for exportation. Maize, beans, cassava, sweet-potatoes, bananas, melons, and sugar-cane thrive equally well on the rich soil. With the clearance of the timber has also disappeared an obnoxious stinging plant which overran the island, and produced a very painful irritation in those who touched it, lasting three or four days in great intensity. On the other hand, the picturesqueness of the scenery has been destroyed, and the reddish-brown doves which swarmed in the woods have suffered a large diminution in their numbers. More serious is the lessened rainfall owing to the absence of trees; and to such an extent has it decreased, that the chances of a severe drought are becoming every year more probable. In the wet season, though it may be raining all the island, the storm frequently passes away shedding one drop of moisture on it.

At the time of our visit there were eighteen hundred convicts in the settlement. Of these, one thousand are divided into ten companies of a hundred each, under the command of a sergeant, himself a convict. They live in outlying villages, and are employed at work in the fields and plantations, and tend the sheep and cattle. The rest live in the town, and are engaged at different handicrafts in the workshop, or fish in catamarans, the native Brazilian canoe, too roughly built to attempt to escape in, being merely two or three logs bound together and propelled by sail or paddle. All have to work for their food and clothing, which they obtain from the Government stores in proportion to the work performed. Some of the convicts themselves are allowed to keep private stores, where their fellows may purchase any little extras they require beyond the bare necessities of life. Convicts of good behaviour are allowed to have their wives on the island, should they be willing to come. There are two schools, one for the children of officers and soldiers, and one for the children of convicts; the masters in both cases are convicts. At the age of twelve, the sons of convicts are sent to a military school at Pernambuco. The girls are allowed to stay on the island with their parents, if they wish to do so. To maintain order among these eighteen hundred prisoners, there were at the time of our visit only sixty soldiers in garrison. Little difficulty, however, is experienced in their management, punishment for ill behaviour being detention in the penitentiary, flogging, or, in extreme cases, banishment to Rat Island, a small uninhabited island about a mile long at the north-east of Fernando, where its occupant would have to keep himself alive by fishing.

When we re-entered the town and had rested for a short time on the terrace in front of the Governor's house—his hospitable invitation to supper was unavoidably declined—we took our leave, and set off for the beach. The English convict, who seemed to have complete personal liberty, accompanied us down to the water, and

talked with me on the way as to the chances of his obtaining pardon and release.

We gained the beach, and thanking him for his escort, bade him good-bye, entered our boat, and pushed off from the shore. As we were carried over the heaving waters, glistening in the clear light of the full moon, we could see him standing motionless on the spot where we had left him, dreaming, no doubt, of the day for which he longed, when he would get his pardon, and row off to the ship which was to restore him to life and liberty. The best that we can wish him is that nothing will ever occur to rob him of the illusion which alone makes existence supportable to him.

‘THE HINT O’ HAIRST.’

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

Willie's fair and Willie's rare!
And Willie's wondrous bonnie,
And Willie's hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he marries ony!

How the little verse had stayed with him during all his comings and goings in poor stifled London! When he drove from his hotel to his lawyer's the hansom cab wheels played the time, and he found him, if, in the middle of Piccadilly, that never thins or slacks for any reason but only congests more and more, singing the pretty words, and thinking of the sweet bird-like voice that had sung them with so modest a boldness by the Erne's running river, where was a sound at spate-time that gave hints of Piccadilly. That merle of his!—He was always thinking of her; when shot he see her? what should they say to one another?

He loved, and had always loved, every bird that sang in Airlach woods, and it was only a case of loving more, of loving quite differently this one bird that was his, and that would flute for him only.

Willie Gordon had the strong vein of sentiment that distinguishes his countrymen the world over—that is heard in their music, that speaks in their poetry, that is buried in their hearts. There was something in his love, a quality very subtle and strange, that can only grow in the soul of a true Scot—that is travestied merely in the sentimentality of a German.

He was in London still, going about this difficult business, thinking of his sweet Scotch lassie, when a telegram reached him: ‘John very ill. Come at once.—ROSE.’ It had been at his hotel for hours, and they had not known how to catch him, or when he would be in to get it. Willie only stopped to put a few letters and small matters in his pocket, while the hall porter looked out the first train. He had three-quarters of an hour to catch it, and he went up-stairs and packed his portmanteau in a leisurely way, sorely troubled all the time.

In an hour he was being whirled northward on the North-western line, pondering and wondering what news would await him at Edinburgh, where Rose would surely have another telegram waiting for him: at their first stoppage he sent her a wire to this effect, for there was always a delay in Edinburgh before getting into the

Inverness train, and he would have time to run up to his club.

The last letter from Foresk, a few days ago, had told him that John was worse, was in bed indeed, and that the Inverness doctor who reinforced Dr Herries on occasion had come over more than once. This, however, had often happened before. Ever since John had come home they had been subject to alarms of the same kind, when, for a few weeks, the attack might at any moment take a serious turn. Willie was therefore not over-anxious, and now and then allowed his mind to recur to thoughts of Aveline, whom he always pictured singing in the woods by the Erne. He had never seen her in a house; he wondered how she would look sitting by a table with the lamplight falling across her hands and hair—sewing, perhaps, or just calmly reading, with the eyelids slanted over the dark gray eyes.

On the whole, it was not altogether a painful journey; nothing in the world would ever be so painful again as it had been before. Had he not always now a fair beacon-light to rest his eyes on? some one thing in his life that would always be beautiful, always be cheery, inspiring, and comforting? The whole tide of his being set towards Aveline Lockhart: if ever there was a faithful, unerring, unwavering love in this world, it was Willie Gordon's.

He arrived in Edinburgh and walked up to his club; yes, there was a telegram for him—it was a long one.

It told him that his brother was dead.

Willie sat down heavily in the Club library with the two sheets in his hand; at this difficult moment he had no consciousness of his own feelings; it was quite mechanical on his part when he got up and walked into the autumn brilliance of Princes Street. Two or three men he knew recognised him and nodded to him; but Willie never saw them, though he saw very dimly the great Castle rising out of a morning mist that lent a dimness and unreality to the bases of its rocks. He was only just in time for his train.

He threw himself back in the corner of his compartment, and made the journey gravely, facing and controlling the strong feeling that overcame him.

He had not loved his brother, and he had been forced to disapprove fatally of him. He could have admitted that it was a good thing for every one that a life which was not only useless but hurtful should be ended—a burden to himself, a sorer burden to others; but none of these admissions, reasonable though they were, had anything to do with the deep feeling—which is family feeling, and is nowhere more at home than in Scottish blood—that filled him in the first presence of his loss.

Now, indeed, his woodland merle could not sing to him! All personal troubles would melt before the music of her voice; the world's woes would recede to a distance at which they would be both bearable and picturesque; but this grief, dark, undefined, but potent, lying in the depths of his being, coursing in his veins—with this Willie Gordon retired within himself, neither suffering nor thinking much, but just watching alone beside it.

In the silent greeting between him and Rose, in the kiss and warm embrace he gave his mother, was his whole strong heart surging up in him. Rose Gordon looked only straighter and paler and sterner than in her frequent strenuous moods; but even she had been shaken to a wondering sort of fear and sorrow at the moment of John's death. This had passed very quickly, and when Willie saw her she was again that slim, clear-eyed figure of Justice, with small leanings to Mercy, to which he was accustomed.

It was for his mother that Willie felt: all the way driving to the house, and often in the train, he had been wondering how the poor gentle woman would bear herself. The disappointment in her favourite boy was an old story now; but, at his death, all the brightness of his promise, all the pride of earlier days, would rise up in her mind and serve to emphasise the impression of his futility. Why are such men born as John Gordon? Perhaps to break the hearts of the women who love them.

Willie spent most of the evening after his arrival sitting with his mother in her own room and stroking her hands. They scarcely said a word, these two; and from an adjoining room came the sound of Rose's pen as she wrote letters and cards to the immense family circle.

By the morning, when he was called on to attend to much business, Willie had resumed his simple, every-day demeanour; he had looked at and accepted the situation, and, though he said nothing about it, he had found a measure for his sorrow.

He was already accustomed to the 'Sir William' which the servants and dependents had at once, with the mobility of their kind, endured him. Next day, when the warm afternoon, spent in letter-writing, had waned, he and Kate went out together to the Erne side, not exactly because he hoped to meet Aveline, but because he wanted to be quiet and to think. Bowers had dropped a hint of fever present in the village; and Dr Herries had said that there was a complication in the nature of Sir John's last illness which suggested he had not escaped from infection by the disease that was hovering in the air. This had to be reflected on. If it were so, it proved that God had not forgotten His world: that terrible Judaic justice was still meted out where it was due.

The end of autumn—the 'hint o' hairst'—was a dangerous season; only the year before, Rose had suffered from a sort of low fever, which was very unaccountable, but which, Dr Herries had not seen fit to mention, bore a resemblance to the illness that laid up one or two of the villagers.

The finger had been laid lightly on innocent Rose; but upon John, clothed with the sins of his selfishness, God's whole hand had been laid.

With the faint sweet scents of the woodland all about him, Willie analysed these thoughts one after another; but having looked at them, he saw they were not good to dwell on. Then the beauty and the mystery of Nature stole in upon his mind; the light chill in the timorous wind that played so tenderly among the brittle leaves refreshed him and cheered him. He watched the uneasy swallows, which a single cold

day would cause to gather about the big elms near Foresk South Lodge, piping their shrill roll-call among the branches, and shaking down the last of their golden store.

There was that other song of Aveline's that came to him somehow : what was it ?

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst

At the wa'gang o' the swallow,

When the wind grows cauld, and the burns grow bauld,

And the woods are hingin' yellow.

Well, that was this afternoon !—Only the winds would be colder still before the swallows went ; Erne would come raging through his rocky channel with the volume of all the mountain and moorland burns in his arms, and the first violence of his winter temper in his stream.

Willie sat on the stone where last time she had been beside him, and the threads of his life began to look as though they might be woven into a bright piece some day ; so fleet is time, so quickly does it hurry over crises, or rather, so much living does it crowd into those dull, dreich days which follow them, that the future takes shape out of the broken fragments of our lives, and dark veils taken from our eyes leave a clearer vision.

To-morrow, he would follow his brother to the grave, and listen to the service that he had last heard at his father's death.

Then he would have to enmesh himself in the difficult business that surrounds the succession to an estate, and in his case it would be doubly complicated. He would have a life as busy and as full as it had once been idle ; he would devote himself to the tenants ; they were his tenants now ; cut down the expenses at Foresk in such a manner as not to affect his mother and sister ; and wisely employ what money he could lay hands on for the immediate improvements required in the village. Among other things, he would be engaged to Aveline, openly, publicly, proudly. He was quite sensible enough to feel that after the constraint and difficulty, the tedium and repression of his earlier years, this liberty and freedom that was coming to him was quite deserved.

He sat, patting his dog and talking to her, sometimes smiling even, as visions of his future showed themselves to him—the future for which he was so ready to use his best strength to make bright for himself and others.

It would be a sweet and lovely home when Aveline, his mother, and Rose—all of whom loved him so—lived at Foresk in the fullness of peace and human-kindness. Their hearts would not then be wrung with tales of suffering they had no means to appease.

In the quiet talk he and his mother had had together the night before, when a subdued sorrow and a timid, just born peace had been apparent in Lady Gordon's manner, Willie had shadowed out the idea very diffidently, and had stolen two or three careful glances at her face : it was a new thing for Willie to be nervous, but when we are making a half-confidence, one eye must always be open to see that our friend's mind has not filled in the other half from imagination.

Lady Gordon had no idea who Willie could be referring to in this visionary, halting conversation, and, in pondering it over afterwards with

Rose, decided that he had been speaking generally, and that, as yet, he had not seen the girl he would care to make his wife. Indeed, as Rose said in her practical way, where could he have seen her ?

And there Willie sat, thinking over the new future, the new hopes, and reflecting upon the old troubles, now passing away ; there was no doubt he would be a good landlord, no doubt that his tenants and his estate would be his first care ; and as a rider to every suggestion of his mind came the silver finish of his love for Aveline.

In all that scene he saw her, and his eyes rested on the opposite bank, where her gaze had so often strayed ; he saw no more pink scabious, not a flower at all, but just the dry gold leaves hurrying over each dead stem and the decaying calyx. The beech-trees had spread a red carpet underneath their branches, and the elms had laid their shadow court with cloth of gold.

In a few days he would meet her here, and have his first long, uninterrupted talk with her. To Willie Gordon this new confidence between himself and his heart's love would be something more fresh and precious than a May-dewdrop in a daisy's eye—it would be something as rarely held in the hand of a man.

Under the influence of this hope he got off the stone, and Kate followed him through the woods, making the passage over the Lover's Leap as usual beneath her master's arm.

Half way up the hill-slope Willie paused ; he and the Foresk woods were in the shadow of their own hills, but the sun, coming through a dip, gleamed on the fire of the rowan clusters on the Ardlach side of the river and threw handfuls of red gold into the windows of the Manse : somewhere, perhaps touched by that last sunshine, she was, and there was no one on whom the sun did so well to linger.

When he turned to go on his way, he saw Rose coming towards him.

‘I wanted to meet you,’ she said ; ‘I had something to say.’

She turned and walked with him ; already she had on a black gown of some sort. After a moment she stopped, and he followed her example ; the path was narrow, and each leaned against a tree facing the other ; Kate, a little in advance, turned her black head to see if they were coming on, and showed the rose-pink of her mouth and the brilliant glister of her teeth.

‘Willie,’ Rose began, in some little difficulty, ‘I am sure you have not heard that John had—had caught the fever that is in the village ?’

‘I have,’ said Willie gravely.

‘And do you know all about it ? Did Jeffreys tell you how it chanced ?’

‘No ; Herries only hinted it, and—I did not question him. Where was the use ?’

A little pause fell.

‘I think you ought to know,’ Rose said slowly. ‘There have been several deaths in the village lately, of children especially. Miss Lockhart used to take great interest in the people, and nursed many of them. I always knew that, and liked it in her. One day, when mother and I were out calling, she determined herself to appeal to John. She had no idea what was the matter

with the children; she only knew that the unhealthiness of their houses was killing them. She came straight from the deathbed of a little child to Foresk, and asked for John. He saw her; she was there a long time—at least over half an hour; Jeffreys saw her of course, and heard about it, but—John told me. He caught the infection from her, we think.

Rose's voice had sunk very low, and her eyes were fixed on her brother; it was as though she wanted him to appreciate the terrible justice of Sir John's death without her mention of it.

There was a long pause, and then Willie, whose mind had indeed grasped this light upon the subject, but who was engaged in dreaming of Aveline's gentle courage, said, more with the air of saying something than because he was interested in it: 'Of course one has heard of that—some one carrying infection in their clothes and passing it on to another, who'—

'But you know the poor girl is dead too?' said Rose with simple tenderness, and looking sad for the fate that had overtaken her; 'that is so terrible, isn't it?'

'She'—

'Yes, poor thing! She died—I think four days ago. It is very terrible,' looking blankly through the woodland; 'it'—

She said no more, for her brother swayed round heavily against the tree trunk, put up his arms, and buried his face in them.

'Willie!'—She started forward and put a hand on his sleeve. He said nothing; but when she continued to question him he motioned her to go away; and after a little, very perplexed and puzzled, she went.

There is nothing more to say about Willie Gordon. The winds grew colder through the woodland, the autumn mists wound their shrouds around the hills, and the swallows twittered and gathered closer in the big elm-tree where their meeting was every year.

He was alone in the 'hint o' hairst,' and it was nearly the 'wa'gang o' the swallow;' but the lines of the old song that Willie had never remembered wailed through the woodlands now:

But oh, it's dowie far to see
The wa'gang o' her the heart gangs wi',
The dead-set o' a shinin' c'e
That darkens the weary world on thee.

He had met the tragedy of his youth through another's sinning; he had had one hope for a little, and then it had been taken.

Truly, his love had been one of those things that 'come and gae,' and who would watch the pink scabious by Erne's bank next year? *His* flower, *his* love, the sun that had shone out over *his* life for a few days—dead, buried, out of sight of his eyes, deaf to his voice, where his hands could never reach her, however they might yearn.

That a Nemesis should have overtaken his brother—that was justice: that he should have died of the very scourge he had prepared for others—that was justice, bare, awesome, not to be questioned or entreated; but that Aveline should have been the means, the instrument in the hand of Fate, for Fate to use and throw away, and that he, Willie, should be the life-long mourner—what was that?

When he was able to think of it, his revolt

against the seeming injustice of this world filled all his soul; but he did not think so till later, and it is as well not to follow him in that mood. Better to leave him in the dim early autumn night, alone in the great woods, with only his dog beside him; to leave him leaning half-lifelessly against a tree-trunk, the rough fine pattern of the crisp lichens impressed upon a cheek that was wet with the first tears his manhood had ever known.

THE END.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

BIMETALLIC wire is coming into use for telephonic and various other electrical purposes, and is said to possess in many situations great advantages. For instance, a compound wire consisting of a cast-steel core with an outside layer of copper has been found most serviceable for telegraphic work along the sea-coast or in any places where there is constant exposure to fog and damp. The two metals adhere to one another perfectly, and there is no tendency to peeling or separation even when the wire is much bent about. Another compound wire which is highly spoken of as possessing unusual tensile strength and low electrical resistance, has an aluminium bronze core contained in an outer covering of copper bronze.

The United States consul at Singapore has recently made an interesting Report on the development of tea-cultivation by the Sultan of Johore (Malay Peninsula). Tea, like coffee and pepper, is not indigenous to the soil; but its growth has been rapid, and the flavour of the product is delicious. The tea-gardens on the Sultan's territory have an area of eight hundred acres, and they are cultivated by Chinese, Javanese, and Malayan labourers, the most rapid and skilful pickers being women and children. After the leaves are picked, they are sprinkled over bamboo trays, and are placed under cover in the upper floor of the factory until they are withered. They are then put, in charges of fifty pounds at a time, into a rolling box, when the leaves are pressed, twisted, and rolled without any loss of juice. Next, after giving a short time for fermentation, the leaves are placed in the 'sirocco,' which consists of an iron chest, over a furnace, which is kept at two hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit. This chest has four trays at different levels, and the charge of tea is put in first at the highest level for a few minutes, then turned over by hand and put lower down, and so on until it has been subjected to the four different degrees of heat. It is then 'made-tea,' after which it is sorted into grades by a machine which has sieves of different degrees of fineness, packed up, and placed upon the market. Specimens of this Johore tea will be sent by the consul to the Chicago Exhibition.

Boughton's 'Telephotos' is a contrivance for day or night signalling which has recently been described and illustrated in *The Scientific American*. It may be briefly described as consisting of a keyboard arrangement in connection with a signal staff nearly thirty feet long, which is furnished

throughout its length with more than one hundred incandescent lamps of thirty-two candle power. By manipulation of the keys these lamps may be illuminated in sections, so as to form the various combinations of the Morse dot and dash alphabet. It is obvious that the arrangement is only applicable where a dynamo and engine are available.

The great tower now being built at the Chicago Exhibition will not have much resemblance to its prototype at Paris, save that it will be made entirely of steel. It will have a height of five hundred and sixty feet, which is about one-third less than the Eiffel Tower, but it will have no lifts. Around it, from top to bottom, will be a winding spiral railway, measuring about one mile in actual length, with two lines of rail, one for the ascent and the other for the return. This railway will be worked by electricity, and there will be a number of cars, each lighted by six incandescent lamps. At the top of the tower will be an observatory with a cluster of search-lights. The cost of the erection is estimated at more than three hundred thousand pounds, and the promoters hope not only to make it pay but to reap a large profit.

The threatened revival of crinoline, about which we have heard so much lately, is a matter of far more importance to commerce than would at first seem evident. When the fashion last became prevalent about thirty years ago, many fortunes are said to have been made in the hoop-iron industry, owing to the demand for those ribbons of metal which were required before the human form could be deformed in the manner which fashion dictated. The most rational arguments against the revival are its thoroughly inartistic character, and the death-trap which it represents in juxtaposition with open fireplaces.

On the Great Northern Railway a new method of signalling to the driver of a train in motion has recently been tried. The semaphore, of small size, is on the engine itself immediately before the driver's eyes. Electrical contact is secured by a brush fixed on the engine, which rubs against a wire or rail on the track. We believe that contrivances of a somewhat similar kind have been suggested in past times, but have not been found of practical value. This device may happily prove an exception.

If every house does not possess its proverbial skeleton, it certainly has one or more chimneys which produce a steady down-draught when the wind happens to be in a certain direction. The Champion Chimney-pot, invented by Mr W. Peyton, seems well adapted from its construction to cure the evil. It consists of a tube, near the top of which are a number of inverted trumpet-shaped openings, so that, in whatever direction the wind may be blowing, some of these openings must receive it, and cause an upward draught in the chimney which they surround. The contrivance has no loose or moving parts, and can be as easily cleaned as a chimney of the ordinary pattern.

The establishment of an Observatory on the summit of Mont Blanc, after being discussed for some years, will soon be an accomplished fact. The accumulation of hardened snow on the site chosen is so deep that it was quite impossible to found the building on the solid rock. It

has therefore been determined to dig its foundations in the snow itself. The materials for this erection, which are mostly of wood, are now being carried piecemeal up the mountain, and two huts for the shelter of the workmen employed, one at the Grands Mulets, and another at the Grand Rocher Rouge, have been built.

A useful suggestion with regard to the application of the common typewriting machine to correspondence in cipher has been made by a M. Erve in one of the French newspapers. He points out that a favourite and simple method of cipher-writing has for a long time consisted in the substitution of certain letters of the alphabet for others, so that, for instance, A shall be represented by C, B will stand for R, and so on. Working on this principle, the types on a machine could be so transposed that the operator would have no difficulty whatever in writing a letter which would apparently be a confused jumble of characters. But his correspondent would copy the letter with a machine which had been rearranged in a similar manner, when the letters would retranspose themselves automatically, and the original writer's meaning would become plainly set forth. The idea is an ingenious one, and will doubtless commend itself to many business men.

It is interesting to note that the revised Patent Act, which came into operation on January 1, 1884, has had the effect of increasing the number of applications for patents fourfold. In the year 1883, when the old Act was in force, the number of applications amounted to close upon six thousand. In the year which has just drawn to a close they were 24,166. These figures show that the easier terms upon which a patent can now be obtained have been productive of good results; but we are still far behind the American Patent Office, in which the fees charged are so small that inventors receive far greater encouragement to patent their ideas.

M. Chaveau lately brought before the French Academy a curious experiment with regard to the appreciation of colour. He points out that if a person go to sleep near a window in such a position that the reflected light from white clouds falls equally on both eyes, he will on awakening have the impression for a short period that the room and all its belongings are bathed in green light. As the phenomenon is only observable after awakening from profound slumber, it is presumed that there are distinct nerve-centres for green, as well as for the other primary colour sensations, red and violet, and that the green first regain activity after sleep.

The loss of life by snake-bite in India alone reaches every year some thousands of cases, and although we occasionally hear of remedies which are said to be effectual, the death-rate continues without diminution. We are glad to note, however, that at last something is to be done with a view to check this terrible mortality. A Snake Laboratory, the only institution of its kind in the world, is to be established at Calcutta, and will soon be in full working order. At this institution the principal work done will be the investigation of the properties of snake-poison and the examination and testing of so-called cures. It is interesting to note that the cost of this Snake Laboratory has been partially provided for by a

Bengali gentleman, who has contributed towards the expenses fifteen thousand rupees.

In an interesting paper read before the Society of Arts by Mr B. H. Brongh on the Mining Industries of South Africa as shown at the Kimberley Exhibition, diamond-mining is very fully dealt with. It is stated that, comparing all available sources of information, the Cape Colony has exported, since the first discovery of diamonds in South Africa in 1867, more than fifty million carats of the precious stone, representing a value of nearly seventy million pounds sterling. This enormous quantity would weigh more than ten tons, and if piled in a heap would form a pyramid six feet high, with a base nine feet square.

To a recent number of the *Annals of Scottish Natural History*, Colonel Duthie contributes an interesting paper on the needless destruction of wild-birds' eggs, and egg-collecting generally. He divides certain collectors into three classes—namely, the aimless, the greedy, and the mercenary, and contrasts them with the true collector, who is a naturalist collecting eggs as a means of acquiring knowledge. Workers of this latter type should, he asserts, do their own collecting, and should not receive eggs into their cabinets unless authenticated by some one whom they can trust. If this were done, egg-collecting as a trade, with its concomitant abuses, would disappear.

An idea has gained currency during the past few years that the tomato as an article of diet is liable to produce or encourage the terrible disease of cancer; and not long ago it was also stated that the use of this vegetable had been forbidden at the Cancer Hospital. So widely spread has this notion become, that Dr Marsden, chairman of the Medical Committee of the Cancer Hospital, London, has thought it advisable to give it official contradiction. He says that his Committee have been inundated with letters on this subject, and he begs publication for the following statement, which we hope will settle the matter once for all. It is the opinion of the Committee 'that tomatoes neither predispose to nor excite cancer formation, and that they are not injurious to those suffering from this disease, but, on the contrary, are a very wholesome article of diet, particularly so if cooked.'

The scheme by which the vast energy of the Falls of Niagara is to be utilised by the employment of huge dynamo-machines has its counterpart on this side of the Atlantic. Mr B. H. Thwaite proposes to distribute power over the chief English manufacturing areas by burning coal at the pit-mouth, where it is comparatively cheap, and turning it into electricity in the form of high-pressure alternating currents. In this way he would from one station supply the whole of Lancashire and the Ship Canal with energy; from another would be supplied Yorkshire; while a third would serve the Midlands and London.

Boise City, Idaho, is about to make use of the hot-water springs in its neighbourhood for heating purposes. The water will be conveyed to the city, distant from the springs but one mile, by means of pipes, and will be associated with heaters of various forms placed in the houses and public buildings. It is anticipated that the cost to consumers will be about one-half that of heat derived from coal. The enterprise, unfortunately, cannot be imitated by many other towns, for there are

few which have such natural conveniences close to their walls.

A skating rink having a surface of real ice, which is renewed every day, has recently been installed at Paris with the greatest success. The flooring is covered with a series of pipes having a total length of five thousand metres, but placed in parallel lines almost touching one another. Through these pipes there circulates an uncongealable solution of chloride of calcium, which is cooled previously to any extent required by the evaporation of ammonia. This pipe-flooring is covered with water, which is very quickly brought to the solid condition. It is proposed to keep this skating rink open all the year round.

In a recent Report by the engineer of the Channel Tunnel Company on the search for coal which has been made near Dover, it is stated that the borings now reach a depth of 2228 feet, and that nine workable seams have been found, containing in the aggregate twenty feet in thickness of good bituminous coal, suitable for gas-making or household purposes.

A tricycle which can be worked indifferently on land or water has lately formed the subject of an American patent. The vehicle has the framework of an ordinary tricycle, but hung between its two larger wheels is a twin-boat, between the prows of which the small front wheel revolves. The larger wheels have blades fixed to their spokes, so that they act as paddle-wheels when the rider leaves *terra firma* and takes to the water. The weight of the machine is about seventy pounds, and it will carry two persons on land, or will support three or more in the water. From this latter circumstance we gather that the contrivance might form a valuable means of saving life in boating and bathing localities.

The issue of the new coinage was preceded by a royal proclamation, and the result is said to be a distinct success. The design for the Queen's head was modelled by Mr T. Brock, R.A., and was subjected to the scrutiny of a Committee before it was finally approved. With the exception of the gold coins and the crown-piece, every new coin will have its value clearly indicated—an innovation which will be welcomed by all, and especially by our foreign visitors, to whom a strange coinage is always a puzzle. The double florin, which has been only recently introduced, and which is so easily confounded with the crown-piece, will be discontinued.

A patent was lately obtained for making 'improvements' in lenses for telescopes, cameras, optical lanterns, &c., the idea being that the manufacture could be considerably cheapened by making the lenses hollow and filling them with water or other liquid. To make the hollow lens, the glass would be blown in a sphere in a box or mould of the required shape. The glasses could also be moulded or pressed into shape. It is very doubtful if good lenses can be produced in this manner, for the slightest departure from true curvature will make a lens useless for any purpose, except perhaps railway signalling and such-like rough work. Hollow lenses have often been used for the adornment of chemists' lamps, for they offer the opportunity of introducing a fluid of any desired colour. But for lenses of large size the system, even if it afforded the necessary perfect results, would be inconvenient, if only on

account of the tendency of glass to fly to pieces with slight changes of temperature when held under any kind of strain, as a vessel full of water must be.

THE WRONG BLACK BAG.

By ANGELO LEWIS, Author of *The Wizard's Tower*, &c.

It was the eve of Good-Friday. Within the modest parlour of No. 13 Primrose Terrace, a little man, wearing a gray felt hat and a red necktie, stood admiring himself in the looking-glass over the mantel-piece. Such a state of things anywhere else would have had no significance whatever. But circumstances proverbially alter cases. At 13 Primrose Terrace it approached the dimensions of a Portent.

Not to keep the reader in suspense, the little man was Benjamin Quelch, clerk in the office of Messrs Cobble & Clink, coal-merchants, and he was about to carry out a desperate resolution. Most men have some secret ambition; Benjamin's was twofold. For years he had yearned to wear a soft felt hat, and to make a trip to Paris; and for years Fate, in the person of Mrs Quelch, had stood in the way and prevented the indulgence of his longing. Quelch being, as we have hinted, exceptionally small of stature, had, in accordance with the mysterious law of opposites, selected the largest lady of his acquaintance as the partner of his joys. He himself was of a meek and retiring disposition. Mrs Quelch, on the other hand, was a woman of stern and decided temperament, with strong views upon most subjects. She administered Benjamin's finances, regulated his diet, and prescribed for him when his health was out of order. Though fond of him in her own way, she ruled him with a rod of iron, and on three points she was inflexible. To make up for his insignificance of stature, she insisted on his wearing the tallest hat that money could procure, to the exclusion of all other headgear. Secondly, on the ground that it looked more 'professional,' she would allow him none but black silk neckties; and lastly, she would not let him smoke. She had further an intense repugnance to all things foreign, holding as an article of faith that no good thing, whether in art, cookery, or morals, was to be found on other than English soil. When Benjamin once, in a rash moment, suggested a trip to Boulogne by way of summer holiday, the suggestion was received in a manner that took away his appetite for a week afterwards.

The prohibition of smoking Quelch did not much mind; for having in his salad days made trial of a cheap cigar, the result somehow satisfied him that tobacco was not in his line, and he ceased to yearn for it accordingly. But the tall hat and the black necktie were constant sources of irritation. He had an idea, based on his having once won a drawing prize at school, that Nature had intended him for an artist, and he secretly lamented the untoward fate which had thrown him away upon coals. Now the few artists Benjamin had chanced to meet affected a soft and slouchy style of headgear, and a considerable amount of freedom, generally with a touch of colour, in the region of the neck.

Such, therefore, in the fitness of things, should have been the hat, and such the neckgear of Benjamin Quelch; and the veto of his wife only made him yearn for them the more intensely.

In later years he had been seized with a longing to see Paris. It chanced that a clerk in the same office, one Peter Flipp, had made one of a personally conducted party on a visit to the gay city. The cost of the trip had been but five guineas; but never, surely, were five guineas so magnificently invested. There was a good deal of romance about Flipp, and it may be that his accounts were not entirely trustworthy; but they so fired the imagination of our friend Benjamin that he had at once begun to hoard up surreptitious sixpences, with the hope that some day he, too, might, by some unforeseen combination of circumstances, be enabled to visit the enchanted city.

And at last that day had come. Mrs Quelch, with her three children and her one domestic, had gone to Lowestoft for an Easter outing; Benjamin and a deaf charwoman, Mrs Widger, being left in charge of the family belongings. Benjamin's Easter holidays were limited to Good-Friday and Easter-Monday; and as it seemed hardly worth while that he should travel so far as Lowestoft for such short periods, Mrs Quelch had thoughtfully arranged that he should spend the former day at the British Museum, and the latter at the Zoological Gardens. Two days after her departure, however, Mr Cobble called Quelch into his private office and told him that, if he liked, he might for once take holiday from the Friday to the Tuesday inclusive, and join his wife at the seaside.

Quelch accepted the boon with an honest intention of employing it as suggested. Indeed, he had even begun a letter to his wife, announcing the pleasing intelligence, and had got as far as 'My dear Penelope,' when a wild and wicked thought struck him: Why should he not spend his unexpected holiday in Paris?

Laying down his pen, he opened his desk and counted his secret hoard. It amounted to five pounds seventeen; twelve shillings more than Flipp's outlay. There was no difficulty in that direction; and nobody would be any the wiser. His wife would imagine that he was in London, while his employers would believe him to be at Lowestoft. There was a brief struggle in his mind, but the tempter prevailed, and with a courage worthy of a better cause, he determined to risk it and go.

And thus it came to pass that, on the evening of our story, Benjamin Quelch, having completed his packing—which merely comprised what he was accustomed to call his 'night-things,' neatly bestowed in a small black hand-bag belonging to Mrs Quelch—stood before the looking-glass and contemplated his guilty splendour—the red necktie and the soft gray felt hat, purchased out of his surplus funds. He had expended a couple of guineas in a second-class return ticket, and another two pounds in 'coupons,' entitling him to bed, breakfast, and dinner for five days at certain specified hotels in Paris. This outlay, with half-a-crown for a pair of gloves, and a bribe of five shillings to secure the silence of Mrs Widger, left him with little more than a pound

in hand, but this small surplus would no doubt amply suffice for his modest needs.

His only regret, as he gazed at himself in the glass, was that he had not had time to grow a moustache, the one thing needed to complete his artistic appearance. But time was fleeting, and he dared not linger over the enticing picture. He stole along the passage and softly opened the street-door. As he did so, a sudden panic came over him, and he felt half inclined to abandon his rash design. But as he wavered, he caught sight of the detested tall hat hanging up in the passage, and he hesitated no longer. He passed out, and closing the door behind him, started at a brisk pace for Victoria Station.

His plans had been laid with much ingenuity, though at a terrible sacrifice of his usual straightforwardness. He had written a couple of letters to Mrs Quelch, to be posted by Mrs Widger on appropriate days, giving imaginary accounts of his visits to the British Museum and Zoological Gardens, with pointed allusions to the behaviour of the elephant and other circumstantial particulars. To ensure the posting of these in proper order, he had marked the dates in pencil on the envelopes in the corner usually occupied by the postage stamp, so that when the latter was affixed the figures would be concealed. He explained the arrangement to Mrs Widger, who promised that his instructions should be faithfully carried out.

After a sharp walk he reached the railway station, and in due course found himself steaming across the Channel to Dieppe. The passage was not especially rough, but to poor Quelch, unaccustomed as he was to the sea, it seemed as if the boat must go to the bottom every moment. To the bodily pains of sea-sickness were added the mental pangs of remorse, and between the two he reached Dieppe more dead than alive; indeed, he would almost have welcomed death as a release from his sufferings.

Even when the boat had arrived at the pier, he still remained in the berth he had occupied all night, and would probably have continued to lie there, had not the steward lifted him by main force to his feet. He seized his black bag with a groan and staggered on deck. Here he felt a little better; but new terrors seized him at the sight of the gold-laced officials and blue-bloused porters who lined each side of the gangway, all talking at the top of their voices, and in tones which seemed, to his unaccustomed ear, to convey a thirst for British blood. No sooner had he landed than he was accosted by a ferocious-looking personage—in truth, a harmless Custom-house officer—who asked him, in French, whether he had anything to declare, and made a movement to take his bag in order to mark it as 'passed.' Quelch jumped to the conclusion that the stranger was a brigand bent on depriving him of his property, and he held on to the bag with such tenacity that the *douanier* naturally inferred there was something specially contraband about it. He proceeded to open it, and produced—among sundry other feminine belongings—a lady's frilled and furbelowed night-dress, from which as he unrolled it, fell a couple of bundles of cigars!

Benjamin's look of astonishment as he saw these unexpected articles produced from his hand-bag was interpreted by the officials as a look of guilt. As a matter of fact, half stupefied

by the agonies of the night, he had forgotten the precise spot where he had left his own bag, and had picked up in its stead one belonging to the wife of a sporting gentleman on his way to some races at Longchamps. Desiring to smuggle a few 'weeds,' and deeming that the presence of such articles would be less likely to be suspected among a lady's belongings, the sporting gentleman had committed them to his companion's keeping. Hand-bags, as a rule, are 'passed' unopened, and such would probably have been the case in the present instance had not Quelch's look of panic excited suspicion. The real owners of the bag had picked up Quelch's, which it precisely resembled, and were close behind him on the gangway. The lady uttered an exclamation of dismay as she saw the contents of her bag spread abroad by the Customs officer, but was promptly silenced by her husband. 'Keep your blessed tongue quiet,' he whispered. 'If a bloomin' idiot chooses to sneak our bag, and then to give himself away to the first man that looks at him, he must stand the racket.' Whereupon the sporting gentleman and lady, first taking a quiet peep into Benjamin's bag to make sure that it contained nothing compromising, passed the examiner with a smile of conscious innocence, and, after an interval for refreshment at the buffet, took their seats in the train for Paris.

Meanwhile poor Quelch was taken before a pompous individual with an extra large moustache and a double allowance of gold lace on his cap, and charged not only with defrauding the revenue, but with forcibly resisting an officer in the execution of his duty. The accusation being in French, Quelch did not understand a word of it, and in his ignorance took it for granted that he was accused of stealing the strange bag and its contents. Visions of imprisonment, penal servitude, nay, even capital punishment, floated before his bewildered brain. Finally, the official with the large moustache made a speech to him in French, setting forth that for his dishonest attempt to smuggle he must pay a fine of a hundred francs. With regard to the assault on the official, as said official was not much hurt, he graciously agreed to throw that in and make no charge for it. When he had fully explained matters to his own satisfaction, he waited to receive the answer of the prisoner; but none was forthcoming, for the best of reasons. It finally dawned on the official that Quelch might not understand French, and he therefore proceeded to address him in what he considered to be his native tongue.

'You smuggle; smuggle seegar. Zen it must zat you pay amende, hundred francs. You me understand? Hundred francs—Pay! Pay! Pay!' At each repetition of the last word he brought down a dirty fist into the palm of the opposite hand, immediately under Quelch's nose. 'Hundred francs—Engleesh money, four pound.'

Quelch caught the last words, and was relieved to find that it was merely a money payment that was demanded of him. But he was little better off, for having but a few shillings in his pocket, to pay four pounds was as much out of his power as if it had been four hundred. He determined to appeal to the mercy of his captors. 'Not got,' he said apologetically, with a vague idea that by

speaking very elementary English he came somehow nearer to French. 'That all,' he continued, producing his little store, and holding it out beseechingly to the official. '*Pas assez*, not enoff,' growled the latter. Quelch tried again in all his pockets, but only succeeded in finding another threepenny piece. The officer shook his head, and after a brief discussion with his fellows, said: '*Comment-vous appelez-vous, Monsieur?* How you call yourself?'

With a vague idea of keeping his disgrace from his friends, Quelch rashly determined to give a false name. If he had had a few minutes to think it over, he would have invented one for the occasion, but his imagination was not accustomed to such sudden calls, and on the question being repeated, he desperately gave the name of his next-door neighbour, Mr Henry Fladgate. 'Henri Flod-gett,' repeated the officer as he wrote it down. '*Et vous demeurez?* You live, where?' And Quelch proceeded to give the address of Mr Fladgate, 11 Primrose Terrace. '*Tres bien. I send teleg-r-r-amme. Au violon!*' And poor Benjamin was ignominiously marched to the local police station.

Meanwhile, Quelch's arrangements at home were scarcely working as he had intended. The estimable Mrs Widger, partly by reason of her deafness and partly of native stupidity, had only half understood his instructions about the letters. She knew she was to stamp them, and she knew she was to post them; but the dates in the corners might have been Runic inscriptions for any idea they conveyed to her obfuscated intellect. Accordingly, the first time she visited her usual house of call, which was early on the morning of Good-Friday, she proceeded, in her own language, to 'get the dratted things off her mind' by dropping them both into the nearest pillar-box.

On the following day, therefore, Mrs Quelch at Lowestoft was surprised to find on the breakfast table two letters in her Benjamin's handwriting. Her surprise was still greater when, on opening them, she found one to be a graphic account of a visit to the Zoological Gardens on the following Monday. The conclusion was obvious. Either Benjamin had turned prophet, and had somehow got ahead of the almanac, or he was 'carrying on' in some very underhand manner. Mrs Quelch decided for the latter alternative, and determined to get to the bottom of the matter at once. She cut a sandwich, put on her bonnet, and grasping her umbrella in a manner which boded no good to any one who stayed her progress, started by the next train for Liverpool Street.

On reaching home, she extracted from the weeping Widger, who had just been spending the last of Benjamin's five shillings, and was far gone in depression and gin-and-water, that her 'good gentleman' had not been home since Thursday night. This was bad enough; but there was still more conclusive evidence that he was up to no good in the shape of his tall hat, which hung, a silent accuser, on the last peg in the passage.

Having pumped Mrs Widger till there was no more (save tears) to be pumped out of her, Mrs Quelch, still firmly grasping her umbrella, proceeded next door, on the chance that her neigh-

bour, Mrs Fladgate, might be able to give her some information. She found Mrs Fladgate weeping in the parlour with an open telegram before her. Being a woman who did not stand upon ceremony, she read the telegram, which was dated from Dieppe, and ran as follows: 'Monsieur Fladgate here detained for to have smuggle cigars. Fine to pay, one hundred franc. Send money, and he will be release.'

'Oh! the men, the men!' ejaculated Mrs Quelch, as she dropped into an armchair. 'They're all alike. First Benjamin, and now Fladgate! I shouldn't wonder if they had gone off together.'

'You don't mean to say Mr Quelch has gone too?' sobbed Mrs Fladgate.

'He has taken a shameful advantage of my absence. He has not been home since Thursday evening, and his hat is hanging up in the hall.'

'You don't think he has been m-m-murdered?'

'I'm not afraid of that,' replied Mrs Quelch. 'It wouldn't be worth anybody's while. But what has he got on his head? that's what I want to know. Of course, if he's with Mr Fladgate in some foreign den of iniquity, that accounts for it.'

'Don't foreigners wear hats?' inquired Mrs Fladgate innocently.

'Not the respectable English sort, I'll be bound,' replied Mrs Quelch. 'Some outlandish rubbish, I daresay. But I thought Mr Fladgate was on his Scotch journey.' (Mr Fladgate, it should be stated, was a traveller in the oil and colour line.)

'So he is. I mean, so he ought to be. In fact, I expected him home to-day. But now he's in p-p-prison; and I may never see him any m-mo-more.' And Mrs Fladgate wept afresh.

'Stuff and nonsense!' retorted Mrs Quelch. 'You've only to send the money they ask for, and they'll be glad enough to get rid of him. But I wouldn't hurry; I'd let him wait a bit—you'll see him soon enough, never fear.'

The prophecy was fulfilled sooner than the prophet expected. Scarcely were the words out of her mouth when a cab was heard to draw up at the door, and a moment later Fladgate himself, a big jovial man, wearing a white hat very much on one side, entered the room, and threw a bundle of rugs on the sofa.

'Home again, old girl, and glad of it!—Mornin', Mrs Quelch,' said the new-comer.

Mrs Fladgate gazed at him doubtfully for a moment, and then flung her arms round his neck, ejaculating, 'Saved, saved!'

'Martha,' said Mrs Quelch reprovingly, 'have you no self-respect? Is *this* the way you deal with so shameful a deception?' Then, turning to the supposed offender: 'So, Mr Fladgate, you have escaped from your foreign prison.'

'Foreign how much? Have you both gone dotty, ladies? I've just escaped from a third-class carriage on the London and North-western. The space is limited, but I never heard it called a foreign prison.'

'It is useless to endeavour to deceive us,' said Mrs Quelch sternly. 'Look at that telegram, Mr Fladgate, and deny it if you can. You have been gadding about in some vile foreign place with my misguided husband.'

'Oh, Quelch is in it too, is he? Then it

must be a bad case. But let's see what we have been up to, for, 'pon my word, I'm quite in the dark at present.'

He held out his hand for the telegram, and read it carefully. 'Somebody's been having a lark with you, old lady,' he said to his wife. 'You know well enough where I've been; my regular northern journey, and nowhere else.'

'I don't believe a word of it,' said Mrs Quelch; 'you men are all alike; deceivers every one of you.'

'Much obliged for your good opinion, Mrs Quelch. I had no idea Quelch was such a bad lot. But so far as I am concerned, the thing's easily tested. Here is the bill for my bed last night at Carlisle. Now, if I was in Carlisle, and larking about at Dieppe at the same time, perhaps you'll kindly explain how I managed it.'

Mrs Quelch was staggered, but not convinced. 'But if—if you were at Carlisle, where is Benjamin, and what does this telegram mean?'

'Not being a wizard, I really can't say. But concerning Quelch, we shall find him, never fear. When did he disappear?'

Mrs Quelch told her story, not forgetting the mysterious letter.

'I think I see daylight,' said Fladgate. 'The party who has got into that mess is Quelch, and being frightened out of his wits, he has given my name instead of his own. That's about the size of it!'

'But Benjamin doesn't smoke. And how should he come to be at Dieppe?'

'Went for a holiday, I suppose. As for smoking, I shouldn't have thought he was up to it; but with that sat-upon sort of man begging your pardon, Mrs Quelch—you never know where he may break out. Worms will turn, you know, and sometimes they take a wrong turning.'

'But Benjamin would never dare!'

'That's just it. He daren't do anything when you've got your eye on him. When you haven't, perhaps he may, and perhaps he mayn't. The fact is, you hold up his head too tight, and if he jibs now and then, you can't wonder at it.'

'You have a very coarse way of putting things, Mr Fladgate. Mr Quelch is not a horse, that I am aware of.'

'We won't quarrel about the animal, my dear madam, but you may depend upon it my solution's right. A hardened villain, like myself, say, would never have got into such a scrape; but Quelch don't know enough of the world to keep himself out of mischief. They've got him in quod, that's clear, and the best thing you can do is to send the coin and get him out again.'

'Send money to those swindling Frenchmen! Never! If Benjamin is in prison, I will fetch him out myself.'

'You would never risk that dreadful sea-passage,' exclaimed Mrs Fladgate. 'And how will you manage the language? You don't understand French.'

'Oh! I shall do very well,' said the heroic woman. 'They won't talk French to me!'

That same night, a female passenger crossed by the boat from Newhaven to Dieppe. The passage was rough, and the passenger was very sea-sick, but she still sat grimly upright, never for

one moment relaxing her grasp on the handle of her silk umbrella. What she went through on landing, how she finally obtained her husband's release, and what explanations passed between the re-united pair, must be left to the reader's imagination, for Mrs Quelch never told the story. Twenty-four hours later, a four-wheeled cab drew up at the Quelches' door, and from it descended, first a stately female, and then a woe-begone little man in a soft felt hat and a red necktie, both sorely crushed and soiled, with a black bag in his hand. 'Is there a fire in the kitchen?' asked Mrs Quelch the moment she set foot in the house. Being assured that there was, she proceeded down the kitchen stairs, Quelch meekly following her. 'Now,' she said, pointing to the black bag, 'Those—Things!' Benjamin opened the bag, and tremblingly took out the frilled night-dress and the cigars. His wife pointed to the fire, and he meekly laid them on it. 'Now that necktie.' The necktie followed the cigars. 'And that thing;' and the hat crowned the funeral pile.

The smell was peculiar, and to the ordinary nose disagreeable, but to Mrs Quelch it was as the odour of burnt incense. She watched the heap as it smouldered away, and finally dispersed the embers by a vigorous application of the poker.

'Now, Benjamin,' she said to her trembling spouse, 'I forgive you. But if ever again!'

The warning was left unspoken, but it was not needed. Benjamin's one experience has more than satisfied his yearning for soft raiment and foreign travel, and his hats are taller than ever.

UNTIL THE EVENING.

Tired with the daily toil for daily bread,
The spirit slaving for the body's needs,
The brain and nerve are dulled, and the heart bleeds
And breaks with grief of brooding thought unsaid:
Were we but born to labour and be fed?
To spend our souls in lowly, trivial deeds,
Mere sordid coin the crown of what succeeds?
Ah! yet press on, though with a fainting tread—

Till Evening ends our work and stills our cries:
Then we may find our lowness is our height,
Our crown, the tasks we wrought with sobbing
breath;

As common things a sunset glorifies,
This life, at last, may robe itself in light
And stand transfigured at the touch of death.

A. St J. ADCOCK.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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EXTRADITION.

MANY and intricate as are the problems of international law, the question of Extradition remains at once the most important and the most familiar. The complexity of business transactions and the vast extension of credit, coupled with the multiplication of the means of travel, have rendered the subject one of the greatest importance. The historic origin of the practice is to be found in the relations of the different provinces of ancient Rome. Under the Republic a citizen accused of a capital offence might at any time, before judgment was pronounced, escape the sentence by going into voluntary exile; and certain of the allied cities were specified by treaty as inviolable places of refuge; but under the Empire these cities were absorbed into the imperial dominions and lost their protective character. As to claims of extradition made by the Romans upon independent nations, they seem to have been confined to enemies of the State. Thus we find that at the end of the war with Antiochus, king of Syria, the Romans stipulated for the surrender of Hannibal, who, however, escaped and fled to the king of Bithynia, from whom he was also demanded, and would have been surrendered had he not committed suicide.

It is a remarkable fact that in the early cases in modern history it was always for political offences that surrender was claimed, though at present it is almost the only ground of refusal. But such an offence does not mean a crime committed from political motives, but one committed during a time of civil war or open insurrection. The French government, in 1880, refused to extradite Hartmann, who was suspected of planning the plot against the Czar at Moscow, in December 1879. When the Swiss government, in November 1890, demanded the extradition of one Castioni, who had shot a member of the ministry, the English judges gave him the benefit of this exception in the treaty. Charles II., as is well known, pursued some of the murderers of his father with relentless hate,

and in 1661 concluded a treaty with Denmark in which the latter agreed to deliver up on requisition all persons who had been concerned in the murder of Charles I. The States-general of Holland surrendered one of the regicides without treaty stipulations; but in 1662 they agreed to give up any persons excepted from the English Act of Indemnity, and all other persons demanded by the English Government. James II. put this treaty in force in demanding the surrender of Burnet, not yet a bishop, but acting as private secretary to the Prince of Orange. He describes it very fully in his *History of his Own Time*. He states that the king's principal cause of anger against him was a report of his intended marriage to a wealthy lady at the Hague; and proceedings were set on foot in Scotland. Burnet, however, got wind of the matter before news of it reached D'Albeville, then English ambassador, and petitioned for naturalisation, which was readily granted. When the ambassador demanded his banishment, Burnet claimed protection of the States as a naturalised subject. The demand was subsequently repeated in more forcible terms; but the States refused to surrender him.

One of the most familiar cases of extradition for a political offence was that of Napper Tandy, known popularly as the hero of *The Wearing of the Green*. Tandy, having made a vain attempt to excite a rebellion in Donegal, set sail for Norway; and after landing at Bergen, made his way with a few companions to Hamburg. The English Government peremptorily insisted on the surrender of the refugees as British subjects who were in rebellion against their sovereign; while the French Government claimed them as their citizens, and threatened Hamburg with the most serious consequences if they were given up. After a long and painful hesitation, the Senate, in October 1799, finally decided, and surrendered Tandy and three of his companions to England. The French Directory retaliated by a letter declaring war against Hamburg, imposed an embargo on its shipping, and threatened still severer measures. The Senate sent a most abject

apology to Napoleon, describing their utter helplessness, and the ruin that must have befallen their town if they had resisted. Their deputies, however, were received with the bitterest reproaches; they were told they had committed a breach of the laws of hospitality 'which would not have taken place among the barbarian hordes of the desert,' and an act which would be their 'eternal reproach.'

Prior to the Extradition Act of 1870 (amended in 1873), which settled the law of England as it at present stands, the two most important agreements on the subject between this country and foreign powers were those entered into with the United States in 1842, and with France in the following year. In the latter case no exception was made of political offences, and the law was practically inoperative, only one case of surrender taking place in twenty-two years. This state of things, as might be expected, caused great dissatisfaction in France, and was the subject of much diplomatic correspondence. Finally, in 1865 the French ambassador gave six months' notice of the termination of the convention of 1843; but after considerable negotiation, it was prolonged for a further period.

Spain has been deemed a safe harbour of refuge by many criminals; but even before the British extradition treaty with that country in 1878, offenders had been given up to justice. An extradition treaty was concluded with Germany in 1872, and with Russia in 1887. The list of extradition crimes fixed by the Act of 1870 includes murder, manslaughter, forgery, larceny, frauds by bankers, and extortion by threats. Dynamiters who have attempted to wreck property do not get the benefit of political aims under English law.

In no country, perhaps, does the question of extradition take such an important place as the United States. At the formation of the Union, the question of the surrender of criminals who fled from one State to another was one of the difficulties with which the founders of the Republic had to deal. The proximity of Canada brought the question within the range of national politics; and it is to the credit of the American judicial bench that its members were equal to dealing with the difficult questions that arose. 'In the matter of extradition,' says Sir Edward Clarke, 'the American law was until 1870 better than that of any country in the world; and the decisions of the American judges are the best existing expositions of the duty of extradition in its relations at once to the judicial rights of nations and the general interests of the civilisation of the world.' The first case in America which brought up the question of the surrender of a criminal to a foreign power occurred in 1784. In that year the Chevalier de Longchamps was indicted at Philadelphia for threatening bodily harm to M. Marbois, the French Consul-general, and also for an assault upon him. It appeared that the Chevalier went to the consul's official residence, used violent language, and called him names; and two days later, in a public place, struck at him with a stick. He was convicted; and subsequently President Washington informed the judges that the Minister of France demanded that M. de Longchamps, having appeared in the uniform of a French officer, should be delivered up to France; to which the judges replied that

he could not lawfully be surrendered. The most important question of extradition between this country and the United States arose in the case of Charles Laurence in 1876, the point at issue being whether a person extradited for one crime could, after being tried and acquitted, be put on his trial for another offence other than that for which he was surrendered, without being afforded an opportunity of returning to the country by which his surrender was granted. Laurence was a Canadian, who subsequently became naturalised in the United States; and having come to England, was demanded, under the treaty of 1842, on a charge of forging and uttering a certain bond and affidavit. He was surrendered; and on his arrival at New York he was arrested on three warrants upon three separate indictments, neither being founded upon the charges for which he was extradited. While Laurence's case was pending, a demand was made for the extradition of Ezra D. Winslow on a charge of forgery in the United States. Lord Derby, however, on behalf of the Government of the day, absolutely refused to surrender him until the United States gave an assurance that he should not, until he had been restored or had an opportunity of returning to Her Majesty's dominions, be detained or tried in the United States for any offence committed prior to his surrender, other than the extradition crimes proved by the facts on which the surrender would be grounded.

The case caused great excitement at the time; and so lately as 1886, a Convention was signed by Mr Phelps and Lord Rosebery, which in one of its articles provided that a fugitive criminal should not be detained or tried for any offence committed prior to his surrender other than the extradition crime, without having an opportunity of returning to that State which surrendered him. An enlargement of the Ashburton treaty of 1842 was ratified by the American Senate, and gazetted in London in 1890.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*; *A Soldier and a Gentleman*; &c.

CHAPTER XL.—MR DOUGHTY EXPLAINS.

'WHICH way?' asked Isabel, when both she and Mr Alexander Doughty were on the pavement.

'Let us,' said Mr Doughty, turning his back on the New North Road, 'walk in this direction, Miss Raynor;' and he was politely careful to take the outer side of the pavement. 'This,' he continued, 'will be quieter for our purpose.'

'But,' asked Isabel, stopping short, 'is it not in this direction that you live?'

'It is,' said Mr Doughty, with solemn emphasis. 'But you shall hear, if you will permit me to explain;' and they went on again. 'Your father and myself had rooms some time ago in the house of Mrs Ackland Snow. She is an excellent woman, but rather fidgety; and her fidgets and the odour of her Irish twist, brown shag, and penny Pickwicks were too much for your father's shattered nerves. It is possible that you do not know that your father's nerves are shattered;

they are not shattered in exactly the way mine are, but they are *shattered*.'

'Will you be so good, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'as explain to me, as you promised, the character of your connection with my father?'

She said that somewhat curtly, and then felt a little ashamed of her curtness; for the forces of attraction and repulsion were striving within her: she was drawn to think kindly and gratefully of Mr Doughty, because—she had understood from Mrs Snow's words—he had been a faithful friend to her father; and yet, when she looked at the shaking Bardolphian creature beside her and thought of his abject behaviour of the evening before, she suspected that he might have had to do with her father's declension, and dislike and disgust swayed her for the moment.

'Your father and myself, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'are bound together in a friendship of considerable standing. A good many years ago—indeed, I may say, when you were an infant in your mother's arms—I was your father's sub.'

'His what?'

'His "sub;" which is, I may explain, an abbreviation used among men of the Press for sub-editor. I was his sub,' he repeated, as if he enjoyed the word, 'on *The Weekly Bulletin*, and we worked together with the extreme harmony; and the harmony arose, I may say, from kindness on his side and good-will on my own. I admired your father, Miss Raynor. He was a man—and he is,' said he, half-aside, and as if to some one who was likely to deny it—'of brilliant abilities, all of which were squandered in editorial and journalistic drudgery for an unenlightened public. I wrote, if you will permit me to say so, with a pen dipped in common ink'—

'And whisky,' thought Isabel, but she refrained from hurting Mr Doughty's feelings by saying it.

—'he,' continued Mr Doughty, 'wrote with a pen steeped in a finer fluid. Moreover, he was the best company in the world—at least in the whole range of Fleet Street; and for that matter he is still; yes, he is still—occasionally.'

'You mean, I suppose,' said Isabel bitterly, 'when he is in a condition in which I would not like to see him?'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty weightily, and he stopped to add emphasis to his words, 'you are under a grave misapprehension. If my meaning had been as you have conceived it, I should not have alluded to the matter in conversation with a lady.' And Mr Doughty walked on again. 'No,' he continued, 'the meaning you suggested would apply, perchance, to the miserable individual now walking by your side, but it would not apply to the chief. I may be—I believe I am—good company only when I have achieved some refreshment; for instance, I am not myself to-night, I beg to assure you, but it is not so with the chief. We both have our foibles, our weaknesses—our vices, if you will,' he added, in a ferocity of criticism of 'self and friend,' 'but, as I ventured to observe a moment ago, they are not alike: I have mine; the chief has his.'

Up to that point Isabel had held herself in: she had hoped that by patiently listening to Mr Alexander Doughty, she would arrive quickly at an understanding of the relations between him and her father, and of the condition in

which her father was living; but now, between impatience with his sonorous maunderings and a strange acute feeling of jealousy that this man—whom she could not but despise, strive as she might after a better feeling for him—that this man knew all about her father, and thought it necessary to defend him against the misunderstandings of his ignorant daughter, she let herself go.

'It is a strange, an unnatural thing,' she broke forth, 'that I should be gathering all the knowledge I have of my father from a—a person whom I have met in the most casual way'—

'And that, you would say, Miss Raynor,' interrupted Mr Doughty, 'not under the most favourable circumstances.'

'Certainly,' said she for she could not spare him now—'not under the most favourable circumstances. But that I have been ignorant of my father, or of his condition, is not my fault. It is his own—or yours, who have come between us. When he first wrote to me three years ago, why did he refuse to see me? Was it you that persuaded him to that?'

'I, Miss Raynor?' exclaimed Mr Doughty, stopping again—this time in the sheerest amazement. 'God forbid! you little know, Miss Raynor. You totally misunderstand me;' and his hands began to tremble as he clasped them on the head of his stick. 'I would spend my last shilling with your father: I have spent it oftener than once! I would give my last drop of blood—such as it is—to serve him! I come between you? I persuade him not to see his own daughter—and such a daughter? You little know!'

'Forgive me,' said she in an impulse of self-reproach when she saw his distress. 'No doubt I have wrongly accused you. But how can I understand if you will not explain? Do not tell me any more about my father's life: he can tell me that himself; but tell me, as you promised, how you come to be receiving letters intended for him, and what you meant by saying he knew nothing of it?'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'bear with me an instant, and I will tell you succinctly. It was I that saw the announcement in the papers of your appointment as mistress in the College for Ladies. I showed it to your father, and begged him, almost on my knees, to make himself known to you; but he refused absolutely to do so, for reasons which he thought sufficient, but which I ventured to consider inadequate. Your father's situation was at that particular moment desperate; our uncle—ahem!—well, Miss Raynor, it was desperate beyond anything you can dream of desperation.'

'Perhaps,' said Isabel. 'I can dream more in accordance with reality than you imagine.'

'At anyrate, Miss Raynor, to understand how I came to do what I am about to relate to you that I did, you must know that I had for years been accustomed to act, if I may be allowed the comparison, as jackal to the lion, and that it had become necessary for me to assume the entire control of our joint affairs, your father's and my own, financial and other. I would relate to you how that had become necessary, but you have signified to me that it would not be agreeable.'

'Not now, please,' said Isabel; 'go on merely with your explanation.'

'Very good, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty. 'When we were in a tight place—that is to say, when we found ourselves in straitened circumstances'—

'In short, when you were hard up.'

'—in short, when we were hard up, it was I who had to find relief from our embarrassment: it devolved upon me to find replenishment for the exchequer.'

'Do you mean,' asked Isabel coldly, 'in plain words that you have had to keep my father?'

'Not at all. Do not misunderstand me, I pray. I am not uttering complaint; I am but stating a fact. And I ask you to remember that I said I was jackal to the lion. It therefore fell upon me, when provision for our wants was required, to go the round to find occupation for the refined pen of your father, or, failing that, for my own rude quill.'

'And if both of these failed?' asked Isabel, in sure expectation of the answer.

'Then,' said Mr Doughty, 'I would try to find temporary accommodation from a friend. Both these resources failed us at the time I spoke of.'

'Now I understand completely,' said Isabel. 'The jackal had one trick—one resource—more than the lion.'

'I ventured to suggest to your father'—

'I understand,' interrupted Isabel. 'You suggested to my father that he should apply to me for help, and he would not hear of it; he said he was not yet fallen so low as to ask his daughter, a girl only beginning life for herself, for such help as his weakness or his wickedness would not allow him to provide for himself. Was not that what he said?' she demanded eagerly.

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'you are as clever as you are charming. He spoke much to that effect.'

'Mr Doughty,' said Isabel, 'I shall be obliged to you exceedingly if you will not pay me compliments.—You, however, had not the same view as my father, your old chief. You therefore wrote to me in his name, telling him nothing of it.'

'What first made me think of it was that my handwriting was not unlike your father's.'

'And you received from me a certain sum of money, which I had sent as to my father.'

'And which, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, 'I religiously expended on your father, and on him alone.'

'Oh, that is not a point we need discuss. The jackal, I suppose, is worthy of his hire.'

'Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty with palpable emotion—he had stopped again and faced her with his hands clasped on his stick—'you should not say that. It is unworthy of you to stab so cruelly one who has learned to admire your generous qualities, even though that one is the miserable, broken individual before you. You should not—you should not, really. His lip trembled with emotion, and a tear sprang in his eye, which he ferociously flicked away with his finger. 'If there is one person in the world whom I care for besides the chief, it is yourself, and I expect you to believe me when I say that

whenever I have applied to you it has been only on your father's account, and that whatever you have bestowed in answer to my applications has been strictly expended on your father to the uttermost farthing.'

'I believe you,' said Isabel, impulsively giving him her hand. 'Forgive me.'

She was so sorry for the pain she had evidently given the poor creature, and she so saw him touched with a pathetic dignity, that a new revulsion of feeling came upon her in which she could almost have kissed him to assuage the pain she had caused. But the trembling and spasmodic fervour with which he grasped her proffered hand drove back all such inclination.

'Are we not nearly there yet?' she asked, going on again.

'To tell you the simple truth, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty, now less constrained and more cheerful, 'your father is not in our rooms.'

Isabel stopped at once. 'Where is he, then?' she asked.

'At this precise moment he is waiting in a certain house in a lane off the Ratcliff Highway for his bill to be paid.'

'Bill?—for what? Not—for drink?' asked Isabel with a new horror upon her.

'No, Miss Raynor, not for drink. That is not the form the chief's refreshment takes.'

'What is it, then?' demanded Isabel. 'Tell me the truth. I hope I am not afraid or ashamed to hear what you may have to say.'

'Well, Miss Raynor, in a word: the devil that has tempted him and brought him to his present pass is opium. I have seen its accursed method of working—excuse my strong epithet—from its initial stage. He began to smoke opium from an innocent and laudable motive, nothing less, indeed, than to find "copy" to be sold for what it would bring in the Magazine market to furnish forth the expenses attendant on your birth. He visited an opium den of the East End in the days when both opium dens and the East End properly so called were much more dangerous places to enter than they are now. He went there by himself, and some time later he piloted no less a person than Charles Dickens thither. I am declaring to you the simple truth. But he did not make a habit of smoking the seductive drug until your poor mother's death. Then he was distracted, and could find no comfort in anything, and forgetfulness only in his opium sleep.—My dear Miss Raynor, let the rest be silence.'

'Mr Doughty,' exclaimed Isabel, without a moment's hesitation, 'let us go at once and pay his bill and get him out of the dreadful place!'

'My dear young lady,' said Mr Doughty, 'I should say "agreed" with the utmost alacrity, were it not that my purse is absolutely empty. To say truth,' added he, with an attempt to laugh which sounded rusty and unused, 'I had looked forward to a remittance from you to-night to release him.'

'Come,' said she hurriedly. 'Which way must we go? I have money.'

Mr Doughty set his face towards the New North Road. Isabel swept along the pavement at a pace which somewhat taxed Mr Doughty's rheumatic limbs to maintain.

'We must take a cab,' said he. 'And will

it not be best for me to go alone? It is a dangerous region for a young lady to venture into, more particularly at this time of night.'

'A cab by all means,' said Isabel; 'but I shall go with you; I am not afraid.'

'It is,' said he, 'for you to ordain, Miss Raynor, and for me to obey. It must be a four-wheeler then.'

They hurried on in silence, till they had passed Mrs Ackland Snow's again, and were nearing the New North Road.

'He goes off, I suppose,' said Isabel, 'at intervals to this place, and remains there till you find him and release him?'

'Exactly so,' said Mr Doughty.

'How long has he been gone this time?' asked she.

'Three days,' answered he.

'Three days! I should have thought that was enough to kill a man! Dreadful! Dreadful! Let us make haste!'

When they reached the New North Road, Mr Doughty produced from his waistcoat pocket a whistle and blew a call, which was speedily answered by the appearance of a four-wheeler. He opened the door, and when Isabel had entered the cab he closed it again.

'But are you not coming?' she asked.

'I am coming certainly,' answered Mr Doughty.

'But my place is with the driver on the box.'

'I cannot hear of such a thing,' said Isabel.

'You will catch cold: you are not wrapt up.'

'I am quite sufficiently clothed, thank you, Miss Raynor; and I would prefer, if you will permit me, to sit on the box and smoke a pipe.'

Thus it came to pass that Isabel did not hear what instructions were given to the driver; and they drove away, on and on, through regions to her altogether unknown. She remembered, however, that Mr Doughty had said that the opium den was near the Ratcliff Highway, and she was familiar enough with her map of London to know the direction they must take. They passed down the New North Road; and presently they left the bustle and the glare behind, and rolled through darkness and comparative silence, with large comfortable-seeming houses on either hand, where in the past had dwelt substantial men from the City, whose descendants or successors have gone further afield; over the dark and gruesome canal with evil-smelling chemical works on the one hand and tall square piles of sweet-smelling wood on the other; on again through the darkness, picked out here and there at wide intervals with tall and despondent gas lamps, and out again into clamour and bustle, blazing gas in shops and gin palaces and flaring naphtha on the stalls; and then out into what was plainly a great thoroughfare and past an imposing church, withdrawn deep into the shadows at the junction of two ways, and looking serenely and pityingly down on the surging tides of human life, business and pleasure, sin and sorrow, that met about its gates; on and still on.

During this progress, with the deafening rattle of the wheels and of the slung windows in her ears, Isabel passed into a semi-conscious state. She knew she was wearing farther and farther east; she saw how different were the scenes she was passing through from those to which she was accustomed in the neighbourhood of her lodgings, a

good many miles behind her; and she wondered anew at the vast, the mysterious London in which she dwelt. She was a tolerably learned young lady, and she was able to compare in her mind the great capitals of the world—to compare, at least, what she had read of those in the past with what she knew of this in the present. And she said to herself that, though Rome was great, and Babylon was great, and Nineveh, and Thebes, yet London was greater far by reason, not of fine buildings and a general impression of magnificence and imposing outward show, but of its vastness and its swarm of men and women, each in an orderly way doing that which is right in his own eyes, none daring to make him afraid. The wonder of London, she felt, is its people. Then she went on to think particularly of her father—a weak unit swimming, floating hither and thither in this sea of humanity. Now that she was definitely set out to find him, her anxiety concerning him and her horror of his situation had changed into a kind of gentle romantic expectation. She had read of De Quincey, Coleridge, and other confirmed consumers of opium, and the glamour of these names made her father's fault appear less a vice than an amiable and poetic weakness.

She was rudely awakened out of these dreams by the stoppage of the cab and the appearance of Mr Doughty at the door. He said it was necessary to descend there and to walk a little way. She descended, and walked along the pavement by his side—not without a tremor or two, for dark, foreign, and wild-looking men—browned and baked with wind and sun—stared curiously at her as she passed. They came to the corner of a dark and noisome alley, which they were about to turn down, when they were accosted by a policeman. He looked hard at Mr Doughty.

'Oh,' said he, 'it's you is it, sir? Your chief down there again, I suppose. Is the lady going down with you?'

'Yes, policeman,' said Mr Doughty, in his profoundest tones, 'the lady thinks it necessary to go with me: she thinks it absolutely necessary.'

'In that case, ma'am— or miss,' said the policeman—'I must go down with you—only to see that no harm comes to you; for they're a queer lot down there.'

PANORAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

PANORAMIC Photography has been the dream of scientific workers with the camera for nigh half a century, and therefore to have achieved complete success in a field of work exceedingly difficult is indeed to have reached a pinnacle of photographic and scientific renown. The invention of the 'Panoram' by Colonel R. W. Stewart, commanding the Royal Engineers of the Western District, at Devonport, must be classed as one of the most important photographic inventions of the age, and as being in advance of anything of its kind up to the present. When the gallant officer took up the question, he entered upon the work with a knowledge of the difficulties which surrounded it—and, indeed, as he proceeded these became even more marked—but determined to proceed and succeed. As may be supposed, he had to invent, discard, and rein-

vent, throwing over ideas which had seemed to be in theory exactly what were necessary, but which failed when carried out. And so model after model was made and set aside. But the inventor was on the right track, and at last came to a point, and the adoption of a principle which would accomplish the end sought for.

At this juncture Colonel Stewart met Mr W. Gage Tweedy of Plymouth, who had, it appeared, been also considering the subject, and who had published a valuable contribution to the question in 1863. The correct principle was secured in the camera which Colonel Stewart had designed when he met Mr Tweedy, and that gentleman's clever mechanical skill has enabled the two to produce an instrument which it may be said is practically perfect. It is at once an instrument of great delicacy of action, but at the same time of simplicity of working, and its results are always the same. As this will meet the view of many who are interested in photographic work, but who lay no claim to being scientists, it may be stated that the results are brought about by means of a camera of exceedingly moderate dimensions—much smaller than would be necessary for the production of views in the ordinary way—pivoted at a central point, and standing on a tripod head, in appearance much after the usual manner. Within the camera is clockwork mechanism worked by a spring, this being wound up from time to time. The gear being set in motion, a roller begins automatically to wind upon it the sensitised celluloid film which is contained upon another roller, a pressure roller keeping it taut and bearing upon another roller. This last roller is what actually secures the action of the camera, as a shaft from it passes through the bottom of the camera, and has at its lower end a pulley, around which pass two turns of a band of silk which revolves the stand to which the camera is attached, and, of course, the camera itself. While the sensitised film is being unrolled, and the camera is, as it were, also unrolling the view upon the film, the motion being exactly at the same rate, the picture falls upon the film as though it were still.

It will thus be seen that the action of unrolling the film is the source of the motion of the camera. The idea is clever, and the execution is perfect and accurate. The focus is a fixed one, though it would be possible to arrange for the use of lenses of varying foci, and, of course, of change of speed in the movement of the camera itself.

The arrangements whereby exposure is made are as clever and complete as are the points already referred to. The camera being ready and wound up, it is carefully levelled—by a level attached—and directed to the point from which a start is to be made. It is set in motion by a pneumatic release, this allowing a fly to rotate at a determined speed, arranged by the operator, controlling the unrolling of the film and the speed of the camera. The photographic image impinges upon the film through a V-shaped aperture, answering to the usual diaphragm of a camera, and gives the required relative exposure to foreground and to sky. This aperture can be varied in size and shape, and can be arranged in combination with the speed of the camera to practically obtain an instantaneous

effect. The rotation of the camera can be stopped at the completion of the circle, or at any point within it that may be desired; or, as it may be put in the terse words of the inventor, 'it will gratify the photographer's wants, whether these be confined to the limits of the parish pump or embrace a full sweep of the horizon.'

Of course, so complete and beautiful an instrument could hardly have been secured but for the aid of such a flexible and transparent material as celluloid. The earlier attempts of inventors were directed to the production of pictures upon curved and flat plates. In 1845, Martens, an engraver of Paris, sought to secure such pictures by the bending of a Daguerreotype plate into a cylindrical curve. A lens placed opposite to the centre of the curve deposited the photographic image, through a slit, upon the plate; and a considerable measure of success followed these efforts. Some nine years later he used a modification of his first invention, with flat plates. Gavella, in 1848, in Paris, created considerable stir by the exhibition of panoramic pictures viewed through a lens. He appears to be considered the first who had gone into the matter in a thoroughly scientific manner. As an officer of Engineers he probably approached the question with a view to its use in connection with military surveying; and he patented the idea in England in 1857, proposing to use paper as the flexible material for the photographic image. But after Gavella in 1848, Henry Fox Talbot in 1849 may be said to have gone forward by proposing to use coated paper for 'panoramic views of scenery which were produced upon a curved surface by the movement of the object glass of the camera.' In 1857, Burnett, an English worker, proposed modifying a roller slide for paper so as 'to take a view all round in one piece.' In the same year Ross, of New York, proposed to take the complete circle in three flat plates of one hundred and twenty degrees each.

One of the most interesting efforts in the problem of panoramic photography was Dr Chevalier's plane table, submitted to the Société d'Encouragement, of Paris, in 1858. In this case the picture passing through the lens was deflected upon a plane table. Each sector of the plate could be impressed with the photographic image. It does not appear that the apparatus came into practical use.

The Pantascopic camera of Johnson, patented in 1864, appears to be the camera described by Mr Tweedy of Plymouth in 1863. It was designed upon the revolving principle, and so far as it went produced very excellent results.

Several workers were considering the matter and inventing between 1864 and 1884, when the Cylindrograph of Moessard was invented. It was somewhat similar in type to Martens's instrument, the lens being pivoted in the centre, and a flexible celluloid film in a dark slide being used for the production of the photographic image. It is necessarily a large instrument as compared with that of Colonel Stewart. And though its work is good, yet it is costly, for a recently constructed instrument, made for the Canadian Pacific Railway, cost one hundred pounds or more, and was of very considerable weight and size. This camera took pictures of a length of forty-five inches by eighteen, though we believe less than

one hundred and eighty degrees were comprehended.

Immediately preceding the 'Panoram,' the 'Cyclographe' of Damoiseau may be said to have been the latest step in panoramic cameras. It is used with a film which unrolls automatically, but is somewhat heavy and unwieldy, as well as rather complicated in action for general working.

From our résumé of the work of inventors, it will be seen that great scientific knowledge has been brought to bear upon the subject, and it is perhaps on its scientific side that the 'Panoram' will be most useful. In connection with surveying, and especially in mountainous and inaccessible regions, it is believed that the instrument will be immensely valuable because of its perfect work. Those whose knowledge enables them to judge will readily see that there is a very large field for the use of such a camera; indeed, we believe the Royal Geographical Society is likely to take it up. Already, though it may be said to have been but just completed, the fame of the instrument is growing; and in Germany it has created a strong impression in scientific military circles. In other parts of the world also, a keen interest has been awakened. It is patented in all the principal countries of the world.

Though devised for such ambitious work as that to which it may particularly be devoted, yet it cannot but be admitted to be a triumph of simplicity, for its mechanism has nothing of a cumbrous character about it, and it does its work directly. Several pictures eight inches wide by sixty inches long can be secured in a camera which weighs under four pounds, and the worker who has hitherto been content to do quarter-plate work may now make more ambitious attempts, and not be more heavily laden than he has hitherto been. As the inventors have also devised means by which these panoramic negatives shall produce pictures to be thrown upon a screen, one may confidently expect much instruction and entertainment for the general public, as these pictures are displayed. And so science may be promoted while those not scientifically inclined may be benefited.

BY ACCIDENT.

By H. F. ABELL.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

EVERY Thursday Mr Richard Marsden dined with his uncle Christopher at the palatial residence of the latter in Portland Place. Every Thursday uncle and nephew disagreed and parted in high dudgeon with each other—an odd state of affairs, and the more so because the eccentric old bachelor loved his handsome young nephew very dearly, and the feeling was warmly reciprocated. The disagreement was always on the same point—the fixed, and, from the avuncular point of view, unaccountable, determination of the young man not to take unto himself as wife the young woman who had been selected by his uncle as most eligible for that position. The discussion came up at odd times—sometimes during dessert, sometimes when uncle and nephew were having their final smoke together, but it never failed to come up.

Old Mr Christopher Marsden, although a bachelor, loved the society of the fair sex, and at his weekly dinners almost as regular a guest as Dick Marsden was Marian Akhurst. For this young lady old Mr Marsden had a respect which almost amounted to worship. She was a nursing 'sister,' the daughter of one of Mr Christopher's oldest friends, and having been left an orphan at an early age, had been obliged to turn to and fight her own battle in life. Strangely enough, her first professional visit was to Portland Place; and it was as nurse by Mr Christopher's bedside during a long and trying illness that she had impressed herself upon his mind as being the very wife for his nephew, his only relation in the world. She was a brown-haired, brown-eyed girl of two or three and twenty, with a kind, smiling face and a gentle manner, which familiarity with human suffering had not roughened; and although she was unfashionable enough to call herself Marian Akhurst instead of Sister Benta or Sister Lachryma, her name was already a household word in the mouths of those whose business lay in the alleviation of human suffering.

Every Thursday evening at dessert Mr Christopher urged upon his nephew the advisability, nay, the necessity, of his marrying Marian Akhurst. 'I cannot conceive,' he would say, 'how you can be such a blind fool as to throw away the chance of marrying such a girl. The girl loves you; I am sure of that; and as to the question of £ s. d.—why, you may leave that to me.'

The young man's answer was invariable: 'I cannot.'

'You cannot!' the old gentleman would retort. 'What on earth do you mean? You're young; you're unfettered; you're good—nay, splendid prospects. The girl's a lady, and yet you blurt out "I cannot!" Have you asked her?—No. Have you sounded her?—No. I'm an old bachelor because I never happened to meet the girl who would suit me. But you! Pooh! It disgusts and annoys me!'

The young man bore the reproaches quietly; he never flared up and made impatient replies; he never argued; he simply said: 'I cannot.'

This imperturbability angered the old gentleman far more than retort or discussion would have done, and in his determination not to comprehend it, he overlooked the possibility of the young man's having a very sufficient reason for his invariable 'I cannot.'

Poor fellow! He had. Marian Akhurst was to him his good angel on earth; he loved her passionately and devotedly. He would have shed his heart's blood, or would have gone to the uttermost parts of the earth, to serve her. He knew that she loved him; and yet he was forced to treat her as an ordinary acquaintance, and dared not say that which his sorrowing heart often urged him to say.

And she knew that the handsome young man with the splendid prospects had a sorrow which could be healed by no earthly skill, and that for acting in direct opposition to his longings he had sufficient reason.

Upon one Thursday evening the disagreement between uncle and nephew was so marked that, as no ladies were of the party, and the young

man foresaw that the unpleasantness would be continued until his usual hour for taking his leave, he pleaded indisposition, and went away early. He walked to Regent's Circus, and took an eastward-bound omnibus. At the Bank he alighted, and passing along Throgmorton Street, followed Bishopsgate Street until he reached a many-lighted edifice upon the façade of which appeared in gas letters the legend 'Arcadia Music Hall.' He did not enter, but sauntered up and down the crowded pavement with his weekly cigar in his mouth until the clocks struck ten, when he turned down a narrow side-lane, and waited at a door illuminated by a feeble lamp, around which were lounging half-a-dozen youths of the usual East End type. Every now and then people passed out at the door. When they were men, the youths took no notice. When they were women, the youths stopped their loud chaff and mirth and assumed the airs of gallants, just as they had seen more gilded youths do at the stage doors of similar establishments farther west.

Presently a tall girl wrapped in an ulster came to the door. The youths nudged each other, and the name 'Stunning Gipsy Jane' passed from mouth to mouth. Dick Marsden approached her, took the paper parcel from her hand, offered her his arm, and walked away with her—with his wife. They walked in silence for some minutes. Then Dick said: 'Well, Leah, how did the new song go off?'

'What? do you mean "Caught him on the 'op"? —Oh, very well. Three encores and a bouquet. But the chorus wants spice, and I'll have to have it. If you won't write for the people, the people won't have anything to say to me. It's all jolly fine to be a gentleman, and to say you won't.—What is it? Pollute your pen with spice? But if I'm to keep my engagement at the Arcadia I must sing spice, and that's all about it.'

Dick made no reply. They went on together in the rain and fog of the November night until they reached Leadenhall Street; here they turned down, and after proceeding some distance, they entered a narrow, lampless alley, and stopped at the door of one of those grimy little old London City houses which defy, with unaccountable pertinacity, the sweeping operations of the modern edile.

Dick entered with a latchkey, and one step took them into a shabby little room filled with a fog of strong tobacco smoke. The author of this was a tall, powerful man with a bad, handsome face, on which was stamped gipsy as plain as could be. He was lying at full length on a decayed sofa, a clay pipe in his mouth, and a tumbler of hot mixture at his elbow.

'Hullo!' said Dick, 'you're here, are you?'

'Yes, I'm here,' growled the man. 'I suppose you don't object to your wife's father being here?'

'Precious little good objecting,' said Dick. 'What do you want?'

'Just to keep an eye on you, that's all,' replied the man. 'I suppose you've been havin' a blow-out in Portland Place. Did you get anything out of the "old geeser"?'

'I don't understand you. Who's the "old geeser"?'

'Why, your precious uncle. Did he come down with the dollars?'

'Of course not. Why should he?'

'Why should he?' repeated the man almost fiercely, as he got up from the sofa—'why shouldn't he? That's the tip. Look here, Mr Marsden. I reckon it's about time we came to some understanding.'

'All right! We'll see to that,' said Dick, who perceived his father-in-law to be in an aggressive mood. 'Suppose you go home and leave me to my—my home.'

Home? Home, indeed! Well worthy of the accent of disgust and despair which the young man threw into his pronunciation of the word.

'Not till I have an understanding,' was the reply.

'Yes, yes; go away, father,' said Mrs Marsden, who was trying to toast a bloater at the half-expired fire. She had taken off her hat and ulster, and was revealed as a tall, fine young woman, with a true Roman face, which in itself was strikingly handsome, but upon which the tale of her wretched life as a low-class music hall singer was being rapidly told. 'Go home. I'll see about it.'

'Not you. You're a fool, and he's a knave. Thought it was a fine thing to marry a gentleman, you did. Talked about your brougham and your villa on the Thames, and all the rest of it; and what's it all amount to? That you've gone and married a gentleman who has to write for his bread-and-butter; who can't afford to keep you as the poorest tradesman in the parish keeps his wife, although he has a rich uncle, and do go aguzzling in Portland Place every Thursday. Strikes me if I was to go to Portland Place and say who I was, there'd be something done; it do.'

Dick Marsden took some rousing, but, like most men of the kind, when roused, meant what he said and did what he threatened. 'Are you going away?' he asked quietly.

His wife's father resented himself on the sofa by way of reply.

'I think, Mr Hearn, you had better go,' said Dick, very quietly—so quietly, that a gentleman would have understood him to mean what he said.

'S'pose I don't choose to leave my child's house,' said Hearn.

'Your child's house! My house, you mean,' replied Dick.

'Do you pay all the rent for it? Did your money buy this whisky? Haven't you never borrowed money of her hard earnings? Your house!' sneered the gipsy.

The words went home; for Dick knew very well that for singing comic songs at the Arcadia his wife could get as much in a month as he could make in three out of his work for the *Hemisphere* and other journals.

'Besides,' continued Hearn, 'I'm short o' cash.'

'Well, I can't help you,' said Dick.

'Then what's the use of going to dine'—began Hearn, but was interrupted by Dick, whose blood was up.

'My house or not,' he said, 'it's my home, and I want you out of it. Come!'

The big man did not stir. Dick, although not

so largely built, had not been through the athletic training of a public school for nothing; and if his miserable life was telling its tale on his appearance, on his muscles and wind, he was still a formidable antagonist for a bloated, lazy, dissipated man, no matter of what size. So he quietly lifted Mr Hearn up by the collar of his coat, despite his struggles, until he was on his feet, and then ran him along to the door, shot him out into the lane, and slammed the door in his face, all in less than a couple of minutes. 'I'll serve him like that every time he comes here in that condition,' said Dick, lighting his pipe. 'It's becoming intolerable. When I married you, I didn't bargain for your father.'

'And as little did I think when I married you,' retorted the girl fiercely between the mouthfuls of her blonter, 'what I was doing. When you came sniggering and smiling about me, and called me your gipsy queen, and swore you couldn't sleep for thinking of me'—

'I was a young fool,' put in Dick.

'I thought I was in for a good thing. I had lots of other offers of marriage; but you had the gift of the gab, and'—

'Why, you made me marry you!' interposed her husband. 'You threatened me with an action if I didn't. I never said I was rich, or ever should be rich.'

'No; but I knew you would be,' said the girl.

'Yes; that's the whole thing in a nutshell,' said Dick. 'Money! money! money! You've had all I ever had, and you get it now, and how it goes I don't know.'

'Well, I owe a lot now,' said the girl.

'Owe money! What for?'

'Cards.'

'You owe money for cards! Shameful! Who do you play with?'

'The other girls at the hall and their friends sometimes. With father's friends sometimes. He's hard hit too; that's why he's so down to-night.'

'Very pretty indeed! And you expect me to pay your dirty card-sharpping friends what you owe them? Why, if I had the money, I wouldn't pay it. And pray, what are you going to do?'

'I don't know. I've thought of going to your uncle and of telling him everything; that's what father wants to do.'

'Then it would be the very worst day's work you ever did in your life. My uncle knows and suspects nothing of my marriage. If he had the faintest idea that I was married, and married to a music hall singer, I think it would kill him.'

'All the better for us,' remarked the hardened, desperate girl.

'I'm ashamed of you,' said her husband. 'It would kill him, but not before he had deprived me of every penny he would have left me. Not that I care for his money; it won't bring happiness, and I have no debts; but I wouldn't do the dear old man such harm.'

'Dear old fiddlestick!' said Leah contemptuously; 'as if an old bachelor like him didn't know a trick or two. Didn't you say he was going to the south of France soon?'

'Yes; he goes on Monday; and as I'm going

to see him off, I shan't be home till later than usual.'

'And he'll be away for the rest of the winter?'

'Yes.'

'And that great lovely house shut up because there's nobody but fat, lazy servants to live in it, and we're obliged to pig it in two miserable rooms in a back lane! Oh, how I wish I was rich!'

'If you were rich to-morrow, you'd be a pauper before your next birthday,' said her husband bitterly.

Leah made no reply, but sat close in to the poor fire, her face darkened by a pensive frown which was almost terrible, one hand supporting her chin, the other clutching the arm of the chair until the knuckles stood out like knobs of ivory. For almost an hour she remained thus motionless. When she turned round, her husband was fast asleep on the sofa. She rose noiselessly, put on her hat and ulster, paused at the door for a moment, as if agitated by a doubt, and then went out into the darkness.

Dick was a sound sleeper despite his woes, and often preferred to pass the night on the sofa to sleeping in the stuffy garret up-stairs; so that if he awoke and missed her, he would but think that she had gone up to bed, and would just turn over and continue his sleep.

ABOUT THE DAIRA SANIEH.

THAT portion of the British public which is interested in our relations with Egypt, and therefore also in the question of 'Conversion,' which has been a bone of contention between our Government and that of France, will have often noticed in the newspapers the words 'Daira Sanieh;' but it is to be presumed that only capitalists concerned directly with Egyptian funds, who are not a very numerous class, will in general know what they mean. It is our purpose to explain in a sentence or two their signification, and then to describe, from personal observation, some of the features of one of the great establishments of this institution.

The Daira Sanieh is a financial organisation which was originated in 1863 by the Khedive Ismail with the object of monopolising the sugar production of Egypt for his personal profit. It was founded upon loan capital, which at first accumulated rapidly, but latterly its increase was slow. At one time it was believed to amount to nearly eight millions and three-quarters sterling. The institution is under the direction of three comptrollers—one English, one French, and one native. It has sixteen factories, and hundreds of miles of narrow-gauge railway. It employs during the harvest season about fifteen thousand men in labours connected with the factories; and indirectly gives employment to a much larger number of men, women, and children in the cutting of the sugar-cane and its transportation to the mills. The higher officials are inspectors, superintending engineers, contractors for fellah labour, and mafetishes; these last being the buyers of

the cane from the growers. The contractors and mafetishes are Turks and Egyptians; the inspectors and engineers French, with a few English and Scotch. The land on which the cane is grown belongs chiefly if not entirely to the Khe-dive's domain: the growers hire it under stringent conditions of keeping it fallow every third year, for the sake of recuperation. As the cane is cut at times which are practically fixed by the mafetishes, and is sold to the Daira Sanieh at its own price, no private mills being allowed, the growers are at the mercy of the comptrollers. But the conditions of purchase appear to be reasonable; and growers who, through favour or bribery of the mafetishes, are able to get their cane to the mills before it spoils, make excellent profits.

The establishment here referred to is that at Baksheesha, eighty-five miles up the river from Cairo. Except where there are temples or other remains of antiquity, the towns and villages on the Nile in Middle and Upper Egypt are remarkably similar in aspect. Over all during the day there is ordinarily the same translucent sky of a blue which may be at one time of a cobalt, at another of an indigo shade, but which is never of that milky hue which in the north we are accustomed to call sky-blue. The line of num-mulitic limestone cliffs of yellowish white on the Arabian bank glaring in the sun till they are painful to look at; the river, yellow, green, or glittering colourless according to the point of view; the shapeless mud hovels, with here and there a white-washed, superior house or domed mosque or Coptic church; the clumps of palms over every considerable group of dwellings; the river-banks in the later months of the summer not much raised above the brimming river, but in the spring and winter stretching as long, steep shelves of drying mud—in these features it is needless to say Baksheesha has nothing distinctive. In the town itself there are the usual adjuncts of towns on the Nile: an open space, dotted with vaults, where, as is customary in Egypt, a market is held on Saturdays—a market which indicates too plainly that the peasantry of one of the most fertile countries in the world are among the most impoverished of mankind. The arched brickwork of the old disused vaults has in many cases fallen in, and you have to pick your way gingerly and avoid stepping backwards, lest you should find yourself dropping suddenly into a hole. Twelve piastres (half-a-crown) would buy the whole stock of any of the dealers present. A small heap of beans, a small heap of oranges, a dozen pocket mirrors such as are sold in England at a penny each, a handful of nails, a few of the iron plates which are used for shoeing donkeys, are the usual capital of these rural Rothschilds of Egypt. Such a merely material thing as quantity of goods, however, is of little consequence if only the god Mammon be present and active.

As we leave the market and make our way towards the sugar factory, we see in the fields women who have brought food for their husbands, and are kissing their hands reverently before presenting it. Farther on is a woman seated on the ground churning, by pulling a string attached to a goatskin, suspended from a beam composed of ribs of the palm-leaf, and containing the milk.

Here is a group of children, boys and girls together, paddling in the water of a conduit which runs from the factory to the Bahr Jussuf, the canal which about this place leaves the Nile and conveys fertility to the Fayum. The fellaheen as they work in the fields are surrounded by innumerable birds, chiefly pigeons; crows of a bluish-gray plumage, with the wings and tail bordered with a stripe of dark blue; and most beautiful of all, the graceful white ibis, so called, more elegant than even the swan, though, of course, as being a heron, altogether different. Egypt is the paradise of birds.

The sugar factory at Baksheesha is a large square mass of buildings, in which the materials of the structure of the second great London Exhibition are again turned to account, and is not unpicturesque to look at of an evening, when several hundreds of Arabs are sitting round it in circles waiting for their turn of nocturnal duty. About fifteen hundred men and boys are employed during the season of harvesting and boiling, which lasts from December to March. The railways bringing innumerable trucks of cane; the travelling rods which convey the cane to the four huge sets of steel rollers, each set driven by a large low-pressure steam-engine of the old beam type; the fresh juice rolling from each set in a little brook; the engines pumping this juice into the twenty or thirty vast caldrons, where it is boiled by steam at a high pressure; the pumping of it thence into the defecators, where it is partly purified by being filtered through animal charcoal; the subsequent treatment in the vacuum pans, in the forms and the tanks, and in the centrifugal machines—all these matters of detail, though interesting to observe, may be omitted here, as not being different from those in sugar mills generally.

The character and aptitudes of the Egyptian workman are a subject of much interest. Generally, his physical development is magnificent. In race he is not absolutely homogeneous, but the predominant type of features reminds one of the Mongolian more than any other; but his eyes are by no means oblique. His head is broad and low, and relatively small; his face is round, and his forehead depressed; but in his body he is often a Hercules, a Mercury, an Apollo; and if modern sculptors would get fellaheen for models, they might rival Phidias. But mentally the Egyptian peasant is anything but a Greek. He is slow of perception, and cannot be trusted to act on his own judgment or to work without superintendence. An accident which happened one evening at the works illustrates this and other features of his character. An overlooker of the youths who work at the centrifugal machines let fall a key through a slit in the boarded floor. He opened a trap-door and sent down a youth to get the key. The youth, overpowered by the carbonic acid gas which accumulates in such places, fell and could not rise again. The overlooker sent down another youth with the same result, and then went down himself, and died like his predecessors. This all happened in a minute or two. Here was a chamber of death which would have suited Kemmler. The English superintending engineer was absent at the time: a panic seized the workmen, and serious disaster

was only prevented by his opportune return. His presence of mind soon restored order; but the night was made hideous by the unearthly whooping of a troop of women led by the over-looker's widow, who found an additional vent for their grief by attacking and breaking a considerable number of the windows of the building. The gas was shut off; but the bodies had to lie as they fell, in compliance with the law, till they could be inspected by a doctor next day. When they were buried, no relations came to testify respect for the youths, from the mistaken fear of being held responsible for their deaths. The widow and children three days afterwards found refuge in the house, or hovel, of another workman, the widow, according to Mohammedan custom, accepting the position of additional wife.

An Egyptian sugar factory is not a place to increase one's appetite for sugar. The floors in many parts, but especially near the centrifugal machines, are allowed to get coated with a mixture of treacle and dirt. The workmen trample this mixture continually with their naked, unwashed feet, and then carry the whitened sugar from the machines into the weighing chamber, where it is piled in heaps; and they are not scrupulous to avoid walking over these heaps, but inevitably deposit there some of the slime from their feet. It is better for the imagination not to conceive the history of sugar from the cutting of the cane to the mouth of the consumer. An Egyptian sugar factory is not only in itself a busy place, the work going on day and night, but is the centre of a great system, of far-stretching ramifications of activity. Railways run first to the drying-grounds for the megass--sometimes called the 'massash'--this being the hard fibre of the cane, which having had the juice crushed out, is spread in the sun till it becomes combustible by the evaporation of its remaining moisture. A megass field is like a hayfield, only vast in size, with white crushed cane spread out instead of hay, and hundreds of half-naked olive-skinned fellahen as labourers. The engines and trucks rush about incessantly, for at Baksheesha there are sixteen separate steam-boilers adapted for burning fuel of large bulk and rapid combustion, and each of the sixteen furnaces occupies three men night and day in feeding it. This crowd of men, fetching, carrying, shouting, and cheerfully busy, forms an animated and not unpleasant spectacle. But the fields where the cane is cut are perhaps even more lively. A row of men nearly naked, armed with short, stout, heavy knives, lop off the canes close to the earth, which grow at a distance of from two to six inches from one another. This space is determined by the distance from one another of rings in former canes which have been used for planting, this planting having been done by placing canes horizontally upon the ground. Each ring sends a root into the soil, and from each root springs a cane. If the rings are close, the new canes have little room, and they grow thin and spindle up to a great height, sometimes as much as twelve feet. If the rings of the canes which were used for planting were far apart, the new canes are stout and short, and the joints are consequently close.

Behind the cutters stands a row of binders;

these bind about twenty canes together; and the bundles are carried on the heads of women, youths, and girls to the nearest railway truck, where they are packed and sent to the mills. Among these workers are generally a few overseers with sticks, with which they belabour the idlers; but in order that no laggard may escape, they err on the side of severity. It is to a European a singular and not very pleasant experience to see a creature in the form of a man stand on one side of a path and, as pitilessly as if he were hastening the progress of a file of asses, hit with a stick successively a score of heavily-loaded women and girls as they stagger past him. The ancient Egyptians probably treated the Israelites hardly worse than they treated any of their other slaves, and not very much worse than they now sometimes treat their labourers and servants. It is to be hoped that the suffering classes of Egypt are thick-skinned. Certainly they do not cry out much; they take blows as a matter of course, and do not seem to remember them.

Among the terrors of the harvest-field are the watchmen. These officials have for their badge of office a shouldered musket, whether charged or not, I cannot say, and their principal business appears to be to restrain those fatigued, hungry, and thirsty wretches for whom the fresh juice of the cane is too tempting. The poor fellah or fellaha, toiling and panting under solar rays which pour down upon the head unmoderated by even the slightest 'nimbus' of cloud, spies an opportunity when there is no detective eye, breaks off a few joints of cane, tears them up with teeth which are unmatched for whiteness, soundness, and regularity, and is in a heaven of gratified appetite such as Lucullus, with all his lavishness and cooks and dainties, never entered: his finest iced wine of Falernus was lukewarm ditch-water compared with this cool juice. But the Roman, it is to be presumed, ate his dinners without interruption; whereas, alas! the poor fellah or fellaha is rudely brought back to the cruel side of realities by blows on the head and shoulders. Nevertheless, while these poor people when they come to the harvest are so lean that their ribs and the small bones of their spines are prominent, they generally contrive to go away in a condition of respectable fatness.

When one can avoid seeing the brutality which is never long latent in such a scene, it is indeed pleasant to lie under the shelter of a stack of cane, forgetful of European squeamishness about personal dignity, and munching and sucking in obedience to the promptings of nature. The fresh juice is delicious, satisfying without cloying. Let the chemists account for it as they can, it is digestible and wholesome, even when made into almost the sole article of drink and food. But it must be consumed absolutely fresh. The cane soon turns sour, even when it is sealed at the ends for preservation. While thus sitting crunching and sucking, the kaleidoscope of gray felt skull-caps ('libdehs'), of white turbans, of fezes, of olive-coloured and brown bodies, of glittering cane-knives, of bundles of green cane, of blue-gowned women, of black-eyed children, with its varying and ever delightful groupings, is a subject with which an eye that discovers beauty in form and colour can never weary. We have

plenty of 'Rebekahs at the Well.' Perhaps the subject is inexhaustible; but for novelty, might not the artists give us Amenna, or Khadija, or Ward-es-shan in the cane-field for once? There would be no historical or sacred interest in the picture; there would only be some very real contemporary toil and suffering, which might be made to touch the heart in a direct way through the pathos of a hard lot, if indeed there were not more fruitful suggestions or incidents in the lives of the women of the British working-classes.

If it be asked why the European officials do not interfere, and try to introduce milder methods of treating the fellahen, the answer is, that they have no authority over the proprietor of the fields, and that moral influence is impotent on the banks of the Nile. If they had some form of material control, they would still be too much occupied to go out into the fields and inform themselves of what goes on there. With every facility which governmental power could give, it would not be possible to eradicate speedily habits of oppression which seem coeval with the race. In the Baksheesha factory itself I never saw a single blow struck.

The higher officials were three in number—a European engineer, a Syrian contractor, and a Mohammedan Egyptian mafetish. They shared a room, provided with a 'mastaba' or ottoman running all round, and surrounded with windows which, from the elevation of the room, gave a view as from a watch-tower over all the works. Here they smoked together with due Oriental gravity, and with a silence which was seldom interrupted except by the entrance of some engine-driver, Coptic clerk, overlooker, or other official coming for orders. The contractor was introduced to the writer of this sketch in these terms: 'This is Syed Jussuf: he is a Syrian and a Christian: he can talk in seven languages fluently, and overreach you in them all.' After this introduction—not very complimentary, it must be confessed, to the honesty of the one or the intelligence of the other—we became fast friends; and I found Syed Jussuf a very interesting and, for anything I discovered to the contrary, a very upright man. He smiled pleasantly now, though afterwards I saw a glint in his eye, as he glanced covertly at the introducer, which was hardly accordant with his character as a Christian. The mafetish, though now a Mohammedan, and named Ismail, was by descent a Copt, but had changed his profession of faith, and had taken to himself three wives—his motives, according to his late co-religionists, being self-interest and the temptations of polygamy. The first time one exchanges cigarettes with a husband of three contemporaneous wives, one scans him closely. Is he more glad or sad by reason of his, to European notions, peculiar connubial arrangements? What were his motives? Religious conviction, romance, caprice, or mere vanity? Ismail evidently thought no ill of himself, but was as characterless and as commonplace as the laced-up boots and the long paletot which he wore.

On the whole, though an establishment of the Daira Sanieh, or sugar-growing or sugar-harvesting, is not what one would go to Egypt specially to see, still, being there, these things have their interest, and help by the force of contrast. Their

juxtaposition with the monuments of antiquity, with pyramid or sphinx, obelisk or temple, stimulates the imagination, and assists to fill in for it the vast picture of the slow march of civilisation.

THE LAST OF THE PEPLOWS.

By G. B. BURGIN.

MISS MARIA PELOW stood on the stone doorstep in order mournfully to watch the carpenter's assistant unscrew the brass plate which had braved the storms of some five-and-twenty winters, and replace it by a new one bearing a slightly modified legend. Peplow House was still what the humorous local gravedigger, when under the influence of beer, was facetiously accustomed to describe as 'a cemetery for young ladies;' but beneath that ghoully statement the words 'The Misses Peplow' no longer appeared. Miss Jane Peplow, the elder sister, had basely deserted the flowery paths of scholastic tuition, and would shortly be known as Mrs Barton, the spouse of a benevolent provision-merchant in the town. Miss Maria grieved that the ancient family of Peplow should be disgraced by what, in her prim, old-fashioned 'French of Stratteforde at Bowe,' she was wont to term a 'missalliance.' Miss Jane had indeed made a false step, and, what was worse, had not even evinced a proper shame in doing it.

When the new door-plate was screwed on—every twist of the screws hurt Miss Maria—she entered the passage, went up to Jane's bedroom, and sternly opened the door. Jane, a fair-haired handsome woman of forty-eight—Miss Maria was dark, three years younger, and more aristocratic in appearance, with a not altogether unpleasing suggestion of lavender-like primness—had just emerged from the hands of her bridesmaid, and was radiant in black silk and orange blossoms. 'Enter, Maria,' she said pleasantly. 'I trust you have reconsidered your decision, and will honour my nuptials with your presence.' But she quailed visibly.

Miss Maria sat down. She spoke with an effort. 'If dear papa were alive,' she said frostily, 'as an officer and a gentleman he could not have approved of such a match—such an incongruous mingling with the plebeian throng; it would have broken his heart. We have never before descended to—to combine with butter. Correct me if I err in this statement, Jane.'

Jane dared not. She had often heard the same remark before, but affected to treat it as wholly novel.

'You must be aware that by such a marriage you forfeit all claim to social recognition. Already, the baneful effect of such a descent has made itself felt. Two of the parlour boarders are about to leave. The—the ostensible pretext was Australian tinned meat supplied by Mr Barton. In reality, it was the fact of your entering into a matrimonial alliance with butter, perhaps oleo-margarine. Under the circumstances, you cannot expect me to—to extend the hand of cordiality to that—that doubtless worthy person.'

The Peplaws were always wholesale, for the few brief years they dabbled in commerce.'

'You are very proud, Maria,' said Jane sadly. 'Sometimes, I think that there are finer things to do in this world than to devote one's life to the exaction of deference based upon mere family considerations.'

Miss Maria declined to discuss the question. 'Has the hymeneal chariot arrived?' she asked.

Miss Jane hastened to a window and peered out. The old flyman from the *Red Lion* over the way had just affixed a white ribbon to his whip, and was rheumatically climbing up on the box. Then, he flicked his Roman-nosed roan as it lumbered over to Peplow House. The flyman had put on his best coat for the ceremony, and hidden his crooked, unliveried legs in a chastely striped rug, as a tacit concession to the sentiment proper to such an abnormally solemn occasion.

'The—the chariot waits, sister,' she said. Miss Maria would have fainted had Miss Jane called the ancient vehicle a fly.

'Very well,' said Miss Maria. 'Do not think I reproach you, Jane. Better the intellectual refinement of a solitary crust and celibacy than the parvenu plenty of tinned tongue and a husband beneath one in the social scale. I am still left to watch over the family honour.'

Miss Jane hesitated nervously. 'Some day, you may be glad of a husband's sheltering love,' she said gently. 'The struggle has been a hard one, Maria. John'—

'I am not socially conscious of the existence of any individual of that name,' said Miss Maria, primly tying her bonnet strings. 'Officially I am compelled to recognise Mr Barton's existence as your husband; but as "John"—never!'

'Mr Barton,' blushed Jane. 'Mr Barton wishes to know if you will honour him by living with us and giving up the sch—the academy?'

Miss Maria was touched, but called up the family pride to maintain her faltering resolution. 'Jane,' she said in the tones of a female Casabianca—'Jane, do not add to your other indiscretions by seeking to lure me from the path of duty. I do not blame you, Jane. Your confiding nature was no match for the wiles of one versed in the sophistries of the retail provision trade, the questionable morality which covers with an eleemosynary candlestick the doubtful quality of his dubious foreign wines; your innocence of plebeian usages is the best excuse for what you are about to do; but, Jane, much as it pains me to tell you so, Mrs Barton cannot be received within the walls of this academy. You—you understand?'

'I understand,' faltered Jane. 'Of course, Maria, with your stern sense of family duty, it could not be otherwise.'

'No,' said Miss Maria, with Spartan fortitude; 'it could not be otherwise, Jane.' But she crossed over to Jane and kissed her.

'But the—the bills?' timidly suggested Jane.

'When your name was removed from the prospectus and the door-plate of this academy,' said Miss Maria, 'you, naturally, ceased to have any connection with the business details of such an establishment.—The chariot waits. I believe it is customary for the bride to lead the way. As my elder sister, you are doubly entitled to precedence.'

'Oh, sister, I'm so nervous,' faltered Miss Jane, with tears in her china-blue eyes. 'I ought to be so happy, and yet I'm thoroughly miserable.'

Miss Maria shook her iron-gray locks with grim determination, and led the way; but Jane drew back. 'This—this is the first quarrel we have ever had, sister,' she faltered. 'Sister, dear sister, bless me before I go to my new home;' and she flung her arms round Miss Maria's neck and burst into tears.

Miss Maria lost her stony composure for a moment, and blessed the somewhat mature bride. 'I—er—hope you may be happy, Jane. I shall miss you, although you never could maintain discipline in the dormitories.—Now, let us descend. The populace await us.'

The vicar was waiting to receive the party at the church, but even at such an eventful moment his first thoughts were for Miss Maria. Miss Maria motioned him aside with, 'I commit Miss Peplow to your care, Mr Kesterton;' and Mr Kesterton received Miss Jane and led her up to the altar, Miss Maria following behind, and turning off at her own pew, sternly unconscious of the fourteen pupils, who giggled and wept alternately, or dropped surreptitious bags of rice all over the seats.

Mr Barton, a middle-aged, gentlemanly man, hastened to meet the bride. He was supported by a tall, grave, individual named Farmer Stebbins, a mighty producer of mangolds and manures. Miss Maria had played with him in the fields, and sung with him in the choir until she learned from her father that Stebbins was beneath her socially. How could she possibly be on terms of intimacy with a man who supplied milk for her young ladies! Miss Maria recognised him frigidly, and bowed her head in uncompromising prayer. Ordinarily, she patronised Farmer Stebbins with a stately dignity, occasionally so far unbending as to drive out to the farm and pay his accounts. On those occasions, Farmer Stebbins had exhibited a quiet pleasure that so majestic a little lady should honour his poor house by her presence. But he had never before met Miss Maria on terms of social, though temporary, equality like the present.

After the completion of the ceremony, Miss Maria went into the vestry, signed certain documents, and drove home alone under the vigilant protection of her red-nosed charioteer. Nothing but a stern sense of duty enabled her to bear up against Jane's departure. That night, for the first time in her life, she was unable to sleep. Jane had shared the same couch with her for thirty years, and Miss Maria had always slept with one hand thrown protectingly over Jane's head. Presently, she bethought her of a soft hairbrush, with the bristles upward, and placed it on Jane's pillow, but carefully removed it every morning lest Dorcas the housemaid should discover her weakness.

And Jane and her husband waxed happier every day, although the school grew smaller and smaller, until even the romantic yet elderly assistant-governess was dismissed and Miss Maria reigned alone—reigned alone, with a haggard, careworn look which nearly moved Jane to tears as she sat opposite her sister in church every Sunday. And then one day the crash came. Perkins the butcher obtained judgment by

default, put a greasy-looking sheriff's officer 'in possession;' and Miss Maria gave up the struggle as she sat, with folded hands and slightly twitching lips, watching her household gods—her dearest relics—being labelled and ticketed and catalogued, and announced for public sale 'without reserve.'

Miss Maria sternly refused all assistance from 'Trade,' and sat waiting among the ruins of her home. A few small worldly possessions still remained to her, but they were of little value. On the last afternoon which remained to the last of the Peplows in her old home, she wandered about the desolate house, and took a final farewell of all the precious possessions which were henceforth to be scattered among the inhabitants of High Drayton. Then she came back to her own sitting-room, and was rather startled when some one knocked at the door, and the vicar entered.

Miss Maria with a stately courtesy motioned to him to be seated.

The vicar seated himself on a cane-bottomed chair as if it had been a throne, and proceeded to acquit himself of a somewhat delicate mission. 'You will pardon me for intruding upon you at such a time, Miss Peplow,' he said deferentially; 'but the fact is I have come to ask you a favour.'

Miss Maria smiled. It was the one ray of sunshine in the crash which had shattered her fortunes. She bowed to the vicar, and motioned to him to proceed.

'The truth is,' said the vicar, 'we are in a difficulty, Miss Maria. The matron in charge of Hollibone's Trust has somewhat suddenly gone away, and there is no one to fill her place. It has been pointed out to me that you are accustomed to command, and I have lost not a moment, as I was unaware of your plans, in hastening to place the post at your disposal.'

Miss Maria almost wept, but she was not going to sacrifice the family pride so easily. 'Of course you must consider my position,' she said graciously. 'As a Peplow, I should lose caste by accepting such a post.'

'I have thought of that,' said the vicar; 'but perhaps you will recall the fact that the matron before the last was Lady Castlemaine's niece.'

'A precedent of that sort enables me to accept the post you are good enough to bring to my notice,' said Miss Maria amiably, and feeling that she must break down if the vicar stayed much longer. Here was a way out of her difficulties without relying on the loathsome succour of Trade. She was not aware that Trade in the person of Mr Barton had bought out the matron and hastily disposed of her in order that Miss Maria might be spared the pain of becoming homeless. But then Trade is seldom credited with refinement of this kind, and so Miss Maria never knew who it was that had stepped in to shelter her; which was just as well, or she would have gone out into the rain and have refused to be sheltered.

Trade had pointed out to the vicar that the post was vacant, whereupon that worthy gentleman had at once suggested Miss Maria, if she could be persuaded to stoop to such an appointment. Then Trade had used plain language. 'It's all her wicked pride,' Mr Barton said.

'She's breaking Jane's heart, vicar. I think a little misfortune would do her good; but she's lived a blameless, honourable, hard-working life, and I don't see how she's to strike root elsewhere. If you'll coax her into it, Jane will come and thank you; but we daren't be seen with you, or she'd suspect something.'

The late lamented Hollibone had erected six beautiful little Queen Anne red-brick cottages and an arched dwelling in the centre with a spire on the top. The central dwelling was allotted to the Lady Matron, the six cottages to divers elderly widows and spinsters of the town whom misfortune had overtaken. In return for a small weekly dole, they were expected to attend church twice on Sundays and once on saints' days, to pray for Hollibone as well as their own souls. When they had performed this duty, they were allowed to do as they pleased, but were required to be back in their cottages by eight o'clock every night. The Lady Matron of course could stay out as long as she liked.

That particularly handy man Farmer Stebbins happened to be passing at the time in a very roomy vehicle, and was pleased to place it at Miss Maria's disposal. Whilst Miss Maria's scanty goods and chattels were being removed to the Lady Matron's lodge, the vicar took her back to see his wife, and kept her there until it was dark.

Miss Maria, as the vicar handed her into a cosy brougham, and told his coachman to drive to the lodge, felt that she wanted to cry. She had upheld the family honour under exceptionally trying circumstances. Providence had come to her assistance, or she would have had nowhere to lay her head. She drew the black fur carriage rug round her and shivered, for the autumn night was chill.

When the carriage stopped, Miss Maria got out. 'This way, if you please, ma'am,' said a well-known voice.

'Dorcas!' cried Miss Maria, in surprised tones. 'You here?'

'Yes, if you please, ma'am,' said Dorcas. 'You didn't think I was going to leave you all by yourself, now Miss Jane has gone.'

'But Dorcas,' said Miss Maria gently, as she sank into a chair before the fire, and Dorcas brought out her fur slippers as usual, 'you must be aware that I have met with pecuniary reverses, and am unable to keep a servant.'

Miss Maria had once nursed Dorcas through an illness, and Dorcas—a very pretty, affectionate girl—was ill-bred enough to remember the fact. 'I'm going to be married in a few months, ma'am, to Farmer Stebbins's head man,' she said; 'and the vicar has offered me the lodge-keeper's post here.'

'But where's the lodge?' demanded Miss Maria.

'Here, ma'am,' replied Dorcas. 'My duty is to look after my mistress.—But it's time you had your negus.'

She came back in a few minutes with the negus and a slice of toast cut into strips. Miss Maria, her gown turned back, as was her custom, sat, with her feet on the fender, thoughtfully warming both hands at the cheerful fire. At half-past eight, Dorcas brought in Miss Maria's Bible, and respectfully sat down near the door.

Miss Maria looked round with somewhat blurred eyes. 'Let us thank God for all his mercies,' she said. 'And Dorcas'—

'Yes, ma'am,' quietly returned Dorcas.

'Don't sit over there in the cold, but draw your chair up to the fire.'

Dorcas had made her bed in the little dressing-room next to Miss Maria's chamber. She tucked up Miss Maria very tenderly, and then went back to her own room. Miss Maria was so tired that she fell asleep without thinking of the hairbrush. Then Dorcas stole quietly down-stairs and admitted those shivering half-frozen conspirators, Mr and Mrs Barton.

'How does she take it?' sobbed Jane.

'Like a lamb, ma'am,' replied Dorcas. 'Would you care to have just a peep at her?'

'She would think it a great liberty,' said Jane; but she followed Dorcas softly up-stairs, and knelt by Miss Maria's bed.

Miss Maria's hand wandering unconsciously about in search of the hairbrush, touched Jane's soft hair. She gave a little cry and awoke.

'Jane! Jane!' she cried. 'Dear, dear Jane, where are you?'

'Did you call, miss?' asked Dorcas, quietly presenting herself with a light after Jane had crept away.

Miss Maria sat up in bed wildly. 'Yes, I—I must have been dreaming, Dorcas. I thought Jane was here, and that she cried over me.'

'It's the strange room, ma'am,' replied Dorcas, tucking her up again; and again Miss Maria slept.

As the days went by, every one of any importance made a point of calling on Miss Maria. People respected her gallant struggle against overwhelming odds; they wanted to show their respect; and so they called at all hours, from old Lady Castlemaine down to Farmer Stebbins, who had sung in the choir with Miss Maria when they were children. In those days, Miss Maria had patronised Stebbins with a gracious condescension which somewhat overwhelmed him, never forgetting to let him feel that they were separated by an immeasurable gulf. And Stebbins had sighed, and gone about the accumulation of filthy lucre in the shape of manure as the one object of his life. Many a maid had longed for him and sighed in vain; many a matron had lured him into afternoon tea on Sundays, and thrown out mysterious hints that so warm a man ought to marry and settle down. Farmer Stebbins had never married. And now that his idol had seemed to fall from her high estate, he developed a more chivalrous courtesy than before. It is needless to say that he had not worried Miss Maria with bills. Every morning he came personally with a tin can of his best cream for her use; every week he brought eggs and butter to Dorcas; and when Miss Maria gently checked him one morning, he replied that he was sorry to displease her, but that he must obey orders. Miss Maria, thinking that he alluded to the trustees, made no more objections, but, from bowing with gracious condescension, actually invited him into the parlour once a month for five minutes' conversation.

Stebbins was true to her; he had always recognised her social position; and the disparity

in their family was so great that Miss Maria felt she could safely meet him on the neutral ground of their childish experiences without losing caste. Jane never had cared for caste, and was happy; Miss Maria had cared for caste all her life, and was unhappy. She fell into the habit of inquiring about Jane from Stebbins. Jane also asked about Miss Maria from the worthy farmer. Thus an indirect method of communication between the sisters was established. Miss Maria also relied upon Stebbins to help in the onerous duties of her post. To her surprise, she found herself gradually glad to leave most of them in his hands. Her long struggle with the world had tired her mentally and physically. The ruddy-cheeked Stebbins, with his enormous muscular strength and gentle, clumsy ways, exercised a soothing effect upon her nerves. She even discovered from the County Guide that his family had once been the De Stevens, then Destevins, then plain Stebbins. He came of a more honourable and ancient stock than the Peplaws themselves, although his father had never served Her Most Gracious Majesty. Hence, when Stebbins, with many blushes, asked her to take tea at the farm in order to meet Mrs Barton on neutral territory, Miss Maria after a faint show of resistance, actually consented to do so. For some three or four months—it was now January—she had lived her solitary life, haunted by the fear that Dorcas would marry and leave her.

'You must not waste your life on me, Dorcas,' she said, as she dressed in her best lavender silk for the tea-party. 'I have been selfish in accepting your devotion.—When do you intend to be married?'

'Not before you, ma'am,' said Dorcas quietly, and went away.

Miss Maria started. Poor Dorcas! Then a faint flush dyed her cheek. 'Dorcas, what did you mean by that remark?' she asked, when Dorcas returned with her best cap.

'What I said, ma'am,' answered Dorcas, carefully putting the cap in the box. 'Shall I bring a lantern to light us on the way back?'

It was a clear, frosty afternoon. A robin twittered faint make-believe music on a bare branch outside the window. Miss Maria listened to the bird for a moment, and then drew on her gloves. When she went down-stairs, another surprise awaited her in the shape of the *Red Lion* chariot. 'What do you want?' she inquired somewhat sharply of the red-nosed Jehu.

Jehu was a man of few words. 'You, mum,' he stolidly answered.

'What for?' inquired Miss Maria.

'Stebbinses,' said Jehu woodenly.

'But, my good man, I didn't order you to come,' said Miss Maria.

Jehu flicked an imaginary fly from the venerable ruin in the shafts, but made no answer.

'Go home,' said Miss Maria. 'I shall walk.'

She went down the path, followed by Dorcas and the chariot. When she looked round, Jehu still followed at a snail's pace.

'Didn't you hear me?' asked Miss Maria.

'Where are you going?'

'Stebbinses,' said Jehu.

'I think we'd better get in, ma'am,' suggested Dorcas. 'He'll go there all the same.'

Miss Maria got in, mentally deciding that she had yielded only to *force majeure*.

Jehu touched his hat when she got out of the chariot. 'Nine o'clock, mum?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Miss Maria, taken by surprise; and the chariot rumbled away, each wheel looking as if it wanted to go to a different point of the compass.

Stebbins was at the hall-door to receive them. Miss Maria thought that he had never shown to so much advantage. All his natural timidity had vanished. He was the quiet, courteous host, full of homely cordiality and good feeling. His housekeeper took Miss Maria up-stairs to remove her bonnet. There was a cosy fire in the best bedroom. Suddenly, Miss Maria—the housekeeper had gone down—fell on her knees by the side of the bed and began to cry softly, utterly regardless of the fact that she was crushing her best cap beyond redemption. She moved from one familiar piece of furniture to another—furniture which she had thought never to see again. There it all was—the old familiar mahogany bedstead, the little bookcase by its side, the ancient bureau, the vast clothes-press, the faded carpet, the painting of her father on the wall, the needlework sampler which had bidden contemptuous defiance to all well-known laws of ornithology and botany for so many years; nay, even the paper was the same pattern, although fresher and newer. And the room had been partitioned off to exactly the same size as her old apartment at Peplow House. There was even an old-fashioned pin-cushion on the dressing-table—no one knew how sorely she missed that pin-cushion—just as it had stood for years at Peplow House.

Before she had recovered from her surprise, the housekeeper again knocked at the door. Miss Maria hastily bustled herself with her cap. 'Does any one use this room?' she asked.

'No, ma'am.'

'Has any one ever used it?'

'No, ma'am.'

Then she went down-stairs, and was not surprised to find herself back at the Peplow House drawing-room again.

Stebbins came forward to meet Miss Maria with quiet deference, and led her to a chair—her chair—by the fire. She could not speak.

Stebbins gave her time to recover herself. 'How can I thank you?' asked Miss Maria.

'If it gives you pleasure,' he said, in his simple honest way.—'if it gives you pleasure, Miss Maria, it is the only excuse I have for doing it. I didn't like to think of your missing the things.'

'But don't you see,' she said, 'you—you make it harder for me to go back?'

'Don't go back. I'll go away, if you care to stay here.'

'What, John!' His name slipped from her lips unconsciously. She had not called him 'John' for five-and-twenty years. 'Give up your home for me!'

'Yes,' he said simply. 'Why not?'

Miss Maria's feeble edifice of family pride tottered and crumbled away like a house of cards. 'John,' she said softly, 'I have spent my whole life in pursuit of shadows. You shame me, John.'

He led her back to her chair, whence she had

risen under the influence of strong emotion. 'I only want to see you happy,' he said. 'I could think of no other way than to preserve the things you love. They—they comforted me.'

'Comforted you?'

'Yes.'

'Have you—have you any sorrow?' hesitatingly inquired Miss Maria.

'Yes,' said John; 'ever since I can remember anything, it has been with me.'

Then a light flashed upon Miss Maria. This man had loved her all his life. She had made a barrier between them which was insurmountable. He had watched over her, cherished her, loved her, only to be repaid by condescending impertinence and patronage. Even now, he was too noble to be revenged, too magnanimous to crush her as she deserved. His sole thought had been for her happiness, for her well-being.

For a moment, they stood looking into each other's eyes. The woman's fell. She moved blindly towards the door. Most men would have taken advantage of her helplessness. This man would not speak even now. Suddenly, she came back and held out her hand.

'Will you forgive me?' she asked. 'I have treated you very cruelly, very unworthily. I only see my own meanness through my tears. Had I found this out years ago, when I was younger and unbroken by the world, I—I should have acted differently.'

Stebbins stood as one dazed; but she came nearer still, her thin, white hands clasped together. 'I am so sorry,' she said—'so very, very sorry. Oh, if our lives could come over again. Now, I am broken and old and worn, with no one to love me, no one to care, no one to remove the barriers which my hideous pride has raised around me. I have wasted my life—and yours! Forgive me!'

Stebbins raised her up. 'You are the only woman in the world for me,' he said. 'I've loved you since we sat in the choir and our voices mingled together. You made my heaven then. Will you make it again?'

She crept into the shelter of his strong arms. 'You are so strong,' she sobbed, and laid her head upon his breast.

TO SPRING.

SWEET Spring! with shy, soft eyes of heavenly blue!
The wild winds whispered: 'She is coming here!'
And laughed aloud for joy: gray skies grew clear;
The violet woke up to welcome you.
The wan gold primroses all wet with dew,
Along the mossy margin of the mere,
Shone out in starry clusters, and anear,
A tangle of white bloom, the wildfire grew.
Now you have come. I hear in murmuring streams
Your musical low laugh, as silvery sweet
As the lark's singing in his rapturous dreams.
Where violets are thickest, there your feet
Have lately passed. I see your azure eyes
Smile in forget-me-nots and radiant skies.

ALICE FURLONG.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

How far thought is affected by food, is Food for Thought. What impoverished, over-stimulated, or beclouded brains, an indulgence in too spare or too liberal a diet may produce, is a question of no small importance. Without expressing any opinion as to the use or abuse of alcoholic drinks—or even conceding, wholly, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's dictum, that only a pure mind can relish apple dumplings—we feel but little doubt that Coleridge himself would scarcely have merited his friend's description of him as a 'damaged archangel' but for his over-indulgence in a brain-beclouding drug. Milk is for babes, and strong meat for those who can digest it; but a man who takes a drug for his friend often entertains a demon unawares, who may any day desert him, and mock the double dose that only brings twice-cursed discomfort. But, argues the man, life is not worth living without this or that pet indulgence. This is the old story of the struggle, the temptation, and the yielding—of Faust and Mephistopheles. 'You are sleepless—in pain, grief, loneliness, or any other affliction; take me and I will give you rest—make your life bearable at least,' avers the patented poison, cunningly disguised perhaps as a much testimonialised medicine. And lulled by the apparent relief, the temporary forgetfulness, the victim hugs and praises the traitor to whom he has given admission.

This remedy, this panacea, will last his lifetime—so he fancies. But no such thing. In the hour of his utmost need, when sickness or sorrow has newly shaken his constitution, suddenly and without warning the dose has lost its cunning power to soothe or stupefy; it will neither ward off nor sweeten painful hours again.

And now begins a conflict dreadful to witness, horrible to endure—an inevitable time of woe, compared with which, the man's state, when he ignorantly said life was not worth living without his darling indulgence, was, as he now remorsefully owns, a paradise. He thought to indulge, and die—but as a matter of fact there are years

of painful life, with ruined digestion, irritable nerves, sleepless eyes, between him and dissolution. Retribution—so inexorable a law in all Nature's dealings with man—sums up painfully, slowly, hourly, day by day, every wrong he has inflicted on the machine she entrusted to him; wrongs inflicted ignorantly or wilfully; it makes no difference physically, however much it may morally; a final account has to be given of all his doings.

But it is not merely self-inflicted torments we have to reckon with: the British householder has his every day's dinner to digest—if he can. In temperate-climbed Britain we have not to dread the rash humour, produced by the pungent pickles and brandy pawnee in the brain of the Anglo-Indian; nor the affected indifference and faded sneer of the habitual absinthe toper; nor the dyspepsia resulting from the iced water and semipiternal pie of our American cousins. Although every housekeeper knows the ease with which a pie can be concocted, and how 'satisfying' it is, we have so far profited by lessons on health and cookery as nearly to have banished from our tables that awful 'resurrection pie' of our school-tide, in which did not disdain to reappear every bone that had figured on the table during the week—not even excepting the 'whiskers' of the harmless necessary herring. But if this horror of a pie has vanished, our cold domestic mutton, or still more unalluring 'hash,' remains behind. The viands which a stuffy used-up atmosphere has ill prepared the appetite and faded eyes of a sedentary worker to regard with relish, would appear, as we all know, in a very different light if spread on the table of a country inn, and encountered after a fast of five hours, with eyes brightened and lungs cleared by ten miles of rough walking over heath or moor.

The indoor worker is as hungry—as much in need of sustenance as the outdoor; he may be no more dainty or self-indulgent than his more fortunate compeer; but as he brings but a languid appetite to his cold mutton, so he probably carries from it an uneasy digestion that calls—or he

fancies that it does—for some cordial corrective to give tone and zest to what he has half-mechanically swallowed. Meanwhile, in the case of the open-air diner, digestion follows without the need of recourse to any stimulant beyond the primeval sauce of hunger which he has brought to his repast. That there is a subtle and intimate correlation between food and brain, all pathologists agree. Without being materialists, or seeking to trace all mental effects to mere physical action and reaction, we yet regard it of the greatest consequence that the vehicle of thought should be nourished and invigorated by the food, so that a man may think his thoughts with all the keenness and perspicacity of which nature has rendered him capable. That men of genius have done much, often with small means and appliances, is no proof that they might not have done more had their environments been more propitious. Granting a preponderating influence to original or inherited temperament—a temperament, however, susceptible of daily alteration—improvement, or the reverse—every meal demands a certain amount of importance. This may be seen especially in the case of growing lads whose appetites are of the keenest. Some happy temperaments there are which feel neither disappointment nor disgust at the aspect of the typical cold mutton; but these are not common; and as a state of temper always renders digestion difficult, the failure to provide an appetising as well as a merely wholesome meal may have far-reaching consequences.

Do our readers remember the exquisitely humorous look of affected recollection which *paterfamilias* assumes in one of John Leech's sketches, when, leaving the house, he pauses at the hall door, and learns the *menu* for the day from the neat little parlour-maid? Then comes the sudden remembrance of an engagement that will keep him from home beyond the dinner hour, and the message to the mistress on no account to wait dinner for him! We can all imagine the secret glee with which he will order and the gusto with which he will absorb his own especially soothing dish at his club; while the lady of his hearth and home is dispersing the domestic cold mutton among the children and servants. He will return home, we foresee, good-tempered, well nourished, generously inclined even, possibly with some little gift in hand for the wife of whose company he has deprived himself out of pure regard for his own digestion and her feelings.

If Shakespeare's Adam was justified in attributing his frosty but kindly old age to his abstention from 'hot and rebellious liquors' in his youth, how many men and women may owe an old age of dyspepsia, unkindly and frosty, to a blighting unwholesome diet in their youth! We know how attractive to young and innocent palates is pastry in all its various shapes and forms; how repugnant to palates on which the mother's milk is scarce dry is meat—underdone, fat meat, 'juicy' chops and steaks! But it is not the young alone who cling to puff paste and short crust; their elders, careless and fearless, will also commit similar excesses until arrested by the pangs of dyspepsia.

Grumio denied mustard to his mistress on the ground that it was too hot for her temperament. But he also denied to her, as quite inadmissible, beef without that choleric condiment. It was, we believe, the elder Mathews, who, watching a traveller dining at an inn upon beefsteak and neglecting to help himself to mustard, first gently pointed out to him the omission, and then, shocked and outraged at the diner's culpable and continued indifference on so vital a point, ended by himself putting mustard on the edge of the recalcitrant feeder's plate, in hopes of coaxing or coercing him into orthodoxy.

In one of his amusing paradoxes, Mr Ruskin advises a young man to be first happy, and then useful afterwards; since by being happy he would prove that he was, or was doing, that which Providence intended him to be, or do. May we argue in like manner that we do well to feed on that which likes us, since the pleasure to our palate proves we are eating what nature intended us to eat? That this doctrine has its practical limitations is obvious at a glance—a glance, we mean, at the countenances of those who, following strictly, if unconsciously, the moralist's advice, seek first to gratify their tastes without paying much regard to the usefulness of their diet for health and strength. Experience must decide here, as elsewhere, what amount of indulgence we may harmlessly accord to the preferences which nature has implanted in us—no less than in the cream- and fish-loving cat, the honey-loving bear, the salt-desiring reindeer. Preferences, due in the first instance, perhaps, to necessity or accident, become riveted on races as on individuals by custom and inheritance. Thus, the Chinaman yields to a craving for opium; and the tea-plant helps to moderate the potations which were the disgrace of an earlier part of this century. Fashion goes for a good deal in eating and drinking, as well as clothing; and those who, out of regard for their brains, prefer to keep themselves well nourished, not by high but by good living, rather 'than paint their outward walls so costly gay,' and suffer dearth within, have the satisfaction of knowing by experience that they have enabled the machine to do the best work its nature allows of—have given it power to grasp and retain those thoughts and ideas which are, we humbly hope, to have a longer lease than the fading mansion in which they have been temporarily enshrined.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XII.—A PRODIGAL FATHER.

Down the noisome lane, or alley, Isabel and Mr Doughty passed in the rear of the policeman. It was so narrow and so dark that they thought it well to keep in the middle of the way; and yet they scarce avoided contact with dingy figures that fitted past them in and out of gaping doorways, and with children that squalled and scrambled in the gutters; for in that dreadful region night and day were confounded even for the youngest. At the end of the alley was a dark little square, and to a tumble-down house at the farther side the policeman led, and they followed. The door-

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way was below the level of the street, and was approached by a flight of half-a-dozen steps, worn very much away by the tread and scuffle of countless feet. Into this den or cave they descended; and now at a suggestion Isabel would have turned back, for these squalid surroundings had dispelled the romance of opium-smoking, and the horrid expectation of what she might see oppressed and terrified her. But neither of her companions said a word, and she went on with them as if without hesitation—on to a door on one side of the dark passage, above which hung a small paraffin lamp, smoking and stinking. The policeman lifted the latch and opened the door, and then stood aside for the others to enter. Isabel drew back.

'I think,' said she, 'I will wait here.'

'I will go in,' said Mr Doughty, 'and find him, and discover what there is to pay.'

He entered, and Isabel and the policeman remained together by the door. They had a full view of the long low room, the atmosphere of which was thick with the brown and sickly opium smoke. A heavy silence prevailed, but yet Isabel was instinctively aware that there were many men in the awful place. No lamp illumined the gloom—nothing save a lurid glow proceeding from a raised brazier of charcoal at the farther end, and points of light here and there, which were alternately bright and dull, and which when bright made little halos in the dense, smoky atmosphere. As her eyes became used to the peculiar gloom she made out wooden bunks ranged above each other against the wall, like the berths of a ship, and in the bunks she dimly descried strange figures disposed fantastically as on beds of languid torture. Now and then she heard murmurs of uncouth speech, which rose heavily from the silence, and slowly sank back into silence again.

Meanwhile Mr Doughty had made his way down the den. He was met midway by a bowing and gesticulating Chinaman, to whom he seemed to explain his purpose, and with whom he moved towards the brazier. There they stopped, looming large and shadowy against it; after a moment or two the Chinaman returned alone down the room. Then it seemed to Isabel as if a face sprang out of the darkness, around the brazier. Close against it, steeped in the glow of the charcoal, she saw the grizzled head of a man with thin nose and lank, close-shaven jaw; the man sat with his chin in his hands gazing into the fire, but presently he raised his head with his face half-turned towards the door to look at Mr Doughty, who stood on the other side of the brazier, and then Isabel's heart rose and sank, for she was sure she saw her father. At that moment the Chinaman appeared through the haze immediately before her. He bowed, and he smiled with an expansive, all-embracing friendliness; but there was an expression in his slanting eyes which made Isabel shudder.

'It is my own fault,' she said to herself: 'I should not have come here.'

The policeman, however, came to her relief. 'Quick, Johnny, quick,' said he; and the Chinaman turned away, smiling and bowing still, and moved noiselessly back to the brazier.

In a moment or two Mr Doughty came back, and said the Chinaman's demand was for so much—naming a sum which seemed extravagant even for three days' unremitting consumption of his seductive poison—but that, with Miss Raynor's permission, he would give him so much less.

'Give him what he asks for,' said Isabel, putting her purse into Mr Doughty's hand, 'and let us get away.'

Mr Doughty's look of mingled surprise and conscious worth at having untold money entrusted to him was good to see. 'I will accomplish,' said he, 'the business with expedition.'

He hurried away; and soon returned, leading by the arm a lean, haggard man, with hair and dress disordered and creased, pale with the pasty pallor of the Chinaman, loose-lipped, and with every nerve twitching in reaction from the prolonged effect of the drug. He seemed but half-conscious, and he walked sadly and shamblingly with his eyes on the ground.

Isabel leaned back, as if she would faint, against the door-post. She experienced such bitter disappointment and piercing of heart as she had never before known. Was this pitiable creature her father?—whom she had dreamed of comforting and cheering, and upon whom she had been ready to pour out all her affection? Did he know that his daughter was there, waiting for him?—the girl whom he had let slip from care and ken for more than twenty years? Perhaps he did not yet know, nor fully comprehend. She found herself thinking it would be well that it should be so. She shrank from embracing, even from touching him. She was filled with shame for him, and yet she was ashamed of her shame.

In this turbulent state of emotion she scarcely noticed that he was being hurried up the lane, by Mr Doughty on one side and the policeman on the other, and that she herself was hastening after them, away from that hideous Inferno, whose stifling fumes seemed still creeping and writhing about her.

They found the cab waiting for them where they had left it. Mr Doughty opened the door and helped his chief to enter. Then he turned to Miss Raynor. 'Miss Raynor,' said he, in a low but impressive voice, 'you see him at his worst—his very worst: you must not judge of him as you see him now.'

'No,' said she, stung somewhat with her former jealousy that a stranger should know more of her father than she knew; 'I must not—I do not. You have my purse, Mr Doughty: will you give the policeman something for his kindness?' Then turning to the policeman, she said, 'Thank you very much,' and entered the cab, and sat down opposite her father.

Mr Doughty did as she requested. Then, closing the cab-door without a word, he mounted

again beside the driver. Isabel felt curiously grateful for so small a matter, and was in some sense cheered by it. She was compelled to see that these delicate turns of behaviour which are taken to mark a gentleman were still possible even to so poor and saddened a creature as Mr Doughty, and she therefore was inclined to be hopeful about her father. Moreover, she considered and said to herself: 'There must, after all, be something good and attractive about him even for poor Mr Doughty to have remained attached and faithful friend these many years.' All which is significant evidence of the prostrate condition to which her feelings and hopes had been reduced by the sight of her father.

They had not driven very far—Isabel on one seat and her father leaning back in the corner of the other—and she was wondering whether he was not asleep, when he suddenly threw himself forward with his face in his hands and his elbows resting on his knees and sobbed aloud. Upon that the imprisoned founts of feeling in Isabel's generous breast burst forth and swept away all doubt and speculation; she became simply a large-hearted woman and a daughter aware that there before her was a man, her father, needing pity and consolation.

'Father!' she cried, and sank on her knees before him. 'Don't! Don't! I'm here!' She took one of his hands, which he yielded to her, and she put her arm about him.

'Rise, rise!' he said, in a sharp treble of agony. 'It is I should be there!'

She yielded to his insistent hand, and sat beside him.

'Don't speak to me,' said he; 'let me look at you. You are like your mother—poor mother!—but stronger—much stronger. How does it happen?'

Isabel looked at him, and for the first time met his eye: there was a light in it which belied the haggard debauchery of the countenance, and which at once made her feel that she was not the chief person there. She was relieved and soothed: she was now certain that her father was not a saddened brute; that, much and terribly though he might have tried, tortured, and debased his body, his intellect and soul still shone clear through all. He leaned back again, looking at her and dreaming, and she sat content (comparatively), and still held his hand, in spite of its nervous twitching, pleased to find it warm and of a beautiful shape. They said no further word to each other till the cab stopped and Mr Doughty came to the door. This time it was Isabel that helped her father. He took her arm out of the cab and into the lodging, which was on the ground-floor of one of the houses of Norfolk Street.

Seeing that Mr Doughty had not followed them in, and hearing voices without for some instants in tolerably loud debate, Isabel—who feared the cabman was in process of being dismissed, and who, moreover, now felt herself responsible for her father and his friend—went to the door.

'I had intended,' she heard Mr Doughty say in portentous tones to the cabman—'I had intended to bestow upon you a considerable honorarium; but, considering the suggestions you have rudely urged concerning this adorable and angelic young lady, I shall not bestow it.'

'But, at least, sir,' said the cabman—who was evidently very civil, as cabmen go—'I hope you won't go and forget the half-pint of Scotch I got.'

'Hush!' said Mr Doughty. 'I will not.'

'Mr Doughty,' called she, 'don't send the cab away: I shall want it to take me home presently. Ask the cabman to wait, please.'

'All right, miss,' the cabman answered for himself.

Isabel was returning to her father, when she heard the voice of Mr Doughty calling her. She waited; and he came to her with business-like air.

'One moment, Miss Raynor,' said he. 'I beg to resign the trust you confided to me'—and he handed back her purse. 'The disbursements—of which I have made a note on this morsel of paper—cover Johnny Chinaman's charges and the cab fare up till now, together with a shilling which I ventured to borrow to furnish some slight refreshment for the cabman and myself. Did I do wrong?'

'Oh no,' said Isabel; and she secretly thought well of him for his confession that he had 'borrowed.'—'But,' she added, 'you must take charge of a little money for my father. He ought, by the way, to eat something at once. I suppose he has not had much food at the Chinaman's these three days?'

'Food, Miss Raynor?' said Mr Doughty. 'The only food supplied or demanded in that Hades is opium! And the chief would not taste solid food at present if he had it.'

'And the shops are all closed!' she exclaimed. She was thinking that she might have bought some soup for him; but nothing could be done now; and she reflected that, after all, he was probably no worse off than he had been many a time before after he had been sated with his drug. It was inevitable he should wait for her provision, but she would ensure that his wants should be properly supplied next day. 'I suppose,' said she, 'that you have nothing in the house that could be easily got ready?'

'I do not know, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty; 'but I am tolerably sure there is not. Food, Miss Raynor, is not our strong point in this house.'

'I suspected as much; but,' said she, with good sense, 'it is with neglecting your food that you foolish men confirm your dreadful habits.'

'You are right, Miss Raynor. We weak male mortals go completely wrong when we have not the clear head and the strong heart of the better sex with us.'

'Compliments again, Mr Doughty,' said Isabel.

'Simple truth, I assure you,' said Mr Doughty. '—And now, Miss Raynor, will you permit me to say that I think it wise of you not to propose to hold much conversation with your father now. Apart from the fact that it is very nearly midnight, the chief is at this present time in his very lowest condition. I would offer to escort you to your—ahem—abode, but I do not think it would be well to leave the chief alone as he is.'

'What?' said Isabel. 'He would not try, surely, to go back to that dreadful place?'

'No,' said Mr Doughty; 'not that. But he might try to lay violent hands on himself.—But,

pray, do not be alarmed. I know his ways, and I will look after him. He sleeps little, but I sleep less, and on these particular occasions I keep a special watch upon him.'

Isabel hesitated; for these words of Mr Doughty brought back doubts and fears. Ought she to stay with her father?—to soothe and strengthen him, if so be she might? It was characteristic of her frank independence and her lack of self-consciousness not to view this at all as a question of propriety with regard to herself. She entered the little sitting-room, determined to let herself be decided by what her father might chance to say. He was reclining limp in an easy-chair—the comfortless, castorless easy-chair of the London lodging-house—apparently in a state of apathy. His eyes found her, however, as soon as she entered.

'Don't take your things off,' said he—she was only undoing a button or two of her jacket. 'You must not stay here: this place is not fit for you.'

'I will go,' said Mr Doughty, 'and interview our landlady;' and he discreetly withdrew.

'I do not propose to stay, father,' said Isabel, going nearer to him. 'I have lodgings of my own.'

'Don't come near me at present, my child,' said he. 'Sit there, and let me look at you. I am glad you have rooms of your own—but not in this house, I hope—not in this house. It is a dreadful house.' He kept his eyes sadly and wistfully fixed on her. 'You have come to me as an angel of God, my dear. I do not ask you now how you found me: we will talk of that and other things by-and-by. I cannot talk of anything now: I—I am not well enough.'

'Promise me, father,' said she, leaning towards him, 'that you will take some food at once!'

'Food? I need no food now, my child. It is meat and drink to look on you. I have often longed to see you—to see how the poor baby that they took from me was grown.'

'My poor father!' she cried, and before he could hinder her, she was on her knees beside him.

'And you are my daughter!' said he, still gazing at her wistfully and half-absently. 'You are very beautiful, my dear—far more beautiful than I could have imagined you to be.'

'Don't say these things, father,' said Isabel, blushing, but pleased.

'It is a good thing to be beautiful, and it is good to know it. The chances are that a truly beautiful woman has a beautiful nature: there is no kind of doubt of that with you.' Then he let his chin drop on his breast and fixed his eyes on vacancy as he murmured:

'I remember one that perished; sweetly did she speak and move;
Such an one do I remember—'

I cannot talk now: I am tired: I am not quite well.' He roused himself a little and said: 'Come and see me to-morrow if you can. Yes; come, and I'll talk with you.'

His chin dropped again on his breast and his eyes closed. He seemed to slide away into sleep; and after a minute or two Isabel rose and quietly went out. She found Mr Doughty waiting at the outer door to see her into her cab. She told

him she would visit her father early next evening, gave him a kindly adieu, and was driven away as the clocks of Islington reproachfully tolled her out the hour of twelve.

THE MANUFACTURE OF ARSENIC.

THE utilisation of waste is one of the great lessons we are learning at the close of the nineteenth century. What our fathers and grandfathers threw away, that we find profitable to work for something it contains which was unknown or disregarded by them, or which has since acquired a new value. This is notably the case with the arsenical pyrites, or mundic, turned out in vast quantities from the copper mines in Devon and Cornwall, principally on both banks of the Tamar. At one time, these mines, rich in copper, were worked vigorously for that metal, and the mundic was cast away, forming enormous 'ramps,' as they are locally termed, or mounds of this waste. After a while the price of copper declined and the richness of the lodes became less. Simultaneously a demand sprang up for arsenic, and now the old copper mines are worked, not exclusively but mainly for arsenic. The cost of production is of course greatly reduced by the fact that enormous quantities had been brought up from underground, and had been thrown out under the previous system, and these waste heaps were now reworked for the sake of the arsenic. Formerly, 'arsenic soot' was sold from half-a-crown to fifteen shillings a ton; now its price ranges from seven pounds to seven pounds ten shillings.

The value of arsenic as something other than a poison or a pigment is of recent discovery. In ancient classic times, the beauty of orpiment, the yellow sulphide, was known, but not realgo, the disulphate of arsenic, which is of a ruby colour. Arsenic as a pigment has been, and, we fear, still is, much used in the colouring of wall-papers—in fact, Kay's orpiment is such a valuable pigment artistically, that the paper-stainers can hardly do without it, if purchasers will have æsthetic greens and yellows. And here, before proceeding any further with the manufacture of arsenic, the writer desires to place before the reader certain experiences of his own with regard to wall-papers coloured with orpiment. Some years ago he went to one of the most noted of firms for æsthetic papers wherewith to cover the walls of his house. A few years after, his children were afflicted with obstinate sores about the mouth, the wrists, and the ankles. The village doctor was called in, an old-fashioned practitioner, who gave doses and prescribed diet, with no good result. Then all at once it occurred to the writer to have the wall-papers analysed. They were found to be charged with arsenic; the gum fastening the colour to the paper had yielded, and the arsenical dust was flying about and lodging everywhere. The children were removed, and recovered. A month later the whole party was in Germany, and the writer called on a friend living in the town where he had taken up his quarters, and inquired how he and his family were. 'Oh! I am well enough; but my boys are suffering from some most intractable sores about their wrists and ankles.'

'Arsenic!' exclaimed the writer.

'But,' said his friend, 'my neighbour, General von B—, has his young people suffering in the same manner.'

'Exactly—arsenic.'

Now, in German towns there are public analysts who for a small charge—in this case a mark, one shilling—will analyse what are suspicious substances. The testing of the papers followed; and it proved that in the bedrooms of the English boys there were three coatings of wall-papers all laden with arsenic; and it was the same with those of the German General's family.

The question naturally arises: Is the manufacture of arsenic prejudicial to the health of the workers? To a certain extent it must be so; but it is not so to anything like the extent that might be supposed. The best means of resisting arsenic is by the use of soap and water. The workmen engaged in the manufacture have their mouths and noses muffled, to prevent their inhaling the dust. They wash and completely change their clothing on leaving work, and they enjoy complete freedom from zymotic diseases, as all germs are killed, either by the arsenic dust, or by the sulphurous acid given off by the manufacture. The time of greatest mischief is the summer, when the men perspire; then the arsenic adheres, and produces sores. Moreover, where there is a wound, if arsenic enters it, it will not heal till the bone has been reached. The best remedy for sores produced by arsenic is fuller's earth. The men believe that the arsenic produces shortness of breath and asthma; but this is really the result of their having to work all day with their noses and mouths covered by woollen muffers.

Let us now look at the manufacture, and for that purpose we will take the Devon Great Consols Mine, where the largest amount of arsenic is made. This occupies a tongue of land about which the river Tamar forms a loop. It is completely barren on its top, all vegetation being killed by the fumes of sulphurous acid. The mine was worked for copper between 1844 and 1862 with wonderful results. The lode was thirty feet wide, and ran for a mile. After that, it gave out, and has been worked mainly for arsenic since 1874.

Arsenical mundic contains from twelve and a half to seventeen per cent. of arsenic, and from twenty-five to thirty per cent. of iron. It has a silvery lead look, with yellow stains in it where is copper. The first process consists in dividing the copper ore from the mundic. For this purpose all the rock brought up from the mine is broken into pieces of the size of a nut; then this, as well as the refuse, is 'jigged,' that is to say is subjected to shaking in sieves, which let the small particles fall through, and reserve only the nuggets. The small matter is not, however, wasted; it is subjected to washing in 'strips,' where the water deposits first the mundic, as heaviest, then the copper ore, and lastly the refuse. The refuse, however, is not dismissed till it has been again jigged and washed, so that every particle of copper and of mundic has been saved from it. What passes away is then mere earthy matter.

The lumps of broken stone cannot be separated thus easily by water; they have to be assorted by hand. For this purpose girls are employed, locally called 'bâl maidens,' from the Cornish

word 'bâl,' which signifies a mine. These girls, five in a row, recline on sloping shelves of board, with a table before them and a trough. On each side of the table are three wooden boxes. With a curved iron tool the girls rake the stones to them and sort them, according to colour. The yellow and 'peacock' copper is thrown into the trough under their noses. The mundic is tossed adroitly into the nearest box on right or left; the 'elvan,' or inferior, into the second; and the rubbish into the third.

Before the table flows a stream of water. The stones are brought in barrows from the jiggers, and are tipped into the water. Then a young man with a fork dips them out and throws them upon the table, and so continually supplies the bâl maidens with material for selection. The boxes have to be examined by the overlooker, to make sure that the girls have not been careless and have thrown away good stuff. Then the copper ore is sent away to Wales to be smelted. As it requires four tons of coal to smelt one ton of ore, it is obviously advisable to convey the ore to the coal, and not bring the coal to the ore. The ore is worth about twenty-five shillings a ton.

The mundic is now taken to the furnaces, where it is first subjected to fires made of ordinary common coal. It passes along with the smoke into condensers. When condensed, it is gray, being mixed with smoke soot. In this condition it is called 'arsenic soot.' The condensation takes place on the floor and sides of the chimney, which is carried many hundred feet at an incline to a main shaft. From the condenser the arsenic is scraped out by the workmen closely muffled; then is again subjected to fire in calciners, the fire being of anthracite coal. Beside the ordinary furnaces, there are two sorts of calciners in use of a very original and interesting character. One of these is an enormous drum thirty feet long and three feet six inches in diameter, furnished with flanges internally. This drum or cylinder rotates at an incline. The arsenic soot is tipped into it at the top, and is turned over and over as the cylinder revolves, partly by its own weight, partly by the flanges. A fire is burning at one end of the drum, and the flame passes through it, consuming the arsenic as it falls, or is tossed athwart it. It is possible to look into the glowing interior as it rotates and watch the fiery heat scintillate with the arsenic that falls as a shower of stars. Another calciner consists of a horizontal rotary metal disc like a millstone, somewhat convex. The cap of this disc is stationary, and is armed with fangs that reach almost to the disc. The arsenic soot flows in through the centre of the cap, and is turned over, ploughed up by the fangs as the disc on which it rests revolves. A furnace on one side sends its fiery breath between the rotating nether disc and the coverer, and turns both to a glowing red, so that the arsenic is volatilised, and all the dross slides away to the lowest portion of the machine and discharges itself over the edge. The vapour is carried through the condensers, of which a mile in length exist. In the side of this gradually ascending brick chimney are openings closed with iron doors. These are ten feet apart. When the furnace is let out, the doors are opened, and the arsenic dust and crystals are raked and cut out.

The crystalline formation is from two to three inches thick on the sides, but two-thirds of the arsenic deposited is on the floor. It is now as white as paper. Some of the clusters of rhombohedral crystals are very beautiful. The arsenic has to be removed whilst warm to the mill to be ground; if left to get cold, the hardness of the crystals would cut the grinders to pieces. At the mill, the workmen are again closely muffled. They have to heave the arsenic turned out from barrows into the mill hopper. When reduced to powder in the mill, it is put into casks that contain from three hundredweight to three hundredweight twenty-five pounds, which are conveyed to the stores.

The vapour from the calciners, after passing through the condensers, traverses a sheet of falling water, which arrests a certain amount of the sulphur in the fumes. Owing to the noxious effect of sulphurous acid on vegetation, more than a certain amount of this acid is not allowed to be given off; it is therefore sought to arrest it on its way. The water as it flows away is milky, or rather like soap and water, from the sulphur it contains. The height of the shaft is one hundred and twenty-five feet.

In Styria and Carinthia, there is much arsenic-eating among the peasants; the women take it to give themselves a good complexion and to make their hair fine and glossy. The men take it because they believe that it gives them wind in climbing in the chase after chamois. There is nothing of this sort in Cornwall and Devon. In Styria and Carinthia it is known that an arsenic-eater can never be broken off the habit, and that, if arsenic be compulsorily kept from the eater, death rapidly ensues. It is believed in the Tamar—and this is perhaps true—that an arsenic-worker is fit for no other work. He must remain at this occupation. Health and breath fail him at other employments. Eventually, it may be that chronic arsenical poisoning ensues; but this may be staved off, if not wholly prevented, by scrupulous cleanliness, by care taken not only to wash in the 'changing-house,' but to bathe freely at home. As one of the foremen said to the writer of this article: 'Against arsenic the best antidote is soap taken externally.'

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER II.

THE local Society of Ancient Chums met every Monday night in the bag parlour of the *Hop Pocket* inn, situated in the pleasant Kentish village of Bennington. It was a fraternity of old friends and acquaintances who assembled once a week for social enjoyment, conversation, discussion of the questions of the day, the consumption of tobacco and accompaniments. There was no subscription to the Society, but in its place there was an elaborate system of fines, so framed that the oldest and most practised member was pretty sure to be mulcted at least once during an evening, so that the community might fairly be styled self-supporting. The last Monday of each month was marked by the reception of guests, and was therefore of a more convivial and hilarious character than ordinary nights.

The Monday night following the events recorded in the last chapter was Grand Night, and despite the character of the weather—bitterly cold with a driving snow—there was a large muster of members and their friends; in fact, every chair in the room was occupied but the most prominent one—the President's. Eight o'clock struck, and at eight o'clock proceedings were ruled to commence.

'Martin don't often hev to pay for bein' late,' remarked Mr Wicks, a copper-nosed gentleman in the chandlery line. 'Wonder what's kep him?'

'He's in general off duty at half-past seven, ain't he?' said his neighbour, who had village tailor stamped all over him.

'Sure-ly, unless the weather's agin him,' said a large man in black with a white neckcloth—sexton, clerk, and beadle of Bennington. 'President pays double fine, don't he?'

'That's one to you, Mr Selah, for not bein' sure of the rules!' shouted out two or three voices, and Mr Selah plumped down his coin.

'I move that we give Mr Martin five minutes' grace,' said a grave gentleman, rising.

The motion was seconded and carried.

The five minutes had just expired, and the Society was on the point of proceeding to elect a temporary President in the place of the absent Martin, when the door opened, and in waddled a round little barrel of a man, with a ruddy, good-tempered face, who was attired in the uniform of signalman on the Great Southern Railway. He was greeted with a storm of ironical applause; but there was an unusual gravity about his demeanour which checked it.

'I'm quite ready to pay my fine, gentlemen,' he said as he took his seat in the Presidential chair; 'and I'm ter'ble sorry for havin' kep you all waitin', specially as it's Grand Night; but when you've heard what I've got to tell, you won't blame me.—Now, give your orders, gentlemen, and let's to business.'

Orders went flying about the room, so that the landlord and his two wenches had as much as they could do to attend to them. When comparative quiet was restored, old Martin said: 'P'raps you won't think it much that I have to tell, but it's a bit cur'ous, and as part of my fine is to sing a song or make a speech, you'll please take it for what it's worth.'

'Hear, hear!' resounded through the room.

'My box,' said the old man, 'is, as you all know, at the level crossin' at Causey End, and my last dooty afore bein' relieved is to signal the down mail at seven-twenty-five. At seven-thirty I'm relieved. Well, at seven-fifteen I got the signal that she'd passed through Brickenden Junction. At seven-twenty I heard her whistle. At seven-twenty-three I saw her head lamps comin' up at quarter speed, 'cos I hadn't got the all-clear signal from Marsh House, which didn't surprise me, as they've been doin' up the embankment there. So the mail came slowly past, so slow that I could see as how there was very few people in the coaches, which, as it's gettin' on towards Christmas-time, ain't surprisin'.—Now comes the strange part. The mail pulled up, and out o' the window of a first-class coach not half-a-dozen yards from me a gentleman was leanin': his arms a hangin' down outside, and his head pushed forward, like, for all the world, as if he

was very ill. For what I could see, his compartment hadn't nobody else in it.

'I sings out to him: "Are you ill, sir? Shall I wire to the next station, or call the guard?" But he didn't make no answer; leastaways, I didn't hear none, as the wind was howlin' fit to kill any noise under a engine whistle. In another minute I should ha' been up on the footboard alongside him; but the all-clear signal came from Marsh House, and I had to 'tend to it. Howsomedever, as the guard's van passed by I sung out that there was a gent took ill in a first-class compartment; but I don't know if Sam Hall heerd it. Then the mail went on, and I prepared to clear out.'

The general opinion, expressed in every variety of interjectional phrase, was that it was very strange, and Martin was asked what he thought of it.

'Well,' he replied, 'if you ask me my candid opinion, I give it for what it is wuth. You see, it was the Injian mail. Well, says you, what difference does that make? A great deal, says I. I've been on the Great Southern now a matter o' forty years, and my experience is that as a rule the Injian mail is the liveliest train that goes out o' Lunnon—much more livelier'n excursions and them like.—How's that? says you. Because, says I, gents goin' to Injia for the Lord knows how long, perhaps never to come back no more, goes off as happy as they can. Their pals gives 'em big dinners, and there's drinks at the terminus afore startin', and all that; and I can tell you I've seen high-jinks sometimes in the coaches when the train's slowed down as it did to-night. So, my opinion is that this gent was—well, he was ill. You can't eat your cake and have it, as the sayin' is; and he'd eaten his cake, and he'd taken somethink along with it, and the 'eat of the coach and one thing and another was too much for him. That's my notion.—But that wasn't what made me late.

'The mail went on. I set my distant to danger: Jim Boston come in to relieve me, and I went off. Now, as you all know, except the gents as is strangers, my road home lies along the side of the line for a matter o' half a mile; then I strikes the turnpike and leaves it. Well, it was blowin' and snowin' half an hour ago as it don't often blow and snow in these parts, and although I'd got my lantern, it was jest as much as I could do to see my way along the path by the line. At anyrate it was so precious dark that I couldn't see a big chap a settin' on the slope of the embankment a yard ahead of me, and well nigh tumbles over him. I pulls up sharp. He was a settin' and groanin' and makin' use of words, gents, which would cost him a fine a minute in this 'ere select company. So I turns my light on him, and gives him a "What cheer, mate?"

'He started, and stops his prayers. "What cheer?" says he. "Precious poor cheer this journey. I've lost my way to Brickenden Junction, and thought I'd try a cut along the line, when these blooming tallygraph wires trips me up, and I've gone and sprained my ankle."

"Just as well, mate," says I, "that you tumbled where you did. A foot t'other way would have got you across the down metals." Then I helps him up; but he were so precious lame that I as

good as carried him to the turnpike; and if he weighed a hounce, he weighed thirteen stone, and I ain't as young as I were.

'As luck would heve it, the mail-cart was waitin' at the level crossin'; so I gets him into it. He gives me a shillin', as I thinks, and says good-night, and off he goes; and off I goes home. When my missis see me, she give a reg'lar shout, and says, says she: "Why, Bob, whereever heve you been? You're all blood." Sure enough, I was—coat, cuffs, and collar. Rum start, thinks I, for a chap with a sprained ankle to bleed. I reckon he'd hurt hisself more than he thought. Then I looks at the coin he gave me, and it warn't a shillin' at all, but a bit o' brass of the same size, with "Royal Arcadia Music Hall—Free Pass Check—not transferable," wrote on it.—And that's what made me late, gentlemen.—Here's to you all!'

This speech of Bob Martin's gave rise to a lively discussion, which lasted a good half-hour. At the expiration of that time the President arose, knocked on the table, and was suggesting that some gentleman should oblige the company with a song, when the landlord rushed into the room with great news on his face. 'Night-mail wrecked near Singleby,' he gasped. 'Thirty or forty killed, and hundreds wounded.'

Half the assembly sprang to their feet. Pipes were taken from lips, glasses remained suspended in mid-air, and a chorus of 'How do you know?' 'When?' and other questions of the kind, arose.

'Messenger just come in from Brickenden. All the doctors and carts in the country are being called for,' replied the breathless landlord.

'Well, it never rains but it pouts,' said old Martin; 'and thank the Lord this ain't happened in my section.'

It is needless to say that the assembly of Ancient Chums was at once broken up, and that the majority of those who had met together for an evening of enjoyment at once hastened away to the scene of the catastrophe.

Dick Marsden still clung to one link which bound him to his old pleasant, happy life as an unfettered bachelor, in spite of the low estate to which he had fallen: this was his membership of a quiet little social club composed chiefly of old public-school men, where moderation in expense was the rule, and the outlay of more famous and pretentious institutions over magnificent architecture, grand rooms, liveries, and brilliant illumination, was devoted to the more immediately personal comforts of the members. When very sick at heart and down in his luck, Dick would walk over to the Snuggery, as it was called, and there, in the chat and mirth of old friends and men of his own station, forget for a while his domestic misery. After he had seen his uncle comfortably settled in a compartment of the mail-train, Dick walked over to the house in Portland Place to give a few final instructions to the caretaker, and to make a general survey of locks and bolts; and then, discovering that he had a piece of gold in his pocket, resolved for once to be selfish and to dine at the Snuggery.

He dined, and after dinner played a couple of games of billiards. Then, it now being nearly nine o'clock, he prepared to go home. As he passed through the hall the porter was putting

a Central News telegram on the frame. Curiosity prompted him to read it; it was as follows: 'Terrible Accident to the Mail on the Great Southern. Reported loss of twelve lives.—Later—The Indian mail-train ran off the line at a point near Singleby where the embankment has lately been repaired. The loss of life has been exaggerated. Nine bodies are lying at the Singleby Station; over twenty persons were injured.'

'Good God!' exclaimed the young man, as he burst out of the building, and calling a hansom, bade the man drive to the Institution where Marian Akhurst lodged. Luckily, she was in. In a few words, Dick told her the news, and asked her if she could come with him at once to Singleby.

'Of course there is a chance that the dear old fellow may have escaped,' he said. 'But as there was no telegram for me at the club, I fear'—

'Perhaps not the worst,' said the girl.

'There were so few passengers by the train,' said Dick, 'that the large proportion of casualties makes the chance of uncle's escaping a small one;' unless more people got in at the other terminus, which, as it was the Indian mail, is likely. However, if you can come, Marian, it will be such a comfort to me.'

They were just in time to catch the last train to Singleby. It pulled up half a mile from the scene of the accident: Marian and Dick alighted in the midst of the blinding storm, and, guided by the flare of many bonfires, proceeded, in the company of scores of people bound upon the same errand as themselves, to where gangs of men were already working hard to clear the line. A line of police barred their way; but upon stating their business, they were allowed to pass; and with what trepidation they approached the little station where the bodies of the killed lay awaiting identification may be imagined. Once within the door, all doubts were set at rest, for the first body they saw was that of poor old Christopher Marsden.

'Strange thing about that gentleman, sir,' said an official who witnessed Dick's recognition of his uncle's body. 'The coach he was in didn't leave the line, and he was the only party in it who was killed. He was found leaning out of window; and as he was evidently killed by a blow in the back of the head, it's supposed he was looking out of window when the front part of the train left the metals, and must have been struck by a bolt or a timber or something from the next coach which went over the bank.'

Marian knelt down by the body, and with professional deftness examined a terrible wound at the base of the poor old gentleman's skull. 'Yes; this was what killed him,' she said. 'Yet he must have been looking in the opposite direction to that in which the train was going.'

'Possibly to call the guard,' said Dick. 'At anyrate, there he lies; and I have lost my best and, I was going to say, my only friend in the world. Poor old Uncle Christopher!' He looked at Marian. There were tears in her eyes, and in the face of this common sorrow their hands met with gentle pressure.

'The body, I suppose, must not be removed?' said Dick.

'No, sir; not till after the inquest,' replied the official.

Then they quitted the terrible scene, and were lucky enough to secure the last two beds at the small inn adjoining the station; for there was no train back to London, and there had been a great demand for accommodation on behalf of the many people who had come down in quest of relations and friends.

ELF-BOLTS.

THERE is something very fascinating in the legends of dwarfs and elves. For the most part we have to look in the pages of Grimm or Hans Christian Andersen when we want to peep into the fairy world; but every now and then, in out-of-the way places, we may find ourselves in curious proximity to those mysterious times. For instance, the writer remembers, some fifteen years ago, when living on the Yorkshire moors, overhearing a dispute which was taking place in a public-house between two old men, one of whom was the parish sexton. While digging a grave, the sexton had turned out what he called a fairy pipe. This well-known form of pipe, which is found dispersed all over the country, is so small that you cannot pass the tip of the little finger into the bowl. No doubt it was used when tobacco was scarce and expensive, and its diminutive size has caused it to be attributed to the elves and fairies who alone could make use of it. The dispute, however, was not about the pipe. Both the old men agreed as to whom the pipe had belonged to; but they were endeavouring to settle what kind of 'bacca' the fairies smoked. Various suggestions were made, and different herbs named, when I joined in the conversation, and turned it from pipes to elf-bolts or elf-shot, some of which I produced from my pocket; and from those old inhabitants I gathered that the flint arrow-heads or elf-shot were used by these same elfin folk who owned the tobacco pipes. The district where I lived was rich in these prehistoric articles, and they were picked up in quantities in the fields round about.

It is hardly surprising that the natives should regard these queer-looking arrow-heads as belonging to the fairy folk, when for hundreds of years their direct ancestors had inhabited that part of Yorkshire, into which education had made but little progress. A place close by was called Dwarriden, which was remarkable for echoes; and when I submitted the name to the best authority on place-names, I was told that it meant 'the abode of the dwarfs,' as, in Scandinavian mythology, wherever you found an echo it was the voice of a dwarf answering you in reply.

Another curious survival in the same parish was this old tradition: Mothers used to threaten their children with a certain black raven, who would come if they were naughty and carry them off, just as once upon a time he had done, when

he ravaged the country and destroyed everything. The only interpretation of this awful threat I gathered from an old woman, who told me that in her young days it was firmly believed that some great calamity had once befallen the district. As the black raven was the Danish emblem, it is quite possible an incursion from that people gave rise to this story, which had survived all those long years.

Few people know what an amusing and instructive pursuit the search after flint weapons is. To begin with, it takes you out of the house for a walk very often when you would have stayed in. Spring and autumn are the best times for searching, and a ploughed field should be chosen that has been well rained upon, so that the flints are washed clear and can be easily detected. I am speaking only of a country in which the natural stone is not flint. Where natural flints abound, you can only judge of the genuineness of the implement by the workings of the tool, which are always to be seen. In the ordinary districts away from the chalk, each surface flint will prove either a real implement or a flake struck off in its manufacture. These remarks may be said to apply to those lucky spots where flints are found, and the idea may be that there are not many such about. I differ from this idea. So far as my own experience goes, I have found these elf-bolts wherever I have been; and if there is one bit of fairy romance left connected with them, it is in their being so universal that it gives the notion of some spirit-work in their distribution.

Any one who follows the plan I suggest of going out into the ploughed fields and searching for flints, will come across many curious implements. Among them none is so peculiar as the scraper. This varies a good deal in form, but the common type is a sort of half oyster-shell, supposing this to be solid where the fish is, and cut off square where the point of the shell comes, so that one side presents a flattened face, and the other a sloped well-worked back, ending in a sharpened cutting edge. I found scores of these before I knew what they were; and I must own I was astonished to find that the Eskimos of the present day adopt still this same form of flint scraper. It is difficult to reconcile the ancient flint-man of the Yorkshire moors with the Greenland in his curious snow-hut, living on the spoils of the chase and scraping the skins of his animals with the same sort of weapon.

Another analogous instance of identity of flint form was the following. I took up to the British Museum a quantity of flints and elf-shot for my little find. One was selected no bigger than an Egyptian arrow-head, and I was told this was an Egyptian arrow-head. But how came an Egyptian arrow-head on our English moors? There is this remarkable distinction about these Egyptian types of arrow-heads—they are not pointed. Supposing a triangle of flint, it was their custom to put the point into the shaft, and to use the broad base as a point to face the enemy, exactly reversing what I may call the British custom. Yet here on the moors I find not one, but several, undoubtedly proving that the men who used these flints were cognisant of both shapes of elf-shot. The small size of the Egyptian type is very peculiar, as it is utterly

different from the arrow-head commonly found not only in Britain but all over the world. I have elf-shot from Italy, Greece, North America, South America, and other lands, but none like the Egyptian arrow-point.

It may be said that human beings all develop similar characteristics, and it is quite reasonable to suppose the Egyptian and the British flint man would originate similar ideas. This may be possible; but I hardly think it accounts for the identity of flint forms. This is the most striking feature when a collection of British flints is put beside one gathered from all countries. There is little difference, again, in a very interesting class of implement, the saw, between the British flint saw and the Egyptian. I found on the moors some very delicate flint saws, and recently I have obtained from Egypt flint saws wonderfully similar in form. Perhaps with these saws was performed that difficult operation of trepanning, which was known in primitive times, and practised. Skulls are found in British interments which have been trepanned, only no metal plate was used, but a piece of another skull was let in in place of it. The agony of such an operation may be imagined; and with some thousands of collected flints before me, I could not select one I could deem fit to use for such a purpose.

The delicacy of workmanship of many elf-bolts is remarkable. I have some on which thousands of blows with some implement must have been delivered before the sharp point and barbed wings were formed. When it is remembered that any blow might snap the brittle flint, it must have needed a master's hand to bring such elf-shot to perfection. When H.M.S. *Challenger* was on her cruise, and arrived at Tierra del Fuego, the natives there, who are still in a Stone Age condition, were found to have utilised a broken soda-water bottle, from the fragments of which they made arrow-heads. I have one of these arrows, with its glass tip exquisitely made in the same pattern as those I found on the moors. There are undoubtedly numbers of what I may call worked flints to be picked up in the fields, showing upon their face the marks of the tool, and yet it is impossible to assign them any definite name. The fact is we know very little about the various uses to which flint was put. In many parts it must have been scarce. It is quite one hundred and more miles from the moors where I made a large collection to the nearest chalk district, and every atom of flint now found must have been carried there by hand.

The true elf-bolt, in all its well-formed beauty, is not so commonly picked up as the core or matrix from which the implement has been struck, or the flint fragment chipped off in its formation. Still, it is advisable to collect all bits, no matter whether they seem valuable or not, as a second examination often proves them to have been in use. Small pointed flints are found such as could be utilised for boring purposes, and very often a rounded flint proves after washing to have marks of blows on it, showing it to have been a hammer-stone, perhaps for making implements.

Though in the case of flint deposits in Britain it may not be possible to point to this or

that spot, and say, here such and such a battle was fought, and here are the remains of the weapons used on that occasion, still history may perhaps be brought to bear in other places. I have several very fine arrow-heads found at Lake Trasimene, in Italy, where, it will be remembered, Hannibal encountered the Romans and defeated them with enormous slaughter. I can see no reason why these arrow-heads should not be the weapons used by the warlike tribes who crossed the Alps with Hannibal, and in this particular battle fell in very large numbers. The iron weapons of the Romans have no doubt long since perished and rusted away, but the flints endure. We may know very little about the prehistoric times and the fierce battles waged by the wild tribes of those days, but their remains are around and about us. Time does not affect the flints. They show no sign of age, excepting a kind of dullness, and smoothness to touch, which newly-broken flint never has.

As a rule, few people care about collecting such things or thinking about them. It is a tedious amusement to walk up and down a ploughed field with a bent back, but it is by no means unhealthy. The soil smells with delicious fragrance, and you have the lark soaring above your head with his musical notes. A fairy pipe or two is often added to your 'bag,' and though some days may be blank, every now and again you have lucky finds that well reward you.

In advocating the search after flints I do so because I believe there is much yet to be found and learned about them. I have avoided quoting from scientific works, or trying to raise this paper above the level of a chat about elf-shot. Besides the fact that from the earliest times these flint weapons have been regarded in many places with something like superstition, they are, from the point of antiquity alone, well worth collecting. Year after year they are ploughed over and turned up, and they only want a quick eye to detect them. Some soils are naturally better than others, especially such as more readily yield to the influence of rain.

If I refer once more to the identity of flint-forms, it is because of late my collection has been much increased by flints from other parts of the world, and I am amazed at the resemblance in them to what I have found in England. The invention and use of flint implements seems to have been universal. Hence, the subject is well worth pursuing, and is one which the amateur can take up with pleasure. It is not confined to one particular place; wherever you go, you may pursue it. I have a friend at this moment on the Nile who gets the Arab boys to search for flints; and he writes to me about the wonderful knives, saws, and sickles he is collecting. Another friend lately sent me some flints which he found when walking on the battlefield of Marathon. It is well known that some of the wild tribes on the side of the Persian monarch tipped their arrows with stone. There is no place, and I was going to add no time, where and when flint-hunting cannot be pursued; but I draw the line at shooting. I once got into great disgrace by holding my head down when after partridges. Birds kept rising in front of me and getting off untouched. The fact was I was crossing fields rich with flints. The keeper

afterwards went to my host and complained. 'I can't make that gentleman out,' he said; 'he keeps his eyes down on the ground, and never looks at his birds. I fancy he must have something wrong in his head.'

SOME EARLY STEAMSHIPS.

It is a matter of considerable surprise to most people, on taking a retrospective survey of the growth of the steam-navigation of this country, to discover how very remotely into the present century such a view carries them. The Steamship, somehow, seems to appeal to the understanding of the younger generation as one of the most modern among latter-day creations. It is difficult to associate her existence with the period of the Crimean War, and it seems wholly incongruous to talk of her as pre-Victorian. This, undoubtedly, is owing to the wonderful and rapid revolution wrought by the marine engine in the conditions of the sea-life. But though, indeed, the steam-vessel cannot afford to 'smile at the claims of long descent,' she was a very tangible realisation when the locomotive was still in embryo, and the electric telegraph a factor of the future which yet remained to be dreamt of.

The earliest steamers the world ever saw, not reckoning the experimental craft constructed by such men as Fulton, Bell, Symington, and Watt, were those employed in the transatlantic trade. As far back as the year 1819, the Yankee paddle-steamer 'Savannah,' of three hundred tons burden, crossed from the port of that name, in Georgia, to Liverpool. She occupied twenty-five days upon the passage; but, as she was fully rigged, and under all sail during at least two-thirds of the voyage, the merit of her performance, as an illustration of the superiority of the engine over canvas, is somewhat doubtful. Yet she was beyond dispute the first steamer to accomplish a long sea-voyage, and to the Americans belongs the credit of her exploit. Indeed, from the time of their last war with us, down to within a quarter of a century ago, our Yankee neighbours generally seemed to be a little ahead of this country in maritime matters. They taught us a lesson in shipbuilding by their famous Baltimore clippers, and they were the first to demonstrate in a practical manner, and to the complete capsizing of the learned Dr Lardner's theories, the possibility of employing steam for the purposes of ocean navigation. It was not, however, until a couple of decades later than the voyage of the 'Savannah' that the successful passages of two memorable vessels from England to America fairly established the era of what has been called the Atlantic steam ferry. These ships were respectively the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western.' The former was a craft of about seven hundred tons burden, with engines of three hundred and twenty horse-power: she sailed from Cork on the 4th of April 1838, under the command of Lieutenant Roberts, R.N., bound for New York. The latter vessel was a steamer of 1340 tons, builders' measurement, with engines of four hundred and forty horse-power: she was commanded by Captain Hoskins, R.N., and sailed from Bristol on the 8th of April in the same year, bound likewise for New York. The 'Sirius,' it was calculated,

had a start of her competitor by about seven hundred nautical miles; but it was known that her utmost capabilities of speed scarcely exceeded eight knots an hour; whilst the 'Great Western,' on her trial trip from Blackwall to Gravesend, ran eleven knots an hour without difficulty.

The issue of the race was therefore awaited with the utmost curiosity on both sides of the Atlantic. Contemporary records usually afford good evidence of the significance of past events, and the interest in this novel ocean match was prodigious, to judge from the accounts with which the Liverpool and New York papers of the day teemed. The following is in brief the narrative of the voyage of these two famous ships across the Western Ocean. The 'Sirius,' after leaving Cork on the 4th of April, encountered very heavy weather, which greatly retarded her progress. She arrived, however, off Sandy Hook on the evening of Sunday, the 22d of April; but going aground, she did not get into the North River until the following morning. When it was known that she had arrived, New York grew instantly agitated with excitement. 'The news,' ran the account published by the *Journal of Commerce* in the United States, 'spread like wildfire through the city, and the river became literally dotted all over with boats conveying the curious to and from the stranger. There seemed to be a universal voice in congratulation, and every visage was illuminated with delight. A tacit conviction seemed to pervade every bosom that a most doubtful problem had been satisfactorily solved; visions of future advantage to science, to commerce, to moral philosophy, began to float before the "mind's eye;" curiosity to travel through the old country, and to inspect ancient institutions, began to stimulate the inquiring.

'Whilst all this was going on, suddenly there was seen over Governor's Island a dense black cloud of smoke spreading itself upward, and betokening another arrival. On it came with great rapidity, and about three o'clock in the afternoon its cause was made fully manifest to the accumulated multitudes at the Battery. It was the steamship "Great Western," of about 1600 tons burden (*sic*), [The difference probably lies between the net and the gross tonnage], under the command of Lieutenant Hoskins, R.N. She had left Bristol on the 8th inst., and on the 23d was making her triumphant entry into the port of New York. This immense moving mass was propelled at a rapid rate through the waters of the Bay; she passed swiftly and gracefully round the "Sirius," exchanging salutes with her, and then proceeded to her destined anchorage in the East River. If the public mind was stimulated by the arrival of the "Sirius" it became almost intoxicated with delight upon view of the superb "Great Western." The latter vessel was only fourteen clear days out; and neither vessel had sustained a damage worth mentioning, notwithstanding that both had to encounter very heavy weather. The "Sirius" was spoken with on the 14th of April in latitude 45° north, longitude 37° west. The "Great Western" was spoken on the 15th of April in latitude 46° 26' north, longitude 37° west. At these respective dates the "Great Western" had run 1305 miles in seven days from King Road; and the "Sirius" 1305

miles in ten days from Cork. The "Great Western" averaged 186½ miles per day, and the "Sirius" 130½ miles: "Great Western" gained on the "Sirius" fifty-six miles per day. The "Great Western" averaged seven and three-quarter miles per hour; the "Sirius" barely averaged five and a half miles per hour.'

Such was the first voyage made across the Atlantic by these two early steamships, and there is something of the true philosophy of history to be found in the interest which their advent created. It is worthy of passing note to learn what ultimately became of these celebrated vessels. The 'Sirius,' not proving staunch enough for the Atlantic surges, was sent to open steam-communication between London and St Petersburg, in which trade she was for several years successfully employed. The 'Great Western' plied regularly from Bristol to New York until the year 1847, when she was sold to the Royal Mail Company, and ran as one of their crack ships until 1857, in which year she was broken up at Vauxhall as being obsolete, and unable profitably to compete with the new class of steamers being built.

The success of these two vessels may be said to have completely established steam as a condition of the transatlantic navigation of the future. 'In October 1838,' says Lindsay, in his *History of Merchant Shipping*, 'Sir John Tobin, a well-known merchant of Liverpool, seeing the importance of the intercourse now rapidly increasing between the Old and New worlds, despatched on his own account a steamer to New York. She was built at Liverpool, after which place she was named, and made the passage outwards in sixteen and a half days. It was now clearly proved that the service could be performed, not merely with profit to those who engaged it, but with a regularity and speed which the finest description of sailing-vessels could not be expected to accomplish. If any doubts still existed on these important points, the second voyage of the "Great Western" set them at rest, she having on this occasion accomplished the outward passage in fourteen days sixteen hours, bringing with her the advices of the fastest American sailing-ships which had sailed from New York long before her, and thus proving the necessity of having the mails in future conveyed by steamers.'

In fact, as early as October 1838, the British Government, being satisfied of the superiority of steam-packets over sailing-ships, issued advertisements inviting tenders for the conveyance of the American mails by the former class of vessels. The owners of the 'Great Western,' big with confidence in the reputation of that ship, applied for the contract; but, not a little to their chagrin, it was awarded to Mr (afterwards Sir Samuel) Cunard, who as far back as 1830 had proposed the establishment of a steam-mail service across the Atlantic. The terms of the original contract were, that for the sum of fifty-five thousand pounds per annum, Messrs Cunard, Burns, and MacIver should supply three ships suitable for the purpose, and accomplish two voyages each month between Liverpool and the United States, leaving England at certain periods; but shortly afterwards, it was deemed more expedient to name fixed dates of departure on both sides of the Western Ocean. Subsequently, another ship

was required to be added to the service, and the amount of the subsidy was raised to eighty-one thousand pounds a year. The steam mail service between Liverpool, Halifax, and Boston was regularly established in 1840, the first vessel engaged in it being the 'Britannia,' the pioneer ship of the present Cunard line.

We get an admirable idea of what these early steamships were from Dickens's account of this same 'Britannia,' which was the vessel he crossed to America in on his first visit to that country in 1842. In one of his letters to John Forster, describing a storm they were overtaken by, he unconsciously reflects the wondering regard with which the world still viewed the triumphant achievements of the marine engine. 'For two or three hours,' he writes, 'we gave it up as a lost thing. This was not the exaggerated apprehension of a landsman merely. The head-engineer, who had been in one or the other of the Cunard vessels since they began running, had never seen such stress of weather; and I afterwards heard Captain Hewitt say that nothing but a steamer, and one of that strength, could have kept her course and stood it out. A sailing-vessel must have beaten off and driven where she would; while through all the fury of that gale they actually made fifty-four miles headlong through the tempest, straight on end, not varying their track in the least.' What would the skipper of one of the modern 'Atlantic greyhounds' think of such a feat? And, more interesting speculation still, what must Dickens himself have thought of the performances he lived to witness as against this astonishing accomplishment on the part of the old 'Britannia'?

There exists a tendency to ridicule the early steamers as they appear in portraits, with their huge paddle-boxes; tall, thin, dog-eared funnels; and heavily-rigged masts, as though their engines were regarded as quite auxiliary to their sail-power, and by no means to be relied upon. Contrasted with some of the leviathans of the present day, the steamers of half a century ago are no longer calculated to strike an awe into the beholder; but, in truth, some very fine vessels were built whilst the marine engine was still quite in its infancy. In a volume of the *Railway Magazine* for 1839 is an account of what are termed colossal steamers. 'An immense steamer,' runs the description, 'upwards of two hundred feet long, was lately launched at Bristol, for plying between England and America; but the one now building at Carling & Co.'s, Limehouse, for the American Steam Navigation Company, surpasses anything of the kind hitherto made. She is to be named after our Queen, the "Victoria;" will cost from eighty to one hundred thousand pounds, has about one hundred and fifty men now employed daily upon her, and is expected to be finished in November next. The extreme length is about 253 feet; but she is 237 feet between the perpendiculars, 40½ feet beam between the paddle-boxes, and twenty-seven feet one inch deep from the floor to the inner side of the spar-deck. The engines are two, of 250 horse-power each, with six feet four inch cylinders, and seven feet stroke. They are to be fitted with Hall's patent condensers, in addition to the common ones. She displaces at sixteen feet 2740 tons of water; her computed tonnage is 1800 tons. At

the water-line every additional inch displaces eighteen and a half tons. The average speed is expected to be about two hundred nautical miles a day, and consumption of coal about thirty tons. The best Welsh coal is to be used. It is calculated she will make the outward passage to New York in eighteen days, and the homeward in twelve, consuming 540 tons of coal out, and 360 home. Expectation is on tiptoe for the first voyage of this gigantic steamer, alongside of which other steamers look like little fishing-boats.'

The next route on which steam-navigation was opened, following upon that of the North Atlantic passage, was between Great Britain and India. The steamers of the Honourable Company had indeed doubled the Cape nearly two years before the 'Sirius' and 'Great Western' sailed upon their first trip. The *Nautical Magazine* for 1836 contains the original prospectus issued by a syndicate of London merchants upon the subject of steam-communication with the East Indies. As an illustration of the almost incredible strides that have been made in ocean-travelling since that period, this piece of literature is most instructive. The circular opens by announcing that it is proposed to establish steam-traffic with India, extending, perhaps, even to Australia! It points out in sanguine terms how those distant parts of the earth, by the contemplated arrangement, 'will be reached at the outset in the short period of seventy-three days; and, when experience is obtained, this time will in all probability be reduced by one-third; shortening the distance by the route in question, from England to Australia, in forty days' steaming, at ten miles an hour. If two days be allowed for stoppages at stations, not averaging more than a thousand miles apart throughout the line, the whole time for passing between the extreme points would only be sixty days; but a relay of vessels will follow, if the undertaking be matured, in which case twenty-four hours will be ample time at the depôts, and a communication may be expected to be established, and kept up throughout the year, between England and Australia, in fifty days. It is reasonably expected that Bombay will be reached in forty-eight days, Madras in fifty-five, Calcutta in fifty-nine, Penang in fifty-seven, Singapore in sixty, Batavia in sixty-two, Canton in sixty-eight, and Mauritius in fifty-four days.'

The *Nautical Magazine* writer gravely comments upon this scheme as quite plausible. He is indeed inclined to be anticipatory. Instead of seventy-three days to Australia, he is of opinion that the voyage may ultimately be accomplished in fifty, and that the table of time generally may be reduced by about one-third throughout; although, to qualify his somewhat daring speculations, he admits that it is well to base the calculations on the safe side. But the Honourable East India Company asserted their prerogatives, and put a stop to the scheme of the New Bengal Steam Company, as the undertaking was to have been called. This raised a strong feeling of dissatisfaction, and the Court of Directors was obliged to provide a substitute in lieu of the new line they had refused to sanction. Their own homely, lubberly craft were quite unequal to the requirements of 'prompt despatch' which even then was beginning to agitate the public mind.

The possibility of establishing steam-communication between England and India had been clearly demonstrated as early as the year 1825, when the 'Enterprise,' of 480 tons and 120 horse-power, sailed from London on the 16th of August, and arrived in Calcutta on the 7th of December. She was the first steamer to make the passage from this country to our great Eastern Empire; the first, indeed, ever to double the stormy headland of the Cape.

But it was not until the people of India began to petition and the merchants of London to clamour for the adoption of steam-power in the Indian navigation that the conservative old magnates of John Company were stimulated into action. Mr Waghorn's Overland Route had almost entirely superseded the sea-voyage by way of the Cape; but the want of an efficient packet service between London and Alexandria, and Suez and Bombay, was greatly felt. Accordingly, in December 1836, the steamship 'Atalanta' was despatched from Falmouth to ply on the Indian side of the route. She was a vessel of 630 tons burden, with engines of 210 horse-power, and was built at Blackwall by the once famous firm of Wigram and Green. The orders of Captain Campbell, who commanded her, were that he was to steam the whole distance, only resorting to sail-power in case of a failure of machinery, in order fully to test the superiority of the marine engine over canvas. She sustained an average speed of about eight knots an hour during the entire passage, and but for her repeated stoppages would undoubtedly have accomplished the quickest voyage yet made to India. She was followed, in March 1837, by the 'Bernice,' of 680 tons and 230 horse-power. This vessel, which likewise made the run without the assistance of her sails, left Falmouth on March 17th, and arrived at Bombay on the 13th of June. As the race between the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western' may be said to have inaugurated the steam-navigation of the Atlantic, so did the voyages of the 'Atalanta' and 'Bernice' first establish regular communication by steamers between Great Britain and India. True, there had been desultory efforts of enterprise prior to this time, and the pioneer of the Peninsular and Oriental steamers, the 'Royal Tar,' had sailed some three years before; but there was no continual service. The *London Times* of November 11, 1838, pointed out the approaching change. 'Scarcely,' it says, 'has the wonder created in the world by the appearance of the "Great Western" and "British Queen" begun to subside, when we are again called upon to admire the rapid strides of enterprise by the notice of an iron steamship, the first of a line of steamers to ply between England and Calcutta, to be called the "Queen of the East," 2618 tons, and 600 horse-power. This magnificent vessel is designed by Mr W. D. Holmes, engineer to the Bengal Steam Committee, for a communication between England and India. Great praise is due to Captain Barber, late of the Honourable East India Company's service, the agent in London for the Steam Committee in Bengal, who has given every encouragement to Mr Holmes in carrying forward his splendid undertaking. When these vessels are ready, we understand the voyage between Falmouth and Calcutta will be made in thirty days.'

From this time ocean steamers multiplied rapidly. One after another of the now famous shipping firms sprang up, beginning with the Cunard, and Peninsular and Oriental lines. The first British steamship was registered at London in the year 1814: in 1842 there were 940 steamers registered; and already was the decay of the sailing-ship so largely anticipated, that Mr Sydney Herbert, in a Committee of the House of Commons, had this same year pointed out 'that the introduction of steamers, and the consequent displacement of the Leith smacks, Margate hoys, &c., would diminish the nursery for seamen by lessening the number of sailing-vessels.'

STARVED!

A REMINISCENCE OF AN ENGLISH SPRING.

'May 12, 1886, STARVED!'—Why starved? What is the meaning of this? A friend is examining a series of skins of the Swallow family, which I have just laid out for his inspection, and such is the question he puts, on reading the labels attached to them.

Don't you remember?—But no; you were in the 'south' at the time, and of course saw little or nothing of that terrible snow-storm which we, living on the English Borders, had in the middle of May. The effects will not be forgotten for a long time here. The skins of swallow, house-martin, and sand-martin, which are now lying before me, with the strange remark on the label, have a story to tell, which is, I think, worth recording. The extraordinary and variable winter of 1885-86 was followed by a spring quite as mutable, finishing with a storm in May, which in the wilder and more mountainous districts of the north of England will be referred to for many a year to come. Ere this, and despite all our climatic changes, our 'summer visitants' among the birds, true to that something which, for want of a better word, we call instinct, had arrived in their usual numbers; and the majority of them had already settled down in their nesting quarters, and begun those labours of perpetuating their species which they had travelled so many hundreds of miles to perform, when winter once more returned, taking full possession of the 'lap of May;' and, though its reign was short, yet it was quite long enough to cause such a fatality among the swallows as has never before been chronicled.

May was ushered in with a week of warm, balmy, and genial weather, the prevailing winds being from south and west, finishing on the 7th with a particularly fine hot day. The yet delicate and lacelike greenery which was decorating the trees and shrubs of our woods and copses, and is seen to the greatest advantage in spring, formed an enamelled bower for those migrant warblers to revel in, and their joyous, sweet songs rang through the woodland glades, as if in thankfulness for the safe accomplishment of their long and arduous journey. Above, the air was alive with the wheeling and twittering swallows and martins, revelling in the plenitude of their insect food. The next sunrise, however, changed all this, and the birds awoke to find the balmy south-breeze gone, and its place filled by

a cold east wind, accompanied with chill showers. This weather lasted for four days, each day getting colder and more bitter. No insects were to be seen during the prevalence of these cold winds; and on the 10th and 11th the swallows were first observed to be feeling the effects of cold and scarcity of subsistence. The birds had so overcome their natural timidity as to persistently seek the shelter—wherever they had the chance—of cottages, farmhouses, smithies, and other buildings; while the fishermen's huts were literally besieged by them; they would not be kept out, in their search for warmth.

Much sympathy was expressed for the poor birds, and every care was bestowed on them; but the heat merely to be found in houses was but a poor substitute for the want of food; and I am afraid the relief was in most cases but temporary. One which entered a cottage in an exhausted condition was carefully tended, and placed where it could receive the benefit of the warm hearth. After a short time it recovered, and took wing again, but only to make a couple of feeble turns round the humble dwelling, when it once more sought the friendly shelter, but this time only to die. Hardly had the last breath left the little body, and the film of death passed over its dark soft eyes, when something like a gray cloud seemed to spread outwards from the dead bird. This, on close examination, was found to consist of hundreds of parasites, which were already leaving the body, whence no more subsistence was to be drawn by them. How did these minute forms of life, which were only to be recognised by the aid of a pocket lens, know in such a short space of time that dissolution had taken place, and that the remains were no longer a home for them?

On the 11th the swallows were seen in many places huddled together in groups of a dozen to fifty, to protect themselves by their mutual warmth against the piercing nor-easter. In one large group a continual motion was going on, the birds at the top fluttering to the bottom, and forcing their way in, which of course forced others out, and so the struggle was kept up. In some places they were seen to fall from the roofs into the streets dead, and in many instances were so weak as to be frequently blown away, tumbled over and over by the force of the gale.

On the 12th this severe weather culminated, on the 'Fells' and throughout the Lake District of Cumberland and Westmorland, in a snow-storm of unusual severity, the snow in many places lying nine inches thick on the level. In the lowlands, or inside—as the sturdy dwellers under the Helm Wind's ominous bar call the low-lying ground between them and the sea—a hurricane of sleet and rain, accompanied by a gale from the north-east, visited that part of the district. During this spell of weather, which an old jingle says is 'neither good for man nor beast'—it might have added bird as well—not an insect was seen; and the poor swallows, unused to get their food in any other fashion than by taking it on the wing, were being gradually starved. This was forcibly brought under my notice on the morning of the 12th. While crossing a bridge over a 'beck' in the north of Cumberland, my attention was

drawn to the slow, feeble, and tame-like flight of some swallows—so utterly unlike their usual rapid gyrations—as they were passing through from one end of the bridge to the other, returning each time in a more listless manner. My first impression was that they were sheltering from the icy gale; gradually it dawned on me that there was no 'feed' on the brook, as anglers would say, and that the birds were starving. This was confirmed when, after waiting a few minutes longer, one of the birds trying to turn at the end of its journey, dropped into the water, and, with outspread wings, was carried over a weir and so out of sight. Simultaneously, another came floating from underneath the bridge, followed by several others in the short time I was looking on. Not far distant, and at the time this was happening, dead birds were being picked up on the lawn in front of a gentleman's country seat, till in the course of a few hours no fewer than sixty were found!

I interviewed several of our local rural postmen in the evening, and they all had the same pitiful tale to tell. The roads on their rounds were all strewn with the dead and dying 'Hirundines.' On the 14th I visited Rockcliffe, on the river Eden, and beneath the cliffs the ground was covered with the dead birds—*Hirundo rustica*, *Chelidon urbica*, and *C. riparia*, being about equal in number. They occurred all the way up the water-edge. The destruction must have been immense. I dissected several of the birds, and found that the crop was in every case entirely empty—the cause of death really being starvation, accelerated by the intense cold. Most of them were in beautiful plumage, but otherwise skin and bone. They were lying mostly with their heads to the bank, some under grass tufts; others, in the holes where pebbles had dropped out of the boulder clay; and others, again, on sandstone ledges, which here and there occur on the face of the 'scour.' The birds were all in the same position as if they had simply settled down, folded their wings, and gone to sleep. The 'bluff' faces south-west, and was therefore well sheltered from the chilling wind. Of course, in such a position insects would fly the longest, so the bitter struggle for existence might last longer here than in more exposed situations. When I say fly the longest, I mean that the nor-easter did not kill the insects, only drove what was flying into shelter, and prevented others emerging from the aurelia state. This may, I think, be safely borne out by the fact that there was no great diminution in warblers and other insectivorous birds; although on the Fells, 'stonechatters'—a name often used locally for three different species, namely, wheatears, whinchats, and stonechats—were found lying on the snow with outstretched wings, as if they had dropped in the act of flying. In their case the food was thoroughly covered over, except what might be found in the interstices of the stone walls.

But the birds frequenting the woods and coppices did not seem to have suffered any inconvenience, for the same cause which deprived the swallow tribe of food, possibly gave them more, driving the insects to the shelter of the budding leaves, where the birds' sharp eyes and inquiring ways would soon find them out.

It was some days before the full extent of the

disaster became known; but kind correspondents all over Lakeland, and numerous friends who sent me newspaper cuttings from the local press in this part of North-west England, all confirmed the sad news of the enormous destruction of the swallow tribe. At Bassenthwaite Lake Station, a colony of sand-martins two hundred strong were picked up dead by the platelayers; and numbers were seen to fall to the ground, having been forced to succumb to the rigour of the weather. One correspondent, writing to a West Cumberland paper in the dialect of the district, said: 'It was a pitiable thing to see sec' a number o' swallows perishing in that storm. They wor fund in aw' kinds o' crevices about buildings, whoar they'd croppen in for sheltur, coald an' stiff. Theosands hev perished in this way fra' t'combeined effects o' coald an' want o' meat. For it's weel known these burds feel on t' wing; bit t' wind was seah strang they couldn't flee; an' than insecks warn't oot, an' they war deprived o' their food. Farmers an' gardeners are varry sworry for this, for they think 'at if a warm summer cooms, they'll be eaten up wid midge pests, an' hardly hev a single swallow t'help to lessen t'swarms. Ah know this, 'at they wad a gay bit rayder ha' seen some destruction amang t'sparrows, nor seen t'swallows destroyed.'

Hundreds of weakly lambs perished on the mountains; what must it, then, have been for the poor swallows, who fell by thousands? In the district round Annan, great numbers succumbed to the severe storm; many were found starved to death in cellars and other places where they had sought in vain for shelter from the biting atmosphere. Numerous instances were given of their entrance into houses, where they fell on the floor, too exhausted to be brought round by the kindly disposed. Near Plumpton, one man filled his hat with a cluster of perishing birds which had found shelter in some masonry. In a journey of thirty miles on the 20th, the writer did not see a single bird of the swallow kind; and the blank to one who has been accustomed to watch them with much interest was something indescribable. Many pleasant hours have I spent watching their marvellous flight, wheeling and gliding as they twist and turn in zigzag fashion, or flitting over the village pond, dipping in its placid water, and leaving dimpling circles on the surface of the pool, marking the course of their erratic gyrations; anon hovering above you for a second or two like miniature hawks, uttering all the while their soft twittering notes, whisking over the hedge into the green embowered lane, decked with flowering sprays of the woodbine and the rose. These 'guests of summer' lend an additional charm to the landscape. See them ascend to a considerable height above the tall elms, ceaselessly describing large, ever-varying circles round the tops of the trees, then descending like a rocket, with great velocity, a long, headlong dive, down, down, their plumage flashing in the sun—you would almost think they were going to dash themselves to pieces on the ground; then, with a sudden turn of the wings, darting off at a tangent, skimming away above the grasses in the flower-bespangled meadow till their infinite turnings and twistings are lost to view in the distance.

Often when sleepless, lying on my couch, anxiously waiting for morning, has the swallow's sweet little ditty, with its gurgling notes, cheered me from the eaves of my cottage; the birds keeping up the musical rhythm in a soft subdued tone, with slight intermission, for hours—now and then a low sweet prelude, gradually raising its song into a charming symphony. Frequently, too, in the dark, when everything else was hushed, the songsters seemingly waiting for the first gray streaks of dawn; but when the sun arises in all his splendour, they get more restless, and their notes are louder just before they dash down the village street to commence their labours for the day.

If 'dear old Gilbert White' had been living when this dire calamity happened to the swallow tribe, how he would have sorrowed and rejoiced over it—sorrowed that such a destruction should have taken place among his favourites—rejoiced that at last he could have settled that vexed question to him of their hibernation.

For some time after the storm not a bird of the swallow kind was to be seen; and only in a few villages bordering on the Solway did the swallow and house-martin ever appear to reach their usual numbers. The birds that filled up these vacant places must either have been later arrivals on their way farther north, who, finding plenty of room, stopped on their journey; or birds which were already in England, but had returned south, and so missed the storm. The first theory, I think, is the most plausible one, as it is well known that birds who go farthest north to breed are the last to arrive, and nesting quarters were not occupied in many cases till two or three weeks after—many, too many, unfortunately, never at all. Had the same birds come back, one would have expected to see them sooner than this.

Speaking generally, after repeated observations all over Lakeland, the 'gentle harbingers of summer' were conspicuous by their absence, and in the 'Fell dales' and villages in this part of North Cumberland, the summer of 1886 is still known and spoken of as the 'Swallowless Summer.'

A BUNCH OF WITHERED VIOLETS.

A bunch of withered violets!
I press them to my lips each day;
They bring before my tearful eyes
A vision that is far away.

Sweet dead memorials of a time
When Love was gracious unto me,
And all the bliss that earth could give
Seemed in this gift of flowers to be.

But now—why dwell upon the past?
For some one else he cheers the hours;
I wonder does he ever think
That I still treasure his dead flowers?

WILLIAM COWAN.

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ON THE TABLE.

THERE are ancient inventories and other manuscripts extant that give us very interesting information about Tables. To go no farther back than the reign of Charlemagne, we learn that that monarch possessed three silver tables and a gold one. One silver table was square, and upon it was delineated the city of Constantinople; the second was round, and enriched with a view of the city of Rome; the third was formed of three circles, and was traced with a description of the entire universe. The gold table was ornamented with precious stones accredited with the property of changing colour if poisoned food was put upon it.

An early vignette delineated in a ninth or tenth century Bible, preserved in the Paris Library, shows a semicircular table with a raised rim to it, and guests seated round the curved portion of it, some of whom are drinking out of long-necked bottles. There are no plates, no knives or forks, before them, and no cloth; but strewn on the table are bones, a salt-cellar, a loaf or cake, a dish raised on a stem holding a kid, and a large chopping-knife, with which that animal was evidently to be divided. The table rests on trestle-like supports, placed at regular intervals, which are partly hidden by festoons of drapery depending from the under edge of it. A twelfth-century manuscript preserved in the Strasburg Library shows a dining-table with the same kind of raised rim and the same absence of table linen. An additional implement is here depicted, of a nipper or pincer form, which must have been the forerunner of the two-pronged fork; but there is no indication that plates were used, except those on raised stems, which held the viands of which all were to partake. It was not, indeed, till the thirteenth century that plates performed any part in a banquet; before then, slices of bread did duty for them. At that date they were in use, but only sparingly, for one plate served for two guests, who were thus paired off; and tablecloths

were also then considered requisites. After a meal, it was the custom to remove the cloth and make use of the same table for amusements, such as chess and backgammon. In the old French châteaux, we are told, between the courses of a grand repast, on special occasions, performers mounted upon the table and recited couplets, or gave allegorical representations, or presented flowers to the guests. When the company was limited in number to a few persons only, long and narrow tables were used, one side of which was kept free for the attendants to wait conveniently upon those who were eating.

It was a long time before earthenware plates were used at table. Poor people ate off wooden plates and took their soup and porridge from wooden bowls. The middle classes used pewter; the very rich ate off silver plates. Silver dishes and silver dish-covers still hold their high place in the esteem of the wealthy; but the pewter plates of the great bulk of the middle classes are now almost curiosities, so completely within remembrance have they been superseded by inexpensive earthenware in all parts of the country. The use of wooden plates, too, only survives in the matter of bread-trenchers. Our mediæval ancestors were aware of the luxury of hot plates; and so that they should not burn their fingers in carrying them, resorted to the expedient of placing them on rings of metal, perforated in an ornamental way, and furnished with handles and feet.

As time passed by, good table linen became much esteemed. Some of the napery for dressers and buffets was bordered with velvet and gold and fringed with silk; and the white linen cloths for dining-tables were woven with representations of flowers, trees, animals, heraldic devices, and other objects, as in the present day.

From a very early period, table knives had a similar form to that now in use, in so far as they consisted of a wide and long blade firmly fixed in a handle. There were carving knives; bread knives to cut the slices of bread that were used to place the portion of each guest upon,

instead of plates; and, among others, oyster knives, over and above the cook's knives used in the kitchen. As the art of carving has ever been looked upon as an accomplishment worthy of a gallant's best attention, we cannot be surprised that considerable care has always been expended upon the means required. We gather from old inventories that knives were spoken of in pairs in the same way as we now mention a case or set of them. A pair of knives comprised not only two carving knives, but a bread knife to cut the indispensable slices of bread, and several smaller knives for game and poultry. An account of the silver plate of the kings of France tells us, too, that there were handsomer knives used on grand occasions than at ordinary times. Thus there is mention of a pair of knives with ebony handles for the season of Lent; and another pair with ivory handles for the Paschal feast; and a third pair gilded and enamelled for the feast of Pentecost. The vignettes of old French manuscripts depict the blades as being of various forms. One is shown to have been furnished with a termination, or point, that was almost crescent-shaped, evidently for the convenience of dismembering joints; others are straight on one edge and curved on the other; in some examples both edges converge to a point. The Museums of Dijon and Mans possess specimens that belonged to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy.

Perhaps the earliest mention of forks occurs in an inventory of articles belonging to King Edward I. They did not come into use till the thirteenth century. Before that date people showed their good breeding in the manner in which they ate with their fingers, with the aid of a knife only, as we still do in the matter of bread and cheese. At first, forks appear to have been intended to be used in eating fruit only, probably to be quit of the discomfort of staining the fingers. We read of 'three silver forks for eating pears'; and again, 'a small fork of gold for eating mulberries.' They were small, and had but two prongs; and were richly ornamented, as became articles of luxury.

Old spoons had rounder bowls than those now in use, and their stems were short. The wooden spoons now sold at Russian fairs are of a similar form to those of the most ancient manufacture. Many people carried their spoons with them, as we now carry penknives, some of which were furnished with a perforation in the handle to admit of a string passing through them, and others with folding stems. Rich folks had their silver spoons then, as now. Less fortunate people used copper or pewter; and in museums may still be seen many examples in brass and gilded copper. The stems became in the course of time a vehicle for ornamentation; and eventually the twelve apostles were frequently represented as terminals for a dozen spoons. It was not unusual to carve spoons out of ivory and ebony, when the handles were also enriched with representations of personages and animals.

Salt-cellars, as the vignettes mentioned indicate, were placed on the table at a very early period; and they have always been a medium for the display of artistic taste. They were formerly furnished with covers, as mustard pots still are, and often kept locked with a key. They fre-

quently formed part of the contents of an ornamental receptacle placed on the table in front of the host, which contained also other articles required in the course of the banquet. One salt-cellar of fifteenth-century workmanship, in the Cluny Museum, is in the form of a man's head with a cap upon it. There is another example in the same collection, of a box form, enriched with a representation of the Annunciation on the upper side of the lid, and an illustration of the Crucifixion on the under side, with Latin mottoes attached. Sometimes they were furnished with tiny wheels in the manner of a chariot, that they might be easily passed down the table from one person to another.

Our old-fashioned tea-caddy seems to have been a survival of the receptacle mentioned above as containing various condiments. Down to the eighteenth century in France, it was customary to place upon the tables of people of rank a highly ornamental piece of workmanship, often in the form of a ship, in which were kept under lock and key everything likely to be required during the repast, including spoons, forks, napkins, cups, salt-cellars, and spices, and in some instances toothpicks. The wines were also kept locked up in small ornamental receptacles placed on the table. Seeing that sudden deaths were often attributed to poison, it is not surprising that many precautions were taken to prevent what was, perhaps erroneously, supposed to be of very common occurrence. French inventories make frequent mention of these table-ships. They were made of silver and of gold, enamelled and set with precious stones, with silken sails and rigging. One that belonged to a Duke of Orleans was made of silver, and around it were banners, which formed small doors, opening down on hinges and giving access to the contents. The deck was packed with armed men, whose escutcheons hung from turrets at each end of the vessel. Six lions crouching under the keel upheld it in an upright position on a flat stand. An inventory of Charles V. of Burgundy mentions twenty-one of these articles made of silver and four made of gold.

Cups and goblets and flagons also furnished a considerable part of the array on the table in old times, especially in high places. A beautiful ewer sent by a caliph to Charlemagne is preserved in the treasury of the abbey of St Maurice, and there are many specimens in museums. Formerly cups were frequently furnished with covers, and the person entrusted with the formality of tasting the wine, to prevent suspicion of poison, drank out of the cover. When a cup had a cover, a stem, and a foot, it became a goblet, and if large, a 'hanap.' The latter was considered the cup of honour. At one time two persons drank out of the same vessel, just as two ate from the same plate. In the inventory just alluded to, the cup and ewer of St Louis and the cup of King Dagobert are set down. There are forty gold cups mentioned, nineteen goblets, a dozen 'aiguieres,' or jugs, but only two hanaps.

Instead of dessert, or fruit, spices and sweetmeats were formerly partaken of afterwards. These were presented in richly ornamented receptacles, on trays or stands, in great varieties of forms. They were sometimes made of gold. One shown in a fifteenth-century manuscript in

the Munich Library is of an octagonal form, having turrets at each angle; it is raised on a low stem, and terminates in a foot, on which are eight dragon-like figures at equal distances. The cover is bowl-like, and is surmounted with an ornamental coronet, which serves for it to stand upon when placed upon the tray. There are two grotesque handles, with which it could be easily carried, and on the tray are two spoons, with which its contents could be distributed.

Froissart mentions the details of a banquet given to the king of Portugal by the Duke of Lancaster, at which the king, four bishops and archbishops, and the Duke of Lancaster, were seated at one table; whilst other dignitaries, barons, abbots, and ambassadors were placed at two others; and the rest of the company at separate tables. He says: 'The dinner was great and handsome, and well garnished with everything; and a great gathering of minstrels plied their trade.' Olivier de la Marche tells us when a sovereign was present at a banquet the service, or waiting, was sometimes performed by nobles, who were often on horseback, and that 'entrements,' dialogues in verse, or pantomimes, took place in the intervals of the serving. The floor was strewn with flowers; and wax candles, some held by vases, and others placed on the table, afforded the necessary lighting. Down the hall were disposed buffets and dressers, which served to display the vessels of silver and silver-gilt, glass and enamel. The repast was announced by sound of horn. On its conclusion, when the tablecloth was removed and games commenced, spices were served, not as part of the feast, but as we now serve coffee. It was not till the sixteenth century that fruit was eaten after a repast.

There were square tables, horseshoe-shaped tables, and round tables in the days of old, as well as the oblong ones mentioned. There were also single-stemmed tables. A vignette in a manuscript copy of the *Chronicles of Louis XI.* shows a square table with a single stem descending into a circular foot.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XIII.—SAHIB GEORGE.

WHILE Isabel was thus occupied with the discovery of her father, the two young men down in Lancashire, whose hearts she had set aflutter and aflame—her cousin George and Alan Ainsworth—had begun to apply themselves, each in his way, to the task of winning her. Ainsworth, on his part, had exerted himself to find a post in London, and had succeeded with a celerity that surprised him, at the same time that it flattered his vanity; for he could not but think that his own deserts had much to do with his quick success. He did not then know, nor guess—though, when he did know, he was properly humbled and chastened in spirit—that the chief whose service he was leaving, who was one of the best of men and editors, had really bespoken for him the place for which he had applied on *The Evening Banner*. All he was aware of in the excitement of the occasion was

that *The Banner* wanted him in London at once, and that his chief had generously agreed to let him go.

George Suffield, on the other hand, had resolved upon a course which the committal of all the Suffield business into his hands left him free to choose. He had the self-confidence and the stout grain characteristic of so many Englishmen, which bear their possessors bravely through supreme difficulties of war, administration, and trade, but which cause them to blunder egregiously in the delicate business of love. George did not hesitate for a moment to believe that he would prevail on Isabel to be his wife, that his desire and his will must overbear all her scruples and doubts; he therefore wasted no time in vague longings, in downcast speculations as to ways and means of making himself more agreeable to her: he meant to marry her, to keep loyally his promise not to trouble her with his addresses for a time, and meanwhile to prepare such a position for her as could not fail to fill her and himself with joy and pride. The Suffield business was big, but he would make it bigger. The dear old dad—bless him!—had prospered exceedingly in the good old jog-trot ways; but his son was born into a sharper, adroit—perhaps, less scrupulous—time, when a fortune might be made at a stroke, and he was resolved to lose no advantage which the turning of the wheel of trade might offer him.

It chanced that Fate had just then placed at his elbow a subtle, insinuating adviser to tempt him into risky ways. An unusual adviser—an unlikely adviser, many might think—but all the more dangerous a tempter for his being unusual and unlikely. Daniel Trichinopoly had been taken into the service of the firm, apparently; in reality, he was attached to the person of young Mr. Suffield, much as he had been to that of the Sahib Raynor. There was nothing of the firm's usual business to which he could be set, but he lightly and easily slipped into the place of personal attendant and deferential and confidential retainer to the Sahib George. And George was more than pleased. He was of a generous and magnificent nature; it did not trouble him that Daniel did little or nothing to earn the emolument conferred on him; it was enough—indeed, more than enough—that he flattered him by his subservience and added to his feeling of consequence by his dark and inferior presence. Daniel put on a lavish show of obsequious admiration and affection, and George patronised and protected him. George suggested that since Daniel was to go in and out with him among the throngs of men, it would be well if he dressed more in the English mode—he would give him wherewithal to array himself properly; and Daniel humbly crossed his dark hands on his white guileless bosom, and professed the extreme desire to please a master who was great and good, strong, and beautiful—the heavens, said Daniel, were wile, but they were not wider than the beneficence of the Sahib George. So Daniel dressed himself in English attire—dark trousers and a loose alpaca coat—all except his head, on which he still wore the blameless turban, and was thenceforward assiduous in his service and in his flattery. He looked after the clothes of Sahib George; he waited upon the Sahib George

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at table and cooked rare little dishes for him; he fetched and carried for the Sahib George, and, like a faithful dog, was always found at heel when wanted either in the house or in the works or in the office in town; and constantly he dropped the insidious word in season into the Sahib George's ear. George had a vast opinion of his own shrewdness and judgment, but in reality he had much of his father's simplicity. He had a kind of large, open contempt for Daniel, and he would have been amazed and indignant if an acute observer had hinted that his black henchman was beginning to exert a prodigious influence over him; yet the extent of Daniel's influence even in the first week of his service may be judged from the following.

There had been supplied to the Sniffeld mills by a Liverpool broker sundry bales of American cotton which when opened made George swear, not loud, but deep: not only was the cotton of inferior quality, but the weight was made up by stones and other foreign rubbish packed in the midst of the bales. He exclaimed, in the hearing of Daniel, against the villainy of American shippers and Liverpool brokers both.

'With regard, Sahib George,' said Daniel, in his childlike humility, 'why the Sahibs of the great English mills do they use much-much American cotton? I beg to try to understand, but the same time I must say I am not able. I have think very much, but—no it is not for the scarcity of fine and pure cotton stuff non-procurable. The native coolie of India, my own people—oh yes!—they grow much-much cotton. With regard, Sahib, why the English Sahibs buy they not very much the cotton of their own great India? I beg to understand.'

George answered carelessly that not very much Indian cotton came into the market, and that what did was short and dirty: the fact was, he knew very little about it.

'With regard, Sahib,' asked the simple Daniel, 'do he also have big stones in the middle of him? I beg to understand.'

George did not know. But the effect of Daniel's words was that George resolved to inquire concerning Indian cotton the next time he visited Liverpool, and that was after two or three days.

It was thus that George Sniffeld set out upon his independent and aspiring course; and he was in that mood when Ainsworth chanced to meet him on the very last day of his Lancashire sojourn. Ainsworth had said farewell to *The Lancashire Gazette* in the morning betimes, and had arranged to travel to London by a late train, intending to spend the interval with a college friend who was a journalist in Liverpool. He was thus in Liverpool in his friend's company at the hour of lunch. His friend proposed to entertain him at a club whither resorted at luncheon-time many representatives of Liverpool commerce—Liverpool shippers and Liverpool brokers, especially brokers. When they entered the dining-room of the club, Ainsworth discovered George Sniffeld occupied at one of the tables with three or four men. George did not see him, and he, remembering how they had parted at Whitsuntide, made no show of acquaintance with George. When they had withdrawn to the smoking-room, however, a hand was laid on

Ainsworth's shoulder and a cheery voice spoke in his ear: the hand and the voice of George Sniffeld.

'Who would have thought of meeting you here, Ainsworth?' he exclaimed. 'Not that you haven't as much business to be here as any one else, but I should have thought you'd be occupied with your paper at this time of day.'

Ainsworth introduced him to his companion, and said that he was done with *The Lancashire Gazette*, and was going to London that very night.

'Oh, indeed!' exclaimed George. 'You must come and dine with me—that is, if you have nothing better to do.'

Ainsworth answered that he doubted whether he could wait in Lancashire for dinner; he intended to travel late, but not so late as to preclude his reaching London and a hotel before midnight. While he spoke, he noted that George Sniffeld's eye wandered to a centre table, on which stood a rough deal box, and about which members of the club kept coming and going more and more with a subdued hum of talk and occasional bursts of laughter.

'What is going on there?' asked Ainsworth, looking from George to his friend.

His friend answered that he did not know, and rose to look.

'It's something of mine,' said George, with a conscious blush. 'I put it there. It's merely a joke; but I wish to show them—the cotton brokers, I mean—that that kind of thing shouldn't be allowed to happen too often. By Jingo!' he said, 'somebody's writing on the box!'

Somebody was writing in large chalk letters on the side of the open box—writing something which made those who read it shout with laughter.

'Let's see what it is,' said George, going to the table.

Ainsworth went with him, meeting his friend, who laughed, and said: 'It's not a bad joke.' This is what Ainsworth saw: in what appeared to be a large starch box was a big stone, on which was pasted a written label—'Specimen of Messrs Jones's middlings'—and on the box itself had just been written in chalk—'Specimen of Messrs Sniffeld's size-box.' Ainsworth was sufficiently acquainted with the terms of Lancashire trade and manufacture to know that 'middlings' meant bale-cotton of average good quality; and that size was the stuff with which manufacturers liberally dressed their webs to give their cotton cloths and calicoes more apparent substance. So he understood, and laughed: George Sniffeld had got *quid pro quo*, a Roland for his Oliver.

'So this is your joke, is it, Sniffeld?' said a little man coming and looking grimly on the small boulder.

'Yes, Jones,' said George. 'And this'—pointing to the chalk writing—'may be considered your joke: it has been made for you. So we're quits.'

Mr Jones smiled wryly, but he said nothing; and George returned and sat down with Ainsworth.

'They laugh,' observed George in confidence, 'but they don't like it: I can see they don't. Of course I know it's not they that put stones and old iron and rubbish in the bales to make weight;

but they are responsible : they should keep their shippers in order. No ; I can see they don't like it. But that doesn't matter. I can do without them better than they can do without me. I can ship my own cotton if I like ; and I will !—And you are going to London to-night, Ainsworth ? I wish you could stay and dine with me.'

Thus he continued, trying to show interest in Ainsworth, but continuing to be excited and occupied with the effect of his joke practical on the cotton brokers. Presently there appeared on the opposite side of the street, looking up at the window where they sat, a black man in a white turban. Ainsworth noticed him first.

'Is not that,' said he to George, 'the black fellow that was Mr Raynor's servant ? I suppose he is in your service now : he is looking as if he wished to attract your attention.'

Daniel was in fact smiling and smiling with a gentle inclination of the head.

'Yes,' said George ; 'that's Daniel. He is my servant now ; a useful, faithful creature,' said he with a pointed smile, which obviously meant : You suspected him once, but we won't return upon that. 'I think he must have something important to tell me. Excuse me a minute.' In a little while he returned in haste, and said : 'I find I must say "Good-bye : " there is some business I must attend to on the Flags ;' by which name Ainsworth knew the quadrangle of the Exchange was meant. 'I daresay you'll be seeing the governor and all of them soon. Remember me to them. Bye-bye.'

That was the last Ainsworth saw of the triumphant George, and the picture dwelt in his memory.

In an hour he was walking with his friend to the Central Station. As they entered upon the platform, a group of three strange creatures arrested their attention : Daniel Trichinopoly in his white turban and his black alpaca coat, underneath which shone his red cummerbund ; a Parsee, fat of feature and of form, topped with his notable brimless Parsee hat ; and a grotesque, hideous creature in ordinary English dress, whose face made one think he must have been buried and dug up again when partly decayed, and whom Ainsworth's friend recognised as a Greek or Levantine, well known as a frequenter of the Flags. They were engaged in serious converse ; and Ainsworth wished that George Suffield could see them so ; for even the best of men may desire to show himself justified in his suspicions, to say, 'Didn't I tell you so ?'

'Don't they look a sinister and villainous trio !' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'Did you ever see three men together that looked like a conspiracy of evil ! What are they talking about, I wonder ? Something wicked, with money in it, I'll be bound !'

His friend suggested that the man in the white turban looked a simple, honest, good-natured creature.

'Look at that hard, glittering eye !' said Ainsworth. 'It's as cruel as a snake's ! I should not be surprised to discover he was the greatest scoundrel of the three. I dislike the looks of the others, but I distrust him upon instinct !'

So he entered the train and returned whence he had come in the morning. When he left the train, he did not need to leave the station, for

his luggage was already there in waiting for his journey to London. He turned on the platform to survey his fellow-passengers, wondering if the wearer of the white turban was among them. He was—along with the fat Parsee.

'It is odd,' said he to himself as he saw them walk away together, 'that that is the very combination I guessed when I saw the turbaned scoundrel in Suffield's mill.'

THE MUTTON BIRD ON THE FURNEAUX ISLANDS.

THOUSANDS of birds, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, nay, hundreds of millions ! A mighty host which cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude, crowded and massed together into one enormous swarm, darkening, like a thunder-cloud, the evening into black night before its time. Sheets and clusters of birds ! of whom an eye-witness wrote some fifty years ago that he had 'actually sailed through them from Flinders Island to the Heads of the Tamar—a distance of eighty miles.' Birds, too, that are good for food, that taste so deliciously when cooked that a Bishop has lately written of them, 'Boiled or roasted, they are a dish to set before a king.' Birds whose feathers make the most perfect beds ; and whose eggs supply the needs of hundreds of 'them that are afar off upon the sea,' or that dwell near the shores they frequent. Birds that excavate burrows instead of building nests ; that, having made their curious homes, seem to desert them for weeks, as if the ten days' labour they have devoted to such an unbird-like occupation had been in vain, or a mere pastime. Birds that arrive each year on almost the same hour of the same day of the same month, and yearly depart as regularly at their appointed time. Birds so valuable that of and from them has in one year been harvested, on a little barren, treeless hummock of only a few hundred acres in extent in our southern seas, a net result of ten hundred and twenty pounds in cash.

To tell something about these birds, something of their history and habits, and of the people who live and move among them, is the object of this paper ; and it is hoped that words coming from remote antarctic regions will not be uninteresting to readers in those northern isles so fondly spoken of as 'Home' by members of the Anglo-Saxon race in all parts of the world.

In Bass's Strait, between Tasmania and Australia, is situated a fair-sized archipelago known as the Furneaux Group. The name recalls that of Captain Cook, for it was his second in command, Captain Tobias Furneaux, who, in the year 1773, when in command of the *Adventure*, touched at Van Diemen's Land, and first saw their apparently barren shores. They consist of three or four large and many smaller islands ; Great or Flinders Island, the principal, being best known as the place to which the harassed aborigines were sent, after having been driven into a peninsula of Tasmania by nearly the whole white population of the country, in the year 1830. Barren, Hummock, and Clark Islands rank next in size. These large islands are hilly, and grow timber, and cattle graze in moderate numbers upon them. Towards the

south-west of this group, and consequently nearer the mainland of Tasmania, are situated several smaller islets, known as Big and Little Dog, Green and Little Green, Babel Islands, &c. All of these last named are low and sandy, and are covered with a coarse kind of grass growing two or three feet high. Very little timber—no more, in fact, than a few scrubby bushes—can be found upon the islands, which, devoid of natural beauty, are inhospitable in appearance, tame, and dreary to a degree. Their inhabitants are chiefly half-castes, the offspring and descendants of European whalers and convicts and native women. These people are generally known as 'sealers,' from an occupation they formerly carried on to a considerable extent, and even now occasionally pursue, when a remnant of the once numerous flocks of seals revisits their ancient haunts.

But it is neither with men nor seals we have now to do. We desire rather to give some description of a curious ornithological subject, one which, even in regions where *rari aves* obtain, may be looked upon as amongst the strangest and most interesting of the fowls of the air and the sea. It belongs to the petrel family, and is commonly known as the Mutton Bird. In appearance it resembles a small wild duck, except that the bill has in a slight degree the turned overhook of most sea-birds. It is of a sooty-brown plumage—hence sometimes called the Sooty Petrel, and the sexes are externally indistinguishable. The egg is pure snow-white, two and three-quarter inches long by seven-eighths of an inch broad. The white or albumen forms an unusually large proportion of its contents. 'It is remarkable,' says Gould, 'that a small part of both the yolk and the white remains soft and watery, however long the egg may be boiled.' The food of the full-grown Mutton Bird consists of shrimps, small crustacea, and molluscs; the young live chiefly on grass and sea-weed.

The peculiarities and habits of these birds seem first to have been noticed and described by Flinders, when he and Bass made the celebrated voyage which resulted in the discovery of the strait between Tasmania and the Continent of Australia, since called after the latter. On December 9, 1798, Flinders writes: 'After rounding the north-east point of the three hummock land, our course westward was pursued along its north side. A large flock of gannets was observed at daylight to issue out of the great bight to the southward; and they were followed by such a number of sooty petrels as we had never seen equalled. There was a stream of from fifty to eighty yards in depth, and of three hundred yards or more in breadth. The birds were not scattered, but flying as compactly as a free movement of their wings seemed to allow; and during a full hour and a half, this stream of petrels continued to pass without interruption at a rate little inferior to the swiftness of a pigeon. On the lowest computation, I think the number could not have been less than a hundred millions; and we were thence led to believe that there must be in the large bight one or more inhabited islands of considerable size.' He adds in a note the calculation by which he arrived at the estimate of their numbers—thus: 'Taking the stream to have been fifty yards deep by three hundred in width, and that it moved at the rate

of thirty miles an hour' (Gould says they fly as fast as sixty miles an hour), 'and allowing nine cubic yards of space to each bird, the number would amount to 151,500,000. The burrows required to lodge this quantity of birds would be 75,750,000; and allowing a square yard to each burrow, they would cover something more than eighteen and a half geographical square miles of ground.'

In the History of Tasmania written by the Rev. John West, and published in that colony in 1852, it is stated that 'the sooty petrel or Mutton Bird occurs in immense flocks in Bass Strait. This bird burrows in the ground, forming what are called by the sealers in the Strait "rookeries," and a considerable trade was at one time carried on in their feathers, eggs, and salted bodies.' Gould in his monumental work on the *Birds of Australia* gives a full-sized coloured engraving of the bird, and a lengthy description of its habits, chiefly compiled from the remarks of Mr Davies, published in 1846. He states that the bird is an inhabitant of all the Australian seas, but is nowhere known to exist in such countless numbers as about the Furneaux Group.

Their habits may be thus described. About the commencement of September the birds congregate, and in the middle of that month, during the night-time, come in to the islands in order to prepare their nests. This they do by scratching away the sand with their feet, casting it behind them in clouds, until a small tunnel or adit is made sloping downwards into the soil to a depth of from two to three feet, in appearance and size something like a rabbit burrow. It takes them ten days to open these temporary homes or 'rookeries;' and when finished, every bird flies away again, leaving the place absolutely deserted. They then remain at sea from five to six weeks, never doubting that their rookeries will be in the same order on their return as when they departed. On or about the 20th of November, as the sun sinks into the sea, a few arrive; but it is not until four days afterwards that any great number reach the nursery. On the night of the 24th the real incoming takes place, and flocks of them are seen making for the islands from every quarter. They continue to fly about for nearly an hour, and ultimately settle. Each burrow has an inmate, sometimes two, occasionally three female birds nestling within it. Many cannot find cover, and have to remain amongst the grass. The noise and confusion that follow are frightful; but as night darkens, stillness prevails. In the morning the male birds fly away before the sun is fully up, returning in the evening, and on every evening, to feed their mates, who remain on the nests until the chicks are hatched. Shortly after they are hatched, the young birds are left in the burrows, both parents being absent all day, but bringing back food at sunset, and resting every night on the land until the new brood is strong enough for flight.

The return of the parents every evening is one of the most wonderful sights on earth. As the rays of the setting sun fade, and the short inadequate twilight of our Australian climate faintly illuminates the gloaming, an observer on a slight eminence is startled to hear the sound of some object rushing swiftly through the air, and is just able to observe a solitary petrel, truly sooty now,

dart straight across the gloom direct to its lowly home. Hardly has it passed when the air is black with pinions, and the partial obscurity becomes deeper as an innumerable company of birds rushes mysteriously from the darkening sea towards the darker earth. So dense is their mass, that, as a writer who saw them in 1839 says, 'night is ushered in full ten minutes before the usual time.'

In a paper read before the Royal Society of Tasmania, Dr Montgomery, the Anglican Bishop of that colony, gives a vivid account of the impression left upon his mind by this home-gathering. He has been called by duty to these remote islands; and he admits that while he was prepared to be interested in studying the mutton birds 'at home,' the reality far surpassed his expectations. 'Just at sunset,' the Bishop says, 'I was invited to go some two hundred yards up on to the higher ground—the island is only two hundred acres in extent—in order to see the birds come in. I shall never forget that evening as long as I live. The sun was setting, leaving a broad belt of crimson on the western horizon, and soon the surrounding sea became invisible. Not a sound was heard except the rustling of the grass in the wind. There was no indication that there was a living thing on the island. There were no cries of sea-birds. The stillness was wonderful. Presently, a single dark-winged form flitted across the island and vanished again into the gloom. In another ten seconds thousands upon thousands of birds seemed to spring like magic up out of the darkness from every quarter, without warning or cry of any kind. And now, backwards and forwards before my dazzled sight, I saw these countless dark shadows shooting with lightning rapidity athwart the lust of the evening light. Still no articulate sound was heard. Nothing but the whistle as if of bullet after bullet through the air, bewildering one with the sense of numbers and of mysterious rushing life. Repeatedly a bird would dash within an inch of my head, and then wheel like lightning to one side to escape a collision. The minutes passed, and still this dizzy, whirling hurlyburly of creatures continued—silent and even awe-inspiring. Sometimes they came in squadrons of hundreds, sometimes by tens. But still they came, each bird, after a turn or two, sinking with unerring instinct on to its hole, finding it in the long grass and darkness with a certainty which was truly marvellous. It was difficult to tear one's self away from this wonderful spectacle. But at length we returned to our tent, pitched near the water's edge, but still among the bushes; and all night long, as I lay trying to sleep, I heard the cooing and cackling of innumerable birds feeding their young in their subterranean homes, some of them apparently within a yard of my ear. At length I fell asleep; and before I awoke, at six o'clock in the morning, there was not a bird to be seen on the island.'

The half-castes come to the island just before the birds, bringing firewood and water with them from Flinders Island. They collect eggs first, then they catch some of the old birds; and the way in which they trap them is peculiar. The petrel cannot fly from the ground. He must either get on a projecting edge of rock to start his flight, or rise from the water. From the

sea-shore to his burrow he makes 'tracks'—that is, the ground is trampled and hardened into narrow paths. Taking advantage of this, on some favourable night the trapper blocks up the greater number of the pathways and digs pits across the remainder. Unable to proceed by those that are obstructed, the birds crowd into the open tracks, and reaching the pits unexpectedly, tumble into them, and are suffocated by the crowds of their fellows who follow. But it is the young bird when a few weeks old that is captured as being the most delicate food. He is very fat—almost, indeed, all fat—and after being spitted before a fire, is a truly exquisite morsel. Dr Montgomery says: 'That the young fresh birds are delicious eating I can testify. They taste like a very fresh herring, as we know that fish in the old country.' The half-castes salt and export them, or sell them to trading schooners, &c. They are unquestionably nutritious when thus treated, and are said to be as healthful for delicate persons as cod-liver oil. These fowlers do very well during the season; a man and his family can earn about four pounds ten shillings a day for nine weeks, spending nothing, and living entirely on the birds all that time. As well as the salted birds, eggs and feathers are also collected and sold.

Unfortunately, by leasing some of these small islands to settlers, the Government has taken a step that has done enormous damage to the birds, and may, if not checked, lead to their extinction. Through the culpable negligence or cruel thoughtlessness of the settlers, whole islands are becoming deserted. Gun Carriage or Vansittart Island is now absolutely abandoned by the petrel. This has been caused by turning bullocks on to the island. The cattle in roaming about for food—or, as an Australian would say, for 'feed'—trample on the burrows, and crush to death under their heavy tread many of the young birds, many more being smothered in the holes which are completely closed by the tramping of the beasts. This is much to be deplored, and it is to be hoped that grazing leases, from which but a paltry revenue is derived, will be done away with, and a close season for the protection of the birds for at least half the year enacted. We have stringent game-laws in Australasia, not against poachers—our game is free to any man but against its destruction at the breeding season, and the Mutton Bird needs protecting as much as any other wild creature. Curiously enough they have not been left by nature absolutely without a protector, although one of an extraordinary kind. These low grassy isles abound in snakes, and every man, woman, and child you meet upon them is armed with a stick or gun with which to destroy these hateful creatures. But the snakes rarely touch the Mutton Birds, living, indeed, on mice and other small fry, which are also numerous. The snakes are not often found in the burrows, although it is recorded that a young girl of sixteen pulled two out in one day, when catching birds a year or so ago. How numerous they are may be judged from the fact that a Mr Smith, a half-caste, had all the snakes his party killed in one season thrown into a heap, and at the end of two months they numbered six hundred. There is, however, one island, Babel Island, where the Mutton Bird is rendered secure

against mankind owing to the enormous quantity of snakes that exist upon it. Even these hardy sealers dare not visit it in quest of them, although quite a fortune in birds and eggs might be garnered there. In that place, thanks to the serpent, the sooty petrel lives and breeds in peace. Surely it would be possible to ordain that on many another rookery a similar state of things might be brought about without the intervention of the dreaded snake.

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER III.

THUS with kaleidoscopic rapidity was the course of Dick Marsden's road through the world changed. His was indeed a strange position. By his uncle's death he inherited an income of over two thousand a year, and was at once ranked amongst the envied ones of the earth. And yet this position he would have to share with a low-born, ill-educated, almost depraved woman, with whom his sole bond of union was the marriage certificate of a country registrar.

During the past two years, when the glamour of his ill-considered passion had been rudely dispelled by the world into which he had descended, Dick had drifted into a condition of lifeless, aimless despair. He had been obliged to work, and to work hard, for the allowance which his uncle made him was merely nominal, the old gentleman being under the impression that his nephew, who turned up so regularly on Thursdays in Portland Place, well dressed and smiling, was making a good income by his pen; but he worked with about as much heart and enthusiasm as the galley-slave chained to the oar.

He first resolved that he would make Leah an allowance, and give her leave to go where she liked and do what she liked; but upon reflection, better counsels suggested themselves to him. He was a philosopher as well as a gentleman. He was married to this wretched chanter of spicy ditties at a fifth-rate music hall, and the heart which should have been a wife's was in the keeping of another. Still, Leah was his wife, and it was his duty to make the best of a bad bargain. Here his philosophy showed itself. The gentleman came out in his resolution, now that he was in an independent position, to lift the girl as nearly to his own level as he could, to soften and refine her if possible.

Before, however, finally arranging his course of life there were two duties to be performed. The first was to see Marian Akhurst, and to tell her his secret. The second was to send Seth Hearn, his father-in-law, about his business. He wrote to Marian, and asked her if she could meet him, as he had an important communication to make, and he named Regent's Park as their place of meeting. There, in one of the least-frequented alleys under the trees, bare and leafless, but aglow with winter sunlight, they met. Dick eagerly scrutinised her face as she advanced to meet him, for he feared what her feeling would be upon receipt of such a request. It was calm and smiling as ever, the cheeks pale, and a strange, inquiring look in the eyes.

'I am going to unburden my mind to you, Marian, of the secret which has kept me apart from you, ay, and from the world, during these past two years,' he said. 'It will shock you, I fear, and, under ordinary circumstances, I would tear my tongue out rather than shock you. But you must know.'

The girl looked imploringly into his face. He was silent for a few moments, for he knew not how he could strike with so terrible a blow the gentle creature at his side. But it had to be struck, and procrastination would not soften its fall.

'Marian,' he said, 'I have been married for two years.'

'Dick!' was all the girl could cry; but the name was gasped out with an emphasis which was half agony and half incredulity.

Then he told her the brief, sad story of his infatuation for the stately young gipsy girl who had acted with him at the Snuggery, and of the terrible price he had paid for what he had deemed the realisation of his dream of happiness. He made no excuses: he did not lament his fate: he did not decry the woman who was as a mill-stone round his neck, for he knew that she who listened to his bare relation of facts could supply the tints and shades required to complete the picture.

For some moments she walked by his side in silence. Then she said gently: 'I am sorry, Dick, not because you are married—God forbid that I should be so selfish—but because of the unhappiness it has caused you. Your story is no strange one; I hear it often and often, so that I seem to know every detail of it without your telling me.'

'And now that I have told you, Marian,' said Dick, 'do you wonder that I never told you before?'

'You did what you thought was best for your uncle's sake, did you not?' said the girl.

'Yes; I *dared* not tell him, and I *dared* not tell you,' said Dick. 'I don't believe it would have changed him towards me; but I know it would have grieved him to the heart. I did not tell you, because—because I knew what you thought of me, and I dreaded the result. But you will always be my friend, Marian? I shall need friendship now as much as ever I did.'

'Dick,' said the girl, 'I will never change towards you. But I am sorry—so sorry for you. I do hope *she* will be a better wife to you in your better circumstances, for you deserve the best a woman can give you.'

They walked on a few minutes longer, and then separated.

Dick's next duty was to arrange matters with Seth Hearn. That gentleman, who of course very soon became informed of the turn things had taken for the better, was very much to the fore, and eagerly volunteered his aid, assistance, and advice in any matters in which Dick should command him, marking his intention of associating himself intimately with the arrangements to be made by the constant use of the pronoun 'we' in connection with them.

Dick, however, at once disabused him of all misunderstanding. 'Now, Mr Hearn,' he said, 'let us understand each other at once and for all. I've put up with your interference with my

domestic life during the past two years for the sake of my wife. Now, you can go, and I see no further occasion for our meeting again.'

Hearn, who had been fortifying himself against possible unpleasantness, staggered at first, but soon recovered himself. 'No, no, Dick!' he said. 'You don't mean that. Separate a father from his only child! Turn an old man out into the cruel world! No; I think too well of you to believe that. Me and Leah can't be separated; the poor child would fret; I know she would.'

'Not she! I mean what I say, Mr Hearn. She can go to see you, but set foot in my house you must not, and shall not. Now you understand me.'

The man gave him a look expressive of the utmost hate and contempt, but still he whined out: 'But, my dear Dick, you'll keep me. Mind, if I hadn't consented to my gal marrying you, she'd ha' been driving about in her broom with dimonds on long ago. But, says I, Mr Marsden's a gentleman, and it's a gentleman my Leah must have.—You'll make me a little allowance, won't you?'

'No, sir. You've done your share of making my life a burden to me, and I don't wish to have anything further to say to you.'

The man went out scowling and muttering, and Dick felt that he had not finished with him yet.

Dick Marsden chose for his new home the neighbourhood of the village of Bennington, to which allusion has already been made. He chose the locality as being particularly fitted by its quietude and remoteness for the successful carrying out of his scheme with regard to Leah, but said nothing to her about it until the house was ready for occupation.

'We shall live in London, I hope?' said she.

'No; in the country.'

'Far?'

'Fifty miles.'

'Fifty miles from London!' she exclaimed.

'That will be terrible. I shall fret myself to death. I've never been accustomed to it. Remember, I am your wife, and I should have been consulted.'

She did not speak passionately, not at all as she would have spoken about a similar proposal a few months previously, and Dick was astonished. But he was encouraged. Perhaps, after all, there was some true metal beneath the coarse dross of her manner.

'Am I to be separated from my friends as well as from my father?' she asked presently.

'Yes,' replied Dick, 'inasmuch as I cannot have them at my house.'

'But you will take me amongst your friends?' she asked.

'That—that depends upon yourself,' answered her husband. 'At present, no. At some future time, perhaps. My wife must show herself the equal of my friends.'

'Why didn't you think of that when you married me!' she exclaimed bitterly, but still not angrily. 'I married you because you were a gentleman, and because I expected to be treated as a lady. Now, I shall be a general laughing-stock, and all my friends will say: "Serve her

right for marrying a gentleman instead of knowing her position and keeping to it." Why did you go and marry me if you never intended me to show myself as your wife?'

Dick forbore from making the answer in his heart: 'Because I was a young fool.'

So Dick and his wife started their new life at the Grange, Bennington.

Weeks passed, and the young man saw that his intense endeavours to make Leah his wife in something more than name were not successful. The girl seemed to keep aloof from him, and all his efforts to live pleasantly and affectionately with her met with no response. She had now attained the object of her ambition, the command of wealth, and yet she was palpably unhappy. The idea of passing her life in this great, quiet country-house seemed absolutely to terrify her, and it was quite clear that she derived no pleasure from the society of her husband. Incurable restlessness and inability to fix her attention upon any pursuit for more than a few minutes, Dick ascribed to her semi-public training and bringing-up; but for certain new features about her nervousness, her sleeplessness at night, her habit of muttering to herself, he could not account. In vain he sought for a remedy. He offered to have music and drawing masters for her; he tried to interest her in country-life, in the garden, in the stables, in reading, but ineffectually.

Then he made a concession out of sheer pity for her condition—a condition into which of course he might blame himself for bringing her. He steadily refused to admit her father to the house, but he gave her permission to have some of her old friends down.

She was delighted, and for the first time since their change of fortune, showed anything like an approach to her old vivacity. In their company she became an altered creature, and although Dick could not bring himself to receive them himself in the person of host, he allowed her to play hostess with unstinted hand, and did not intrude his restraining presence upon them. To give Leah's London friends their due, they behaved themselves better than could have been expected from individuals of a class whose recreative notions are usually associated with excess of liberty of speech and action. They were slangy and noisy, it is true; and the rnde janglings of the grand piano in accompaniment of unclassical ditties suggested irresistible comparisons in Dick's mind with the sweet old English ballads which Marian Akhurst used to warble after dinner in the drawing-room at Portland Place; but nothing went on which would bring actual discredit on the house; and the natives who were attracted to the gate on the high-road by the brilliancy of illumination, the festive sounds, and the vision through widely opened and unblinded windows of gaily attired ladies and animated gentlemen, pronounced the company at the Grange to be 'a rare good lively sort and no mistake.'

But not even did this great concession seem to draw husband and wife any nearer to each other. Dick tried hard to analyse Leah's feelings towards him. He did not think that they had changed for the worse—that is to say, from feelings of mortification and disappointment to feel-

ings of actual dislike. On the contrary, she really seemed to appreciate his efforts to make their union a substantiality, for she was quiet almost to submissiveness; she had lost her old freedom and sharpness of speech; she thanked him for little kindnesses and attentions, and she busied herself to the best of her ability in household affairs.

Still, there was a gulf between them; and between any other married couple, Dick would have called it the gulf fixed by a woman *afraid* of her husband. Leah never looked him in the face. To be alone with him for any length of time was palpably irksome to her. Her gaiety in his company was forced, and on more than one occasion when he spoke kindly to her she actually burst into tears. Dick then wondered if her separation from her father had anything to do with her unaccountable depression, and yet he remembered that in the old days of poverty the relationship between father and daughter had never struck him as being affectionate, although they invariably sided with one another against him.

Gradually Dick began to observe that a great change was being wrought in Leah's appearance, and that she whom he had married as a fine, handsome young woman, was in less than three months beginning to look old and haggard.

One morning he was surprised to see the doctor's carriage at the door. Leah had gone to bed early on the preceding night, and had not been down to breakfast that morning. Dick waited for the man, and took him into his study.

'I am glad you have asked me to come in, Mr Marsden,' said the doctor, 'for although Mrs Marsden asked me not to let you know that she had sent for me, I should have felt it my duty to inform you that she is in an exceedingly unsatisfactory state of body—and mind.'

'Mind?' repeated Dick.

'Yes; mind,' said the doctor. 'I don't like the constant craving she has for change, for distraction, for excitement.—Tell me, has she had a great trouble or disappointment lately?'

'Not that I know of,' replied Dick. 'She was disappointed when she married a gentleman to find that he was a poor one; and now that he is not poor, she may be disappointed at not being admitted into his circle of friends. But I can think of nothing else.'

'No; I don't mean that sort of disappointment,' said the doctor. 'I mean something mental rather than sentimental.'

'I know of nothing,' said Dick.

'Was she always like this?' asked the doctor.

'No; certainly not,' replied Dick. 'But, then, you see there was always an element of excitement about her professional life.'

'Hm! Well. Unless she alters her style of life,' said the doctor, speaking impressively, 'I will answer neither for her reason nor her life.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Dick, 'is it as bad as that?'

'Yes,' replied the doctor; 'she must live regularly; she must see few people. And—excuse me for asking such a question—has she any reason for being *afraid* of you?'

Dick started. The doctor had asked him the very question which Leah's peculiar attitude towards him of late had often prompted him to ask himself.

'Good God! no!' he replied—'not the shadow of a reason.'

The doctor shrugged his shoulders in a puzzled way and took his leave.

Dick rang the bell, and told the servant to ask Mrs Marsden to leave her friends for a few minutes and come in to him.

Presently Leah entered the study. On her face there was written inquisitive, almost fearful wonder. Although it was not mid-day, she was gorgeously arrayed. Her thick mass of black hair was gathered together with a diamond spray; her fingers glittered with rings. But the fire in her eyes was unnatural; and the mouth, regarding which Dick and many other golden youths had often raved in rhyme, was beginning to have that thin, drawn-out appearance which is one of the most reliable trademarks of the handiwork of Time and Wear.

'You sent for me?' she said, quite anxiously.

'I did, Leah,' replied Dick, leading her to his own chair and seating himself on the *escritoire*. 'I want to speak seriously and for your own good.'

The girl's face turned quite pale, and her two hands were knotted together so tightly that the finger-ends seemed to be buried deeply into the flesh.

Dick went on. 'The doctor has been here; he gives a very bad account of you.'

A sigh of palpable relief escaped the girl. 'Do you believe in doctors?' she asked.

'Not always,' replied her husband. 'But in this case I can see for myself that there is cause for anxiety. He says that unless you change your method of life the consequences will be serious.'

'Does he mean that I am going to die?'

'No—not exactly. You must lead a quiet, regular life, he says.'

'That would kill me; or it would drive me mad. May I have my father with me occasionally?'

Dick got off the table and walked up and down the room for a few moments in thought. 'I will see,' he said presently. 'But at anyrate all your friends must go.'

'Very well. If you insist upon it, they must. But if it had not been for them, I should have gone mad before now. I believe you mean well; but you both forget that I have been accustomed to a life of excitement, and that to take away excitement of some sort from me is like shutting a flower up in a cellar.'

'I understand you,' said Dick kindly, and taking one of her hands in his; 'but I want, Leah, to do the best for you. I really do, and perhaps after a while'—

The girl sprang up from the chair, and in an agony of sobs and tears rushed from the room.

The curative course commenced that day. The rabble of singers, acrobats, musicians, and hangers-on at the Shoreditch Music Hall departed by the evening train, and Dick explained to them that it was by the doctor's strict orders.

For some weeks the strangely assorted husband and wife were left to themselves; still there was no diminution of the symptoms so gravely accentuated by the doctor; and Dick became more and more forcibly convinced that the secret of

the girl's horror was, not of her surroundings, not of the change of life, but of *him*. She pleaded indisposition when he asked her to go out with him. She shut herself up for hours in her own room. She often rose from the dinner table when the meal was but half through. She was sleepless at night. She—the 'Stunning Gipsy Jane' of the music hall, the dashing *soubrette*, the bold, brazen-faced chanter of roaring ditties, the dancer whose steps had an *abandon* which was the delight of the East End, the unblushing hurler of chaff and repartee and slangy retort—started at sudden noises, changed colour when she was spoken to, and had the utmost horror of quiet and darkness. Gradually Dick noticed that the restlessness and feverish activity were being succeeded by dreaminess and lethargy; that her sleepless eyes had the peculiar, heavy look of one whose craving was for sleep; that her hand was unsteady, and that the swart olive of her complexion was changing to an unwholesome yellow.

He sent for the doctor, who shook his head gravely as he said: 'Constitutionally, there is nothing wrong with her; but the mind is killing the body, and she is taking opium to kill the mind. Mr Marsden, there is something at the root of all this *which she is concealing from you*, for it is contrary to every law and every usage of nature for a strong, healthy, young woman, as Mrs Marsden still is, to be sinking into the condition in which she now is.'

THE EXPLOSION OF KITCHEN-RANGE BOILERS.

THE winter is undoubtedly the most appropriate time to call attention to this danger that exists in our households, owing to the fact that although there are four distinct causes of such disasters, frost, which is one of them, takes precedence as being the most prolific of mischief. This article is not intended to be of an alarming nature, but to call attention to what precautions should be adopted, these precautions being of an ordinary and simple kind, and their adoption tending to make these somewhat rare accidents still more unlikely. That the danger does exist there is no denying. It is not often that its occurrence comes to our ears, but its infrequency is no excuse, as in fully half the instances it proves fatal to some one.

The kind of boiler that is accountable for the trouble under discussion is that which exists at the back of the kitchen-range fire, and is in connection with a system of pipes which furnish hot water for baths, &c., in different parts of the house. This boiler is sealed up, and the only outlet for steam—the expansive force which does the hurt—is in the form of an open pipe at the extreme top of the apparatus. There is another relief for any unusual force that may occur, in the cold supply-pipe, as, before an explosion could take place, the force would exert itself through this channel. This is assuming the regular safety-pipe referred to is closed. The danger, therefore, from frost is in its solidifying

the water in this safety-pipe and the cold supply-pipe. The same danger also occurs if the pipes in some other part of the apparatus are frozen, and so cut off the escape of steam by either of the exits named. In other words, there is pronounced danger if, during the night, frost so affects the pipes that when the fire is lighted in the morning any steam generated cannot escape. Steam, as every account of boiler explosions manifests, has enormous force, and it is merely a matter of time and firing to cause it to rend open a strong wrought-iron boiler, and then its effect is most disastrous to anything or any one that may be near.

From this explanation, and knowing how servants light the fires without thinking of frost or peril, it may naturally be thought that accidents might occur oftener than they do. It happens, however, that there are many things—trifling occurrences in themselves—which transpire to obviate danger; and there is no doubt whatever that, during a severe and lasting frost, there are numbers of range-fires lighted when it is almost suicidal to do so, and yet, strangely, seldom any casualty occurs. These incidental elements of safety are, providentially, rather numerous. Firstly, assuming the fire is lighted in ignorance that some dangerous stoppage by frost exists, the gradual heating of the water may cause the ice to melt. The water in the boiler and part of the apparatus cannot be heated to boiling-point and generate steam in a few minutes; and this heating operation, occurring as it does in the tubes in which the ice is, may cause the pipes to clear sufficiently to ensure safety. Secondly, some one may go to a tap, and the mere opening of this ensures relief, as it directly and freely communicates with the source of danger—that is, supposing the tap to be connected at a point below where the frost-bite is, as would probably be the case. Thirdly, upon opening a tap—and taps are being applied to frequently and at all times—the irregular issue of water would indicate something being wrong, and possibly no water whatever would run. With such obvious symptoms of danger as these, the fire would in nine cases out of ten be extinguished, and the possibility of an accident be avoided. There are several other minor things that may occur to ensure safety when highly dangerous conditions actually exist, and, due to these it is that disasters are of much less frequent occurrence than they might otherwise be.

The correct remedy for this state of things is to protect the pipes and apparatus generally from the effects of frost. This can easily be done at a moderate expense, and it will be shown that the results are decidedly conducive to economy and comfort in other ways. To protect the pipes from frost they should be covered wherever they are exposed with some material which has slight heat-conducting properties, and nothing exceeds for this in efficiency the hair-felt, which can be bought at any ironmonger's shop. Properly speaking, a hot-water apparatus of this character should be covered in every part, including the hot-water tank, to effectually prevent loss of heat. The object of the apparatus is to provide heated water at taps; and if the fire is devoted to

this end, it is unreasonable to dissipate the heat, especially where it is not required. In addition to the economy of conserving the heat, the practice goes far towards solving that constant problem, how to ensure a supply of hot water for early bathing, for when the fire is out the water does not cool very materially during the night. If we adopt this suggestion and conserve the heat in the pipes, we shall have no reason to fear frost: but this result can be greatly aided by leaving a fire at night. Doubtless, a number of people have left fires at night in kitchen-ranges with the view to prevent the water freezing, and also with the object of providing the early bath just referred to; yet this plan has not succeeded. The plan does not succeed unless a little care and judgment are used, for, unless it is arranged that the fuel be kept in a state of combustion, and does not go out during the night, failure must follow. The common cause of failure is leaving the boiler damper open. This ensures the water being heated while there is fire; but it creates such a brisk state of combustion that the fire goes out in an hour. It is overlooked what happens after the fire is out; the boiler flue being open, there is a rapid and continuous passage of cold air under the boiler, and this undoes all that the hour's firing has effected. To ensure a range-fire keeping alight a number of hours, the boiler flue must be tightly closed, and the oven dampers only be out sufficiently far to allow the smoke to pass away. Anything like a sharp draught must be avoided; and if small coal and cinders are put on at night, frost will have no serious effect whatever. The fire being in contact with the front plate of the boiler is sufficient to effect this result.

Now, there is another effect of frost to be guarded against, to which the precautions enumerated do not apply—namely, the total failure of water-supply to the house. This, although an active source of danger, is better understood, and is always obvious. It is doubtful if any one should light a range-fire where there is a circulating boiler, knowing that the water-supply is stopped. To do such a thing is highly dangerous, and it occurs in this way. After the water ceases to issue from the taps, there may be a little left in the boiler and a few feet of pipe; but this quantity is evaporated after an hour or so's firing. When the water has disappeared, the boiler becomes red-hot, and should a thaw set in, or water pass from any other cause into the boiler while it is in this state, the result would be an explosion of a terrific nature. A fire should never be lighted in a range of this kind when the water-supply has failed.

From this it will be understood that severe frosts require that attention should be given and precautions taken against their effect upon hot-water apparatus; but there are three other recognised causes that can be explained in their order of precedence as regards danger. The first cause is failure in the water-supply. This is not always due to frost. One instance known to the writer was owing to an extensive leakage which passed unnoticed, due to its occurring in a hollow wall. In country residences, a failure frequently occurs, and the wonder is that accidents are not more common, as the water-supply is usually provided for by an odd man's attention at a pump. It is

when a number of visitors cause an unusual demand for water that the cisterns are emptied. An excellent way of obviating this danger is by having the apparatus erected upon—or altered to—the modern 'cylinder system.' This system does not permit of the hot-water tank being emptied, so that when the water fails, there remain some forty gallons of water to be disposed of by evaporation. This would be an element of safety for many hours even if a large fire was kept going.

The next cause is stopcocks in the circulating pipes. It is not the insertion of one cock only in one of the pipes that is to be condemned; for so long as one pipe remained clear no accident could occur. It is the not infrequent practice of putting cocks in both pipes that is so bad, as it permits of the boiler being cut off from the steam outlet. The object of this practice is to permit of the boiler being emptied and opened for cleaning or repairs without withdrawing the water from the remainder of the apparatus. This is certainly a convenience, but only a small one, as the waste of the water is scarcely worth considering, and a large apparatus can be emptied within an hour. This practice fulfils no useful purpose, and in the hands of unskilled or careless people is an element of danger. About five years ago a plumber, a practical man, who was actually using the cocks, lost his life by forgetting to open them before he lighted the fire.

The last cause is incrustated deposit. As our readers who live in hard-water districts know, there is considerable deposit of a stone-like substance, carbonate of lime, inside boilers and pipes which have water within them and are subjected to great heat. The dangerous element is that the pipes may in course of time become totally stopped with this substance; but, fortunately, as the accumulation occurs it gives unmistakable warning a long time before it reaches a dangerous degree. If it were not for this, explosions from this cause would be quite common; but the warning is compelled to occur, and no one can overlook it. Consequently, it is doubtful if an accident from this cause has ever actually happened. The writer has made inquiries from many sources, but cannot trace such an occurrence. The warning that this accumulating deposit gives differs somewhat occasionally, but it is always in the form of violent noises and vibrations proceeding from the apparatus; and before any danger is to be feared, they are unbearable, and have to be remedied to put an end to the annoyance. When these noises are heard in an old apparatus and they gradually grow worse, it may be taken for granted that some part of the pipes—near the boiler—is becoming choked, and will have to be cleared or renewed.

In conclusion, there is the universal remedy for all the dangers to be suggested, which is an unfailing one—the provision of a safety-valve. A discussion occurred recently between several of our best authorities as to whether an accident had been known to occur where a safety-valve was provided. No such instance was known. Considering the little expense a safety-valve involves when the range is first fixed, and the terrible nature of the calamities it obviates, it ought to be compulsory to use it. We shall

perhaps have a little epidemic of explosions some day, and then the authorities may move; but it is to be hoped the epidemic may never occur, or that we may be prepared before the time.

GENTLEMAN GEORGE.

By REGINALD HORSLEY.

"('GENTLEMAN GEORGE' is over the border, Sergeant."

'You don't say so, sir!'

'It's a fact. The chance you have been waiting for is come at last. He stuck up the bank at Rosewood and put a bullet through the manager's head. You knew that?'

'Yes, sir. 'Twas his first murder, I believe.'

'Yes, his hands were clean of blood up till then; but they all come to it some time if they are out long enough.—How long has Cardale been out?' Cardale was the almost forgotten surname by which 'Gentleman George' had been known in days gone by.

'Three years, sir,' I replied. 'Three years, good measure.'

'Ah! well, it is time he was stopped. I suppose he finds Victoria a trifle too hot for him after this rumour, so he has crossed over to us for a while.'

'Is your information reliable, sir?'

'Quite. Foster saw him at Billabong yesterday, and wired.'

'Foster! Why didn't he take him, then?'

The Chief smiled. 'As well ask the bird why it did not catch the cat. No, no; there is only one man on our side I expect can do that.' And he looked at me and laughed.

'Meaning me, sir?'

'Meaning you, Sergeant Sparks.'

'I'm sure I'm much obliged, sir.'

'Well, then, see that you justify my good opinion.—But you have a wily customer to deal with, Sergeant. Three years out, by Jove! And those Melbourne side troopers are no fools.'

'I expect I've got my work cut out, sir.'

'I imagine you have.—Now then, off with you at once; get the latest description of the fellow from Foster, and follow him up. It will be five hundred pounds in your pocket if you take him.—And mind,' added the Chief impressively after a pause, 'mind, it is *dead or alive*. Report to me on your return.'

I saluted, and withdrew, and ten minutes later was galloping in the direction of Billabong.

Five hundred pounds! It was a big reward; but I tell the honest truth when I say that just then I thought more of the honour and glory of getting the man than the money. For three years the Victorian troopers had been after him, and the best of them had never come next to near him. Sometimes they might get a glimpse of him, but that was all; and once out of sight, George, who was every inch a bushman, could laugh at the lot of them. His mare was a flyer, too, a sort of Australian edition of 'Black Bess,' and the distances the two of them covered now and again were almost incredible. There wasn't a township in Victoria where the bank manager didn't live in dread of a visit from George; and there wasn't a newspaper in the country that didn't abuse the police for their failure to take

him, and get off leather-headed opinions as to the way in which it ought to be done. However, it never had been done; and for all their smartness, the troopers never had a show. I expect they were heartily sick of the very name of 'Gentleman George,' and heard of his crossing the border with no little satisfaction. I know I did, for I had heard so much about him that I positively ached to have a slap at him. And now I was actually out after him. No wonder I felt a trifle more excited than usual. If I could manage to nab him at the first try, what a feather that would be in the cap of the New South Wales police!

At Billabong I found Foster—in plain clothes. 'Why, what's up? Where's your uniform?' I asked him.

Foster grinned uneasily. 'Ask George,' he said.

'I will that,' I answered, 'if ever I come up with him. Do you mean to say he's got it?'

'He has so,' replied Foster ruefully; 'and my horse and saddle into the bargain.'

I roared, laughing. 'Well, I'm blest, if that doesn't beat cock-fighting,' I cried. 'Got your horse too. But where is his mare?'

'How should I know? Got a bullet in her somewhere, very likely. Anyhow, he was riding a sorry beast enough.'

'Tell us all about it,' I said.

'Well,' began Foster gloomily—for he was very sensitive to chaff, and this was not the first mistake he had made by a long way. 'I was over at Rogers's about those sheep he lost last week'—this I knew to be Foster's euphemism for taking a drink, but I did not interrupt him. 'My horse was hung up outside,' he went on, 'and we were talking away, when, all of a sudden, in walks George as cool as you please. "Keep your seats, gentlemen," says he, laying a six-shooter on the counter; "keep your seats, or there'll be trouble." We kept 'em.'

'What! Were you not armed?'

'No. Why? All was quiet our way. I had no notion George was over the border till he dropped in on us.'

'It is always well to be prepared for surprises,' I said. 'Well?'

'Well, I recognised him at once, for I lived down his way before he took to the bush. Presently he stared at me. "Why, it's Foster," says he. "Hullo, Foster!"—"Hullo, George!" says I. "What's up?"—"You're the right man in the wrong clothes," says he; "they don't suit you a little bit. Take them off and hand them over to me."—"What do you mean?" says I.—"Well," says he, mighty polite, "I'm sorry to inconvenience you, but I'll trouble you for your uniform. That's what I mean."

'And you gave it to him?'

'What could I do? There was no use in swallowing lead for nothing.'

'What happened then?'

'He tucked the uniform under his arm, made Rogers give him a nobbler, which he drank off, filled his flask out of the bottle, and turned to the door.'

'And you let him go without a word?'

'Oh, I gave him words enough, you bet; but he only laughed; and when he got outside, he jumped on my horse, and says he: "I'll borrow

your nag as well, Foster, as you are so pressing." And with that he rode off?

I laughed again. "Well, he's a cool hand," I said. "Which way did he go?"

"North-east, in the direction of Forty Mile Creek," replied Foster; and proceeded to give me a minute description of the bushranger.

"Well, good-bye, old man," I said when he had finished; "I'll bring back your uniform with George inside it, I hope.—Meantime, I'd advise you not to talk too much "sheep" to Rogers, or you may come to grief. So long!"

"A mighty smart trick that," I thought as I rode along. "A trooper riding through a bush township is no such uncommon sight. I expect I'll have some trouble to strike Master George's trail." And so it proved during the next week, for, though I daresay I was often close behind him, and though I made the most minute and searching inquiries in the various townships I passed as to the appearance of any troopers who had preceded me, yet I never once got any satisfactory information, and I was beginning to despair of ever coming up with my man, when at last, and quite unexpectedly, I did so. "Clever Capture," the newspapers called it. Bosh! It was sheer luck, and nobody ever heard me blow about it. If it had not been for a piece of superb insolence on his part and a fortunate accident on mine, I might very well have missed him altogether.

It was about one o'clock one afternoon that I rode up to the homestead on Toomburra, the owner of which station, Mr Ingram, or 'the Squire,' as he was usually styled, I knew very well. I came in by the back way, and was riding towards the stables, when I noticed a horse hung up to a post by one of the outhouses. I glanced carelessly towards it as I went by; and then, as my eye took in the details, I jumped hastily out of the saddle, and hitching my horse to a sapling, ran hard across the intervening ground. My heart thumped against my ribs from excitement as I saw that my impression had been correct. The strange horse carried a regulation saddle and bridle, and bore the government brand! "Gently," I said to myself. "It won't do to jump at conclusions; this may not be Foster's horse after all." Then I examined the holsters. One was empty, but from the other I drew out a revolver—*not* regulation. I breathed more freely. "That's better," I muttered; "he's got the other on him for a certainty: I'll make sure of this one at any rate;" and I drew the cartridges and slipped the weapon back into its case. Then I went swiftly round to the front of the house and, sheltering myself behind the creepers which grew thickly over the veranda posts, peered cautiously into the dining-room through the open window. They were all there, the Squire, his wife and daughter, and a young son home for the holidays. But there was some one else, a strapping fellow in police uniform, whose features, as he sat with his back to the window, I could not make out. I don't know him from this side," I said to myself; "but he seems to be on capital terms with the Squire. What if I have made a mistake?" And then I remembered the pistol in the holster, and was comforted.

Making my way round to the back again, I

entered without ceremony, and going noiselessly along the passage, paused for a moment at the dining-room door. There I halted and looked in, and, in the rapid glance I shot at the handsome trooper who was evidently the life and soul of the party, I recognised, by certain peculiarities of feature which Foster had described to me, the man I was after, the redoubtable George himself. I took in the situation in an instant. "By jingo," I grinned to myself, "isn't he a daisy! What magnificent cheek!"

Just then—of course it happened in much less time than it takes to tell—the Squire saw me and jumped up with a loud outcry. "Sergeant Sparks!" he roared, upsetting his chair in the fervour of his hospitable greeting. "Bravo! Are there any more of you? We'll have the whole force here presently. Come and have some dinner. That's right." And he pushed me into a chair opposite the stranger, whose behaviour ever since my entrance I had carefully watched out of the corner of my eye. I must say it was remarkable. His face never changed at all, only I noticed that, as the Squire called out my name, his hand dropped from the level of the table to his belt. That was all: otherwise he sat perfectly still; and then, seeing that I took no manner of notice of him, he resumed his dinner and nodded pleasantly as the Squire, good easy man, with no notion of 'treason, plots, and stratagems,' introduced us to one another.

"You won't know Merton, I expect, Sergeant," he said. "He's from the Melbourne side on special duty."

Now, bluff is a game that two can play at, and, besides, I didn't want bullets flying round the room while the ladies were in it, so I answered quietly: "Indeed. Secret service?"

"Oh, dear no!" said my *soi-disant* comrade, in an extremely pleasant voice, and with an amount of manner which, if he really were 'Gentleman George,' plainly showed how he came by his sobriquet. "Oh, dear no! not at all. I'm out after "Gentleman George," who skipped from our side after that shooting affair at Rosewood lately."

I wasn't ready for that, I confess; but I managed to keep a straight face as I replied: "Are you really! Then we can look him up together, for I am out after him too."

"Gad!" said the Squire, "he shouldn't get very far with two such chaps as you after him."

"Ah," said my opposite neighbour, "I've heard of the prowess of Sergeant Sparks. Who hasn't? I think we ought to be sure of our man. Two hundred and fifty apiece, Sergeant, eh?" And he looked at me and laughed.

"Yes," I admitted carelessly, "if we get him. But I don't seem to hear the money jingling in my pockets yet, anyway. Do you know George by sight?" I continued, not looking at him, as I poured out a glass of claret.

"Rather," he returned, laughing again. "Do you?"

"Unfortunately, no," I answered. "I've only a somewhat imperfect description to go upon. However, with your help—"

"And your own well-known cleverness," he complimented.

"Thanks," I said, smiling in a pleased fashion. "Well, we shall see. Have you been here long?" I added.

'No; I rode up just about dinner-time, and Mr Ingram insisted on my stopping. I bunked at Waratah last night.'

Fatal error! I lowered my eyes that he might not see the triumph that shone in them. Waratah was a station some five-and-twenty miles away, and I had spent the previous night there myself. I was certain of him now; but it was no part of my plan to let him see it.

The conversation grew general again, and I will say a better table-companion than Merton I never met. He laughed and jested, told a score of excellent yarns, and certainly no one could have suspected that he sat there with a price upon his head, and within a foot or two of a man who was sworn to take him dead or alive. I must admit I admired the fellow, he was so cool.

Presently there came a lull in the flow of talk, and Merton rose from the table. What a remarkably handsome man he was, and what a splendid chest and shoulders! I was not by any means a chicken myself, but I felt if we came to grips he would have the best of me. Therefore, I determined not to give him the chance.

'Excuse me, Mr Ingram,' he said; 'I'll just take a look at my horse and be back again directly.'

'Do you think of going on at once?' I queried.

'Well,' he returned, 'as I didn't know what might happen, I hung up my horse outside; but now that you have turned up, I'll stable him for an hour or so while we discuss the best thing to do.'

'Right you are,' I said; while to myself I added: 'Catch me letting you reach your horse, my fine fellow.' Then I went on aloud: 'I'll take the saddle off my beast as well.'

By this time he had reached the door, from which a long and narrow passage led to the back entrance. I let him get a little way before I rose, for I wanted him well in front of me, and then, after a hurried whisper to Mr Ingram, 'Sit still, Squire, whatever happens,' I bounded into the passage after my quarry. He had not suspected I saw through him, it was evident, so I was on him with the muzzle of my revolver pressed against the back of his neck before he had time to turn, even if it had occurred to him to do so. 'Throw up your hands!' I cried in a low voice. 'Quick! or I'll drop you in your tracks.'

He threw up his hands slowly. 'You are mad,' he said. 'What do you mean?'

'I'll apologise afterwards, if I'm wrong,' I answered. 'Meantime, keep up your hands.' As I spoke, I rapidly unclasped his belt, and threw it with the revolver in it as far behind me as I could. 'Now,' I said, 'march straight on, and'— But the fight was not out of him by any means, though I had him at such disadvantage. With extraordinary quickness, he ducked, and then, turning swiftly round, he struck upwards so fiercely at my right hand that the pistol exploded, the ball burying itself somewhere in the ceiling, as the weapon sailed through the air and dropped some yards behind me; while at the same moment I received a blow on the chest, delivered with such tremendous strength that I reeled right back into the dining-room.

The moment I got to my feet, I rushed after George, who had of course made good his escape by the back door and gained his horse. By the

time I got outside he was off, and I saw him sailing over the slip-rails like a bird.

'So long, Sparks, old man,' he shouted to me. 'You had a good try for it, but you won't collar the five hundred this bout.'

'Won't I!' I yelled after him wrathfully, as I flung myself on my horse.—'What's up?' roared the Squire, rushing madly out.—'Gentleman George,' I howled back as I popped over the slip panels and raced away over the flat on the bushranger's track.

George knew all about riding, I soon saw, for, short as was the start he had got, he made the most of it. We kept the same distance between us for about ten miles, and then, though I knew the pace was too hot to last, yet George's horse was fresher than mine, and I saw that I was losing ground.

'I must stop him,' I muttered. 'If once he reaches the Long Scrub, he'll dismount and get clear away.' So I shouted: 'Halt, George, or I'll fire.' I don't know whether he heard me or not, for he kept straight on; so I let drive at him. It seemed to me that he swayed a little in his saddle, but I could not be certain, and only those who have tried it know how difficult a thing it is to hit a mark when one is going at racing pace. Presently he reached for his holster and drew out the revolver I had replaced. He saw in a moment what had been done, and flinging the weapon aside with a violent gesture, he rode on for dear life.

And now the edge of the Long Scrub came in sight. I drove the spurs into my horse and sent him along for all he was worth. George heard my cries of encouragement, looked round once as a second bullet from my revolver whistled over his head, or buried itself in his body, I could not tell which, and with a yell of defiance, urged his horse into a yet more furious gallop.

Nearer and nearer we drew to the scrub, and the pace was tremendous. The strain was telling fearfully on both horses, and it was evident that neither of them had much more running left in him. George's was labouring fearfully, despite the savage spurring of his rider; while my own faithful roan was sobbing with distress as he struggled gamely, but in vain, to overtake his fellow. And now the goal was very near, and still George thundered on. Would he beat me? I ground my teeth together and called on my horse for one last effort. Gallantly the poor brute responded, and I felt him spring beneath me as he put all his noble heart into the struggle. Hurrah! I was gaining. But, oh, how slowly. It was a question of time, of endurance, and—ha! look at George! Was I blind with excitement, or was he reeling in his saddle? Nearer and nearer—five minutes more and he will be there. Three are gone—four—he is there! And then for one moment I seemed to see him away from side to side—the next, I was hurled through the air like a bolt from a bow, as my horse, putting his foot in a treacherous hole, came headlong to the ground.

For some moments I lay there stunned; and then, struggling again into consciousness, I tried to rise. But it was no use; my left leg was broken, and I sank back with a groan. Fifty yards away, I saw George supporting himself on one elbow and looking at me.

'Are you hit, George?' I called out.

176
 'You,' he answered; 'somewhere in the shoulder. I lost so much blood, I couldn't keep my seat. What's wrong with you?'
 'Surrender, George,'
 'Leg,' I replied laconically.
 'What! To a man with a game-leg? Not I. Besides, what for? You would nurse my wound well again, and then hang me. No, no; I know a trick worth two of that; and he began to crawl slowly and painfully towards a point somewhere to my right, not, to my surprise, in the direction of the scrub. I watched him for a moment or two as he dragged himself laboriously along. 'What are you at?' I shouted at last, puzzled by his behaviour. He never answered; but with his eyes fixed apparently on some object which I could not see, held straight on his course, his breath coming and going in deep shuddering sighs from the dreadful effort the exertion cost him.

'Whatever can his game be?' I wondered, as, screwing myself round with difficulty, I followed the direction of his intent gaze. I saw it all now! What a fool I had been not to think of it before! Plainly outlined against a tussock of grass by which it had fallen was my revolver, which had been jerked out of my hand as I fell. That was what George was making for.

I wasted no time in words, you may be sure: I wasn't going to lie there to be shot like a dog, and, cursing my own folly, I started to crawl towards the revolver on my own account. I had somewhat the best of it even now, for though George was a little nearer the tussock than I was, yet he was fearfully weak, and more than once he fell over on his side, labouring painfully for breath. But, oh! it was torture for me. Lines of red-hot fire ran up and down my leg, and my very heart ached with the intensity of the pain. The agony was horrible, and over and over again I stopped and sank groaning on my face. But the dreadful issue at stake nerved me, and I held on. I glanced at George, and shuddered, for he was awful to behold. His right arm hung useless by his side; but with his left hand he clutched the grass, or dug his nails into the soil as he dragged himself along, or sank upon his stomach and wriggled forward like a great snake. Great drops of sweat stood out on his forehead and rolled down his cheeks; his teeth were set, and his face, deadly white from loss of blood, wore a look of fierce determination as he rallied after each desperate effort.

All at once, in the midst of that ghastly crawl, I heard the sound of hoofs far away. I never looked round, but I knew what it meant, and a thrill of hope shot through me.

'Give it up, George,' I cried breathlessly. 'The Squire and his men are coming. You've no show, even if you do shoot me.' Not a word said George, only he kept straight on. Nearer and nearer came the thunder of the galloping horses, and nearer and nearer we drew to that deadly revolver, as we laboured along, panting, gasping, groaning, gnashing. Nearer and nearer—I could hear the Squire's shout borne faintly through the clear air. Nearer still, and my heart began to throb exultantly as I realised I was the closer to the goal, when all of a sudden I felt as if all the pain in the world had concentrated itself in my leg. I could not go on, and for one moment at least I had to lie still; and that moment gave

(George the advantage, for, as I looked up again, he had reached the revolver. But the terrible strain he had undergone overcame him, and in the very act he sank swooning to the ground. Another instant and it would have been in my grasp, when, with a dying effort, George writhed forward. Our hands met with a shock; but before I could seize his wrist, he snatched the revolver, and with a gigantic heave, rolled over out of reach and lay still. Groaning with pain, I slewed myself round. The Squire and his men were not far away now, and coming on like demons. If I could only reach George before he revived! But it was useless; exhausted nature gave way, and I sat still and despairing.

On came the Squire, shouting like mad. In a moment we should be surrounded: in a moment the danger would be past. Hurrah! I tried to shout, but my parched throat refused its office, and the word died away in a cracked shriek. On thundered the Squire—a couple of hundred yards more and—just then George stirred, heaved a long shuddering sigh, and sat bolt upright, the blood gushing from his mouth and nose, and the revolver tightly clasped in his hand.

I saw it was all up, and steadied myself, determined to meet my fate like a man. Behind me I heard the Squire. In front of me sat George, holding the revolver, and looking deathly as he swayed unsteadily to and fro.

Suddenly he spoke, roused by the shouts that were now almost in our ears. 'I'm done for,' he gasped. 'If it were only you, I'd have a break for freedom; but there are too many. Look here, Sergeant. I was born a gentleman—I've come down a good deal—but I'll die like one. You shan't put the rope round my neck. You shan't.' He raised the revolver to his head, and then, catching sight of my amazed face, he lowered it again and broke into a low gurgling laugh. 'Why, bless you, Sergeant,' he said, 'it was for myself—not for you. So long! So'—There was a sharp report, and, even as the Squire leaped from his reeking horse and rushed forward, 'Gentleman George' fell on his face and lay still—still for ever, this time.

Yes, they took me back to Toomburra, and nursed my leg well again, and I got the reward; but, somehow, whenever I remember George, I am glad he got hold of the revolver first.

SEA-VOICES.

Up from the Deeps the mystic voices come—
 The mystic, moaning Voices of the Sea;
 They sing their 'Miserere' ceaselessly.
 I stand and listen to them, stricken dumb.
 Aye mingling with the tangled notes of Time,
 They chant in mighty harmony below:
 'Through grief and pleasure, Life must onward go,
 Till God's deep bells the resting-hour shall chime.'
 And from the heaving bosom of the Sea
 Comes, like a sigh of love, the word to me:
 'Though thou shalt see no light in coming years,
 Hold thou to this: that good oft seemeth ill,
 And that, through storm and darkness moving still,
 Man's life is set to music of the spheres.'

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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ELECTRICITY FROM NIAGARA.

By J. MUNRO.

THE great scheme now approaching completion for the utilisation of Niagara Falls by means of electricity is a triumph of human enterprise which outrivals some of the bold creations of Jules Verne.

When in 1678 the French missionaries La Salle and Hennepin discovered the stupendous cataract on the Niagara River between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the science of electricity was in its early infancy, and little more was known about the mysterious force which is performing miracles in our day than its manifestation on rubbed amber, sealing-wax, glass, and other bodies. Nearly a hundred years had still to pass ere Franklin should demonstrate the identity of the electric fire with lightning, and nearly another hundred before Faraday should reveal a mode of generating it from mechanical power. Assuredly, neither La Salle nor his contemporaries ever dreamed of a time when the water-power of the Falls would be distributed by means of electricity to produce light or heat and serve all manner of industries in the surrounding district. The awe-struck Iroquois Indians had named the cataract 'Oniagahra,' or Thunder of the Waters, and believed it the dwelling-place of the Spirit of Thunder. This poetical name is none the less appropriate now that the modern electrician is preparing to draw his lightnings from its waters and compel the *genius loci* to become his willing bondsman.

The Falls of Niagara are situated about twenty-one miles from Lake Erie, and fourteen miles from Lake Ontario. At this point the Niagara River, nearly a mile broad, flowing between level banks, and parted by several islands, is suddenly shot over a precipice one hundred and sixty feet high, and making a sharp bend to the north, pursues its course through a narrow gorge towards Lake Ontario. The Falls are divided at the brink by Goat Island, whose primeval woods are

still thriving in their spray. The Horseshoe Fall on the Canada side is eight hundred and twelve yards, and the American falls on the south side are three hundred and twenty-five yards wide. For a considerable distance both above and below the Falls the river is turbulent with rapids.

The water-power of the cataract has been employed from olden times. The French fur-traders placed a mill beside the upper rapids, and the early British settlers built another to saw the timber used in their stockades. By-and-by the Stedman and Porter mills were established below the Falls; and subsequently, others which derived their water-supply from the lower rapids by means of raceways or leads. Eventually, an open hydraulic canal three-fourths of a mile long was cut across the elbow of land on the American side, through the town of Niagara Falls, between the rapids above and the verge of the chasm below the Falls, where, since 1874, a cluster of factories have arisen, which discharge their spent water over the cliff in a series of cascades almost rivalling Niagara itself. This canal, which only taps a mere drop from the ocean of power that is running to waste, has been utilised to the full; and the decrease of water-privileges in the New England States, owing to the clearing of the forests and settlement of the country, together with the growth of the electrical industries, have led to a further demand on the resources of Niagara.

With the example of Minneapolis, which draws its power from the Falls of St Anthony—the 'Laughing Water' of *Hiawatha*—before them, a group of far-seeing and enterprising citizens of Niagara Falls have resolved to satisfy this requirement by the foundation of an industrial city in the neighbourhood of the Falls. They perceived that a better site could nowhere be found on the American Continent. Apart from its healthy air and attractive scenery, Niagara is a kind of half-way house between the East and West, the consuming and the producing States. By the Erie Canal at

Tonawanda it commands the great water-way of the Lakes and the St Lawrence. A system of trunk railways from different parts of the States and Canada are focused there, and cross the river by the Cantilever and Suspension bridges below the Falls. The New York Central and Hudson River, the Lehigh Valley, the Buffalo, Rochester, and Pittsburgh, the Michigan Central, and the Grand Trunk of Canada, are some of these lines. Draining as it does the great lakes of the interior, which have a total area of 92,000 square miles, with an aggregate basin of 290,000 square miles, the volume of water in the Niagara River passing over the cataract every second is something like 300,000 cubic feet; and this, with a fall of two hundred and seventy-six feet from the head of the upper rapids to the whirlpool rapids below, is equivalent to about nine million, or, allowing for waste in the turbines, say seven million horse-power. Moreover, the great lakes discharging into each other form a chain of immense reservoirs; and the level of the river being little affected by flood or drought, the supply of pure water is practically constant all the year round. Mr R. C. Reid has shown that a rainfall of three inches in twenty-four hours over the basin of Lake Superior would take ninety days to run off into Lake Huron, which with Lake Michigan would take as long to overflow into Lake Erie; and therefore six months would elapse before the full effect of the flood was expended at the Falls.

The first outcome of the movement was the Niagara River Hydraulic Power and Sewer Company, incorporated in 1886, and succeeded by the Niagara Falls Power Company. The old plan of utilising the water by means of an open canal was unsuited to the circumstances, and the company adopted that of the late Mr Thomas Evershed, Divisional Engineer of the New York State Canals. Like the other, it consists in tapping the river above the Falls, and using the pressure of the water to drive a number of turbines; then restoring the water to the river below the Falls; but instead of a surface canal, the tail-race is an hydraulic tunnel or underground conduit. To this end some fifteen hundred acres of spare land, having a frontage just above the upper rapids, was quietly secured at the low price of three hundred dollars an acre; and we believe its rise in value owing to the progress of the works is such that a yearly rental of two hundred dollars an acre can even now be got for it. This land has been laid out as an industrial city, with a residential quarter for the operatives, wharfs along the river, and sidings or short lines to connect with the trunk railways. In carrying out their purpose the company has budded and branched into other companies—one for the purchase of the land; another for making the railways; and a third, the Cataract Construction Company, which is charged with the carrying out of the engineering works for the utilisation

of the water-power, and is therefore the most important of all. A subsidiary company has also been formed to transmit by electricity a portion of the available power to the city of Buffalo, at the mouth of the Niagara River, on Lake Erie, some twenty miles distant. All these affiliated bodies are, however, under the directorate of the Cataract Construction Company; and amongst those who have taken the most active part in the work we may mention the President, Mr E. D. Adams; Professor Coleman Sellers, the Consulting Engineer; and Professor George Forbes, F.R.S., a son of the late Principal Forbes of Edinburgh, who is Consulting Electrical Engineer.

In securing the necessary way-leaves for the hydraulic tunnel or in the acquisition of land, the company has shown consummate tact. A few proprietors declined to accept its terms, and the company selected a parallel route. Having obtained the way-leaves for it, it informed the refractory owners on the first line of their success, and intimated that the company could now dispense with that. On this the sticklers professed their willingness to accept the original terms, and the bargain was concluded; thus leaving the company in possession of the rights of way for two tunnels, both of which they propose to utilise.

The liberal policy of the Directors is deserving of the highest commendation. They have risen above mere 'chauvinism,' and instead of narrowly confining the work to American engineers, they have availed themselves of the best scientific counsel which the entire world could afford. The great question as to the best means of distributing and applying the power at their command had to be settled; and in 1890, after Mr Adams and Dr Sellers had made a visit of inspection to Europe, an International Commission was appointed to consider the various methods submitted to them, and award prizes to the successful competitors. Lord Kelvin (then Sir William Thomson) was the President; and Professor W. C. Unwin, our well-known expert in hydraulic engineering, the Secretary; while other members were Professor Mascart of the Institute, the leading French electrician; Colonel Turretini of Geneva; and Dr Sellers. A large number of schemes were sent in, and many distinguished engineers gave evidence before the Commission. The relative merits of compressed air and electricity as a means of distributing the power were discussed, and on the whole the balance of opinion was in favour of electricity. Prizes of two hundred and two hundred and fifty pounds were awarded to a number of firms who had submitted plans, but none of these were taken up by the company. The impulse turbines of Messrs Faesch and Piccard of Geneva, who gained a prize of two hundred and fifty pounds, have, however, been adopted since. It is another proof of the determination of the company to procure the best information on the subject regardless of cost,

that Professor Forbes has *carte blanche* to go to any part of the world and make a Report on any system of electrical distribution which he may think fit.

With the selection of electricity another question arose as to the expediency of employing continuous or alternating currents. At that time continuous currents were chiefly in vogue; and it speaks well for the sagacity and prescience of Professor Forbes that he boldly advocated the adoption of alternating currents, more especially for the transmission of power to Buffalo. His proposals encountered strong opposition, even in the highest quarters; but since then, partly owing to the striking success of the Lauffen to Frankfurt experiment in transmitting power by alternating currents over a bare wire on poles a distance of more than a hundred miles, the Directors and Engineers have come round to his view of the matter, and there is little doubt that alternating currents will be employed, at all events for the Buffalo line, and probably for the chief supply of the industrial city. Continuous currents, flowing always in the same direction, like the current of a battery, can, it is true, be stored in accumulators, but they cannot be converted to higher or lower pressure in a transformer. Alternating currents, on the other hand, which see-saw in direction many times a second, cannot be stored in accumulators, but they can be sent at high pressure along a very fine wire, and then connected to higher or lower pressures where they are wanted. Each end, therefore, has its peculiar advantages, and probably both will be employed to some extent.

With regard to the engineering works, the hydraulic tunnel starts from the bank of the river where it is navigable, at a point a mile and a half above the Falls, and after keeping by the shore, it cuts across the bend beneath the city of Niagara Falls, and terminates below the Suspension Bridge under the Falls at the level of the water. It is 6700 yards long, and of a horseshoe section, nineteen feet wide by twenty-one feet high. It has been cut one hundred and sixty feet below the surface through the limestone and shale, but is arched with brick, having rubble above, and at the outfall lined on the invert or under side with iron. The gradient is thirty-six feet in the mile, and the total fall is 205 feet, of which 140 feet are available for use. The capacity of the tunnel is 100,000 horse-power. In the lands of the company it is 400 feet from the margin of the river, to which it is connected by a canal, which is over 1500 feet long, 500 feet wide at the mouth, and twelve feet deep.

Out of this canal, head-races fitted with sluices conduct the water to a number of wheel-pits 160 feet deep, which have been dug near the edge of the canal, and communicate below with the tunnel. At the bottom of each wheel-pit a 5000 horse-power Girard double turbine is mounted on a vertical shaft, which drives a propeller shaft rising to the surface of the ground; a dynamo of 5000 horse-power is to be fixed on the top of this shaft, and so driven by it. The upward pressure of the water is ingeniously contrived to relieve the foundation of the weight of the turbine shaft and dynamo. Twenty of these turbines, which are

made by the I. P. Morris Company of Philadelphia from the designs of Messrs Faesch and Piccard, will be required to utilise the full capacity of the tunnel.

The company possesses a strip of land extending two miles along the shore; and in excavating the tunnel, a coffer-dam was made with the extracted rock, to keep the river from flooding the works. This dam now forms part of a system by which a tract of land has been reclaimed from the river. Part of it has already been acquired by the Niagara Paper Pulp Company, which is building gigantic factories, and will employ the tail-race or tunnel of the Cataract Construction Company. Wharfs for the use of ships and canal boats will also be constructed on this frontage. By land and water the raw materials of the West will be conveyed to the industrial town which is now coming into existence; grain from the prairies of Illinois and Dakota; timber from the forests of Michigan and Wisconsin; coal and copper from the mines of Lake Superior; and what not. It is expected that one industry having a seat there will attract others. Thus, the pulp-mills will bring the makers of paper wheels and barrels; the smelting of iron will draw foundries and engine-works; the electrical refining of copper will lead to the establishment of wire-works, cable factories, dynamo shops; and so on. Aluminium, too, promises to create an important industry in the future. In the meantime, the Cataract Construction Company is about to start an electrical factory of its own, which will give employment to a large number of men. It has also undertaken the water-supply of the adjacent city of Niagara Falls. The Cataract Electric Company of Buffalo has obtained the exclusive right to use the electricity transmitted to that city, and it is all but settled that the line will be run in a subway for which way-leaves have been obtained. The underground line will be more expensive to make than an overhead line, but it will not require to be renewed every eight to fifteen years; and it will not be liable to interruption from the heavy gales that sweep across the lakes, or the weight of frozen sleet; moreover, it will be more easily inspected and quite safe for the public. We should also add that in addition to the contemplated duplicate tunnel of 100,000 horse-power, the Cataract Construction Company owns a concession for utilising 250,000 horse-power from the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side in the same manner. It has thus a virtual monopoly of the available water-power of Niagara; and Professor Forbes has not the least doubt that the enterprise will be a great financial success.

Thanks to the foresight of the New York State and Canada, the scenery of the Falls has been preserved by the institution of public parks; and the works in question will do nothing to spoil it, especially as they will be free from smoke. Mr Bogarts, State Engineer of New York, estimates that the water drawn from the river will only lower the mean depth of the Falls about two inches, and will therefore make no appreciable difference in the view. The utilisation of the tunnel will by this time be in practical operation, and the electrical distribution is to be ready during the summer. Altogether, the enterprise is something new in the history of the world.

It is not only the grandest application of electrical power, but one of the most remarkable feats in an age when romance has become scientific, and science has become romantic.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XIV.—THE FATTED CALF.

THE morning after Isabel found her father she woke early with the horror of the opium den upon her, and she began to reflect what was to be done with him. All day, at school, when not engrossed with her teaching, she considered what arrangements she could make for his comfort and reclamation; yes, reclamation: she did not like to think the word in regard to her father, but she did not know any other (nor do I) that would cover the necessities of his case. She pondered one plan after another, but she finally returned to that of which she had first thought: she must bring her father to live with her. She saw that if she did not, she could not properly tend and control him. She was not unaware what that decision might entail upon her—what anxiety, what risk, and what loss even; but yet she returned to it, and that not merely from an impulsive sentiment. She perceived clearly enough that such a habit as her father's, maintained more or less for twenty years and longer, must not only have 'shattered' his nerves—as Mr Doughty declared—but also have sapped his will and ruined his self-respect, and that, therefore, to restore him to himself would be both an onerous and a tedious task, demanding tact, resource, and patience: in a word, demanding Love. She perceived also certain side-issues likely to arise from her contemplated action: her father might (probably would) sometimes break away from her control, cause disquiet in their lodging, and bring upon her more expense than she could well bear; and her uncle—both her uncles—might become alienated from her, at least for a time. And why should she take this burden upon her? Because it was her duty?—because he was her father? Not altogether. Isabel was a young lady of the kind that the forces of education are tending to make increasingly common: she did not accept an opinion or perform an action merely because tradition or convention said it was right; she sought to prove all things, and at the same time to hold fast to that which is good. She had concluded long ere this that, as loosely and foolishly applied, 'Duty means something disagreeable which other people think you ought to do'; and if she had thought the particular line of conduct that lay before her disagreeable, and if she were driven to argue about it, she might have shown sufficiently that it was not her bounden duty to rescue her father from the fate to which he had committed himself, since she owed him nothing but her being. But she had not troubled to argue so—indeed, like a true woman, she had attained her conclusion not at all by course of argument—she merely did not herself think of the word 'Duty' in connection with her father, and would have resented its use by another. The fact that her father was her father inclined her to him, and the discovery that he had something

about him which pleased and charmed her made her inclination into positive attraction. In spite of his appearance, in spite of all, she liked him, and she thought well of him; but it is probable she would not have turned her energies with such generosity and alacrity to his resuscitation and rehabilitation, had she not believed him to be a man of talent and attainment.

When school was over she hurried away to her lodging to begin the fulfilment of her purpose. She inquired of her landlady if there was an unoccupied bedroom in the house. Yes; there was a bedroom—the second-floor back—recently vacated by a young gentleman that kept late hours.

'Almost as late hours as yourself, miss,' said the landlady pointedly.

'It would probably suit me,' said Isabel, ignoring her allusion. She added on an impulse of mischief: 'It is for a gentleman I should want it, Mrs Wiffin.'

'Lawk-a-daisy me, miss!' exclaimed Mrs Wiffin, subsiding into a chair, with her hands limp in her lap. 'The flurries and the worrits you put me into!—you do, indeed! A gentleman! 'Praps you're thinking of getting married. But the ways of gentlefolk must be changed: when I was a girl you'd ha' no more thought of having your intended to live in the same house with you than— There! Well! You're a good, clever, innocent young lady, I believe; but take my word for it, men are all bad when they get the chance! And you're a handsome, fine figure of a girl, my dear, and no mother to tell you things!—as I often think to myself when I'm waiting up for you at night!'

'You are a dear, good soul, Mrs Wiffin,' laughed Isabel, sitting down and taking her landlady's hand, 'and I shall try not to flurry and worry you any more.'

'There's a dear!' said Mrs Wiffin, patting her hand. 'You see I'm so perceptible to things that touch my feelings.'

Then Isabel revealed to Mrs Wiffin as a secret that must be kept from every one that it was for her father she desired the extra room: he was in poor health and must be kept quiet, and therefore she wished to take charge of him; at all which Mrs Wiffin expressed her surprise and admiration.

Isabel had just sat down to have—as women foolishly will—a make-shift meal, when there was a loud rat-tat-tat at the street door, and her uncle—Uncle Harry—was shown into her little sitting-room.

'Ah, there you are,' said Uncle Harry. 'I'm restless. I've had a walk across the park, and I thought I'd just have a cup of tea and a chat with you, my dear.'

'It is good of you, uncle, to drop in like this,' said Isabel.

'In this soft London air,' said Uncle Harry, stirring the cup of tea which his niece handed him, 'I am beginning to find I have a liver. I never knew before I had one; but, I suppose, that rascal Daniel's curries—of which I have eaten too many—have developed it.'

'And how,' laughed Isabel, 'do you propose to get rid of your liver, uncle?'

'"By strict regimen," the doctor says, "and by exercise:" by eating and drinking, that is to say, what I don't like, and by walking more than is

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comfortable or even possible in London streets and back-gardens.'

'Don't you think, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile, 'a homeopathic treatment would be better? Eat and drink what you like—curry or whatever it may be—but in small doses.'

'God!' said he, 'that's a good suggestion: homeopathic!' And he smiled most agreeably, his eyes being involved in good-natured wrinkles. 'You're a very clever girl, you know.'

Since he had sat down, it was inevitable that she should have his brother—her father—in her thought. And still as she looked at him and observed the varying expression of his face, she noted how like he was to his brother, and yet how unlike: they were, she said to herself, as a complete personality cleft in two—Uncle Harry being as the male half, hard and alert; and her father being as the female, soft, sensuous, and plastic.

'Uncle Harry,' said she, 'have you ever known any one who had for years been addicted to a subtle and insidious kind of poison?'

'Drink, do you mean?' asked Uncle Harry, frowning.

'Something like that,' said she.

'I've known tens—hundreds,' said he.

'What would you do with a person of that sort?'

'I'd let him drink himself dead,' said Uncle Harry: 'it's all you can do.'

'Nonsense, uncle,' said Isabel. 'There's surely no habit but can be changed so long as you have a body and a mind. Suppose you wanted to cure a person of that kind, how would you treat the person?'

'Cut off the liquor at once,' said Uncle Harry.

'Don't you think,' said Isabel, 'that the homeopathic way would be better? Your way seems to me so sudden and dangerous. The person who gets into the habit of drinking to excess, for instance, drinks because of his craving for a stimulant: if you wish to cure him, should not your procedure be first to vary the stimulant?'

'My experience has been,' said Uncle Harry, 'that a man takes drink because he likes it.'

'Likes the effect,' said Isabel, 'which is stimulative, less or more.' Then continuing her exposition of her view, she went on: 'First vary the stimulant. For instance, in place of dreadful, strong spirits, give him light wine, and good, stimulating food. A person that is given to drinking to excess seldom eats much—does he?'

'Very seldom; never, I may say. As I heard a soldier once put it, "He eats his beer."'

'Very well; get your person to eat well: that will be a new form of stimulation for him. Then gradually divert his attention from these gross and unwholesome forms of stimulation to others of a refined and wholesome nature; to music—if your person is that way inclined—and so on.'

Perceiving the pertinacity with which his niece followed out this exposition, Uncle Harry observed her closely—not exactly with wonder, but with the question in his mind: 'Yes, of course: but why such steadfast earnestness in this?'

Isabel, seeing his intent look, and suspecting what might be in his thought, dropped her inquiry, saying: 'After all, speculation of that kind is foolish—is it not?'

'Speculation,' said he sententiously, 'is neither

wise nor foolish in itself, but only in regard to the actions it may lead to.'

Having thus closed that discussion, he said in a manner meant to be very cordial that he had come on purpose to have a chat about something else; and Isabel, in a tone likewise meant to be very cordial and affectionate, begged to know what it was, while she feared, with a glance at the clock, that she would be much later than she had intended to be in setting out to her father. He was very comfortable, he said, with George and Joanna: he had pitched his tent in their back-garden; but he had come to think he would like a 'pitch' of his own: he did not like his daily view of other people's back-windows, and he did not like to order about other people's servants. Isabel thought—with her eye on the clock—that it would be very lonely for him to live by himself. Naturally, he said with a laugh; but he feared he bored his niece; he would come to the point: he had his eye on a companion: oh, dear, no! he did not mean marriage—nothing so foolish as that—but yet he meant a lady. And still Isabel furtively eyed the clock.

'It's you I mean,' he said suddenly. 'Would it trouble you—do you think?—to join hands with me?—to live with me? I'm sometimes crotchety, cranky, and crusty, I believe; but you're a sensible girl, and you could manage me, I've no doubt. I think we should suit each other. What do you say, my girl?'

'You are very kind, uncle,' said she quietly; very much astonished and perplexed, and becoming pale under her uncle's shrewd, expectant gaze: she now perceived her difficult position. 'The kindness of your proposal is overwhelming. But I—I think I had better remain as I am.'

'Oh,' said he, with an involuntary snap like the closing of a box. He frowned a little in evident vexation. 'You like your independence, I suppose, and your freedom?'

'It's not that, uncle. No, no; it's not that. I am, believe me, not so enamoured of my independence and freedom. Sometimes they are a trouble and a burden, for, you see, I am a woman to my great regret.'

'Oh, what is it, then?' asked he, softening his heart again and leaning with a smile over the table. 'Come now; speak to me as you would to a father. Tell me frankly.'

'Frankly, then, uncle,' said Isabel, 'a week ago I would have accepted your proposal gratefully.'

'A week ago!' said he, leaning back again. 'I see, I see. You think I was unjust to you at first, and now you won't accept any of my kindness. Don't you think that is rather—well, mean?—though it is not a word I should have thought of applying to you.'

'Oh, uncle, pray do not think that!' she cried. 'It would indeed be mean if that were my reason! Don't I know how very kind your offer is!—don't I see that you are thinking more of me than of yourself in making it? And I confess that three days ago even I would have welcomed your generosity: it is generous and good of you, and it pains me very much to say I can't accept it now. That may seem to you strange; but something has happened within the last day or two, and I have undertaken a responsibility which I cannot lay aside, and which demands that I should live as I am.'

Her uncle wrinkled and puckered his brows in disappointment and suspicion and drummed on the table. 'I suppose,' said he, 'you would say it is no business of mine to ask the nature of the responsibility?'

'No, no, uncle. I would not say anything of the kind. Indeed, I would not. I cannot really tell you, but not because I think it impertinent in you to ask. I may tell you some day—by-and-by—but I cannot tell you now. Pray, believe me, uncle.'

'I do believe you, my dear,' said he, patting the hand she extended to him. 'And I believe you are too sensible and clever not to have a sufficient reason for what you are doing and for keeping it to yourself. Do not trouble yourself. Be good. But I suppose this responsibility won't remain on you for ever? When it's gone, will you promise me to consider my offer?'

'I cannot say how long the responsibility may remain; but it may modify itself; in any case, I promise.'

Then Uncle Harry rose to go. 'I daresay,' said he, 'you feel scarcely equal to a walk this afternoon. You look a little upset, and had better rest, perhaps. If,' he continued, holding her hand and looking at her kindly, 'you should want to confide in me by-and-by about any difficulty, you will not find me backward to help you.'

'You are very good, uncle,' said she; 'and I may come to you for advice by-and-by.'

(To be continued.)

THE DUTCH RAID ON THE MEDWAY.

'I WILL be revenged!' So, with a great oath, exclaimed John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of the United Provinces. What he took oath to avenge was the burning of Vlie and its shipping by Admiral Holmes in 1666. The time had now come for retribution. Charles II. had been voted five millions of money to equip a fleet and put the country in a proper state of defence, in view of the Dutch war, then in progress. But the Merry Monarch, with great ingenuity, had found—in his estimation at least—a better use for it; he spent the greater part on his court and his favourites—mostly females. The consequence was that the country was utterly defenceless, and its coasts and honour at the mercy of the first comer. Pepys, in his Diary, bitterly bemoans the state of the country at this period. The king and court were utterly abandoned to vicious pleasures. Public affairs were completely neglected and in utter confusion, especially in the Admiralty department. The Dockyard hands were openly mutinous on account of arrears of pay. Seamen deserted—some even going over to the Dutch—for the same reason. Men-of-war were lying rotting in the yards and in the river in various stages of equipment, from the sheer impossibility of procuring hands to fit them out, the workmen absolutely refusing to do a stroke of work, or seamen to go on board their vessels, unless they were first paid; for otherwise they knew only too well from experience that they might, so to speak, whistle for their money; and as there was no money with which to pay them, either before or after their work, the work remained undone.

Such was the state of affairs when the Dutch made their descent on the English coast. They could not have chosen a better time. On the 17th June 1667, Cornelius de Witt, brother of the Grand Pensionary, and Admiral de Ruyter appeared off the Nore with a Dutch fleet of fifty-one men-of-war, three frigates, and fourteen fire-ships. On the morning of the 19th, after a council of war had been held, an expedition, consisting of seventeen of the most formidable of the men-of-war, under Admirals van Ghent, De Liefde, and Vlieg, left the main fleet, and sailed up the Thames, cautiously feeling their way among the numerous shoals and sands that guard the mouth of the river; and here it may be mentioned that the Dutch, while they were in the Thames, showed a knowledge of its navigation which the English themselves did not possess. They got up with the first tide as far as the Middle, and with the second to about two miles of the Hope. Here they could see the ships at Gravesend; but the wind falling and evening coming on, they cast anchor. Next morning the English ships had disappeared higher up the river, and Van Ghent thought it prudent to return to the mouth of the Medway, where he was joined by other ten men-of-war under De Ruyter himself.

On the afternoon of the 20th, being opposite Sheerness, three of the more powerful vessels, the 'Haarlem' of forty-six, the 'Peace' of forty, and the 'Utrecht' of thirty-six guns, were ordered to attack and demolish the fort that had been newly raised there; while several light vessels were sent up the river to take soundings. Burnet says that 'there had been enough discourse all that year of erecting a fort at Sheerness for the defence of the river. The king had made two journeys thither in winter, and had given such orders to Commissioners of Ordnance respecting fortifications, that everybody thought the work was done.' As a matter of fact, the fort was in so weak and unfinished a state that a two hours' bombardment sufficed to batter it about the ears of its garrison, who took to flight on the appearance of a Dutch storming party of eight hundred, who, having carried off what guns and stores they could, along with the flag, blew up what remained of the fort, and retired in triumph to their vessels.

Meanwhile, the advent of the Dutch created wild confusion and dismay at Whitehall. No one seemed to know what to do. The Lord Lieutenant of Kent being absent, his deputies would not venture to take command of the troops there. The king sent down Lieutenant-general Middleton, who hastily assembled the trainbands at Rochester. While this was being done, however, the Dutch were working their wicked will unmolested.

The news of the taking of Sheerness spread terror as well as aroused indignation throughout the metropolis. The Court was roused to action, not so much, perhaps, by the gravity of the situation, as by popular clamour and the fear of the mob. Pepys says the king meditated a flight to Windsor, for change of air, as he put it. The Duke of Albemarle (General Monk) hastened down the river with the Guards and all the troops he could collect at the moment. On reaching Chatham, he found General Middleton

strongly posted there, but nothing else done for the defence of the river, except that, opposite the village of Gillingham, a chain had been stretched across the water, supported on masts sunk in the mud. He immediately raised batteries at Chatham and reinforced Upnor Castle. In order to make the chain a better defence, he sunk seven ships in front of it. There should have been another, but the 'Santa Maria,' the eighth, had run aground, and was not available. The gap thus left was the undoing of the whole business. The man-of-war 'Unity' was posted before, and the 'Carolus Quintus,' the 'Matthias,' and the 'Monmouth' behind the chain, to guard it. Several ships were also sunk at Woolwich and Blackwall, to block the river in that direction. As to these latter Pepys says: 'But strange our confusion! that among them that are sunk are the "Franklin," one of the king's ships with stores to a very considerable value, that hath been long loaded for supply of the ships; and nobody will own that they directed it, but lay it on Sir W. Rider. They speak also of another ship loaded to the value of eighty thousand pounds sunk with the goods in her, or at least was mightily contended for by him and a foreign ship that had the faith of the nation for her security; and it is too plain a truth that both here and at Chatham the ships that we have sunk have many, and the first of them been ships completely fitted for fireships at great charge.' Strange confusion indeed! but with the noise of the Dutch guns thundering in their ears, it is not to be wondered at that there was not much time for calm consideration, or that they sunk the first ships they could lay their hands on.

After levelling Sheerness fort, the Dutch weighed anchor on the 22d as soon as the tide served, and proceeded up the Medway. On reaching the vessels posted at the chain, two of the men-of-war, the 'Protection' and the 'Peace,' immediately engaged the 'Unity,' and, after a short fight, boarded and carried her. Meanwhile two fireships sailed through the gap in the sunken vessels and drove right at the chain and snapped it. One of them immediately fell foul of the 'Matthias,' set her on fire and blew her up; and shortly afterwards the 'Carolus Quintus' fell into the hands of the enemy; the 'Monmouth' seeing the turn of affairs, prudently made off. Two batteries which had been hastily erected on the shore had all this time been blazing away, but now, being exposed to a cross-fire, surrendered. When the Dutch landed at Gillingham to seize the forts, they behaved with praiseworthy moderation. They did not set a single house on fire—unlike the English at Vlie—or kill a single person, or indulge in plundering, except, as Pepys naively remarks, they only 'did take some things of easy carriage and left the rest;' in striking contrast to the English troops who occupied the village after them, who plundered the inhabitants as if they were in an enemy's country.

The passage now being forced, the whole Dutch squadron came up and sailed through the broken barrier. The dismantled 'Royal Charles' and the 'Mary' had been negligently left lying in the river, where they could be of no earthly use, and these fell into the hands of the Dutch without a blow. The 'Royal Charles'—the 'pet'

ship of the English fleet—could easily have been saved by the same tide which brought up the Dutch if there had been boats to tow her; but it was said that all the boats had been requisitioned by the English captains to convey their effects on shore from the threatened vessels. This was made the subject of an inquiry afterwards, at which Mr Pett said that he certainly used some boats to carry the models into safety, as he considered that the models would have been of much more use to the Dutch than the vessels themselves; to which the Commissioners naturally enough replied that they would rather the Dutch had had the models than the vessels, and relegated Mr Pett to the cool shades of the Tower.

The Dutch squadron sailed next morning up the river unmolested as far as Upnor Castle. This they would not have been able to do if a great blunder had not been committed in not bringing down field-guns with the troops. They had been left behind for want of 'orders.' If field-guns had been brought down the river, the Dutch would not have been able to do the damage they did; as it was, the English could only march parallel with the advancing ships, which were completely out of the range of musketry. On reaching the castle they were received by a heavy fire, which, however, soon fell off for want of powder. The Dutch now sent their boats up and burned the 'London,' the 'Princess,' the 'Oak,' and the 'Royal James,' along with several merchantmen, which were lying helpless above the castle. It is questionable if the Dutch advanced as far as Chatham itself, as is commonly stated, for Burnet says 'without doubt, if they had prosecuted their present advantage, they might have fired the royal navy at Chatham, and taken or destroyed all the ships that lay higher in the river; but they thought they had done enough, and so returned with the ebb.'

It is probable that De Ruyter was not deterred by any humane considerations of having 'done enough' from burning all he could lay his hands on; but he did not think it safe to go up any higher, as he was now in a narrow and intricate channel, where his escape might easily be cut off. He retreated, therefore, carrying with him the 'Royal Charles' and the 'Unity,' which, considering they had to be towed down, were navigated through the shoals with a skill and in a way that the best pilot on the Thames would hardly have dared to do in the then state of the wind and tide. The Dutch were forced, however, to set fire to three of their own vessels, which had gone ashore and could not be got off.

Burnet says that the distraction and consternation of the court and city were as great as if the Dutch had been not only masters of the river but had really landed an army of a hundred thousand men. The distraction and consternation of the king and court at least may be doubted, for the same night on which the Dutch burned the ships near Chatham, 'the king did sup with my lady Castlemain at the Duchess of Monmouth's, and there were all mad at hunting of a poor moth.'

Those of the populace who were able to do so fled into the country, taking their effects with them. They were doubtless used to periodical flights by this time, for first they had the Plague, then the Fire, and then came the Dutch to cap

the climax. As Pepys piously remarks, it looked as if there were a curse upon the country for the sins of its rulers. He tells how he first sent his wife and valuables into the country for safety, not being able himself to leave his post, and then made his will, in momentary expectation of death by violence at the hands of the enraged mob, as, being a government official, he would naturally be among the first upon whom it would wreak its vengeance. The mob might have had some excuse under the circumstances; it did not, however, resort to violence, confining itself to hurling insulting epithets at the members of the court and government whenever they appeared on the streets. As a finish to their exploit, the Dutch afterwards landed a force at Harwich and levied contributions on the neighbouring country.

Thus ended an incident unique, it may be said, in the history of England, in which the inhabitants of London heard for the first and last time the roar of an enemy's guns. It had such a salutary effect on the rulers of this country that peace was hastily concluded six weeks afterwards.

BY ACCIDENT.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

THESE words of the doctor's made a great impression upon Dick Marsden. Of what nature could that be which Leah was concealing from him? he asked himself. Whatever it was, it must have happened before they came to Bennington, and after the change in their fortunes had been brought about, for, although ever loving publicity and the society of those with whom she was professionally brought in contact, and of a decidedly gregarious and even convivial temperament, Leah had never before betrayed the nervousness and restlessness and inability to fix her attention upon one occupation for any length of time, of which the doctor made such a point, and upon the seriousness of which he laid such stress.

Dick puzzled over this mystery for a long time without arriving any nearer to a plausible solution of it. Suddenly it occurred to him that Leah's father, the disreputable gipsy loafer, might in some way be connected with her mental trouble. He did not think that the mere fact of separation from him was weighing heavily upon the girl, although she had more than once asked to be allowed to see him, for their relationship had never been of a particularly affectionate character. Indeed, during their life in the Leadenhall Street alley, his dissipation and idleness and his constant demands upon her earnings were endless sources of warfare between them; but the man was kept out of mischief by her influence and her presence; and it was just possible, Dick thought, that a spark of filial feeling might make Leah anxious about what her father was doing when her influence was removed.

So one morning at breakfast he asked her straightly: 'Leah, is your father in trouble?'

The girl started as if struck; and instantly Dick divined that he was in the neighbourhood of a solution of the mystery.

'Not that I know of,' she stammered in reply.

'But I do know that he has long been anxious to get out of the country—to America, or Australia, or somewhere; but he hasn't the money.'

Dick pondered for a minute. Then he said: 'If he were provided with the money, and you knew he was far away and trying to become a respectable member of society, would you become more of your old self again?'

'I—I don't know, but I would try,' she answered.

'Then it is on his account that you have been so disturbed and miserable since you have been in this house?' said Dick.

'Yes—yes!' replied the girl earnestly.

'What a pity you did not tell me before,' said Dick kindly. 'You are sure there is nothing else?'

'No—nothing else.'

'Very well,' said Dick, 'I tell you honestly, your father is not a man to be trusted; but I will arrange to meet him somewhere in this neighbourhood, where I can talk to him, and give him clearly to understand that I expect never to be troubled with him again. I will pay his passage to wherever he chooses to go, and I will give him enough for pocket-money whilst he looks about him. He is a clever fellow, and if he really means to do well, I don't know why he shouldn't.'

The girl's eyes filled with tears, and then, with one of those sudden, uncontrollable outbursts of emotion which Dick had noticed to be almost frequent of late, she rose and rushed from the room.

The arrangement Dick made with Hearn was that he should come down from London the next Sunday morning, and, following directions given, should meet him and Leah at a certain place, where they would be tolerably sure to be free from interruption, and where a distinct understanding should be come to that he was to take himself off from England without delay. Dick Marsden was so thoroughly a Londoner that he was not aware that the country on Sunday is very much more lively and animated than it is on a week-day, especially as during his residence at the Grange he never stirred beyond his own domain on Sunday except to go to church. Consequently, he was not a little chagrined to find, upon the bright, balmy August morning fixed for his interview with Leah's father, that the roads and lanes were quite festive with groups of Sunday-attired rustics come out to see and to be seen, to sweetheart, and to lounge away the long hours before the great event of the day—dinner.

Upon this particular morning Bob Martin, the Causey End signalman, and his 'missis' were out for an airing. As the day was fine and warm, Bob was clad in his stiffest and shiniest; whilst Mrs Bob was, after the manner of her class, fearfully and wonderfully arrayed. Both were supremely content with themselves and with everything around them, and rolled along the hedge-girt lane which led to the very spot arranged upon by Dick for his interview with Hearn, laughing and chatting as only those can laugh and chat upon whom the cares of life sit lightly.

Dick and Leah were waiting at the appointed spot as Bob and Mrs Bob came up.

Bob Martin stopped short. 'Why, bless my heart!' he said, 'who be they?'

'The young gent at the Grange and his lady sure-ly,' replied Mrs Bob.—'Come! Don't stand a starin' at the quality as if they was queer animiles.'

'But—bless me, I've seen him afore,' said Bob, suffering himself unwillingly to be led away.

'Well! That ain't no miracle,' said Mrs Martin.

'No; it ain't. But I didn't meet him in an or'nary way,' replied her spouse, stopping again and looking back at Dick.

'Where hev you seen him that warn't or'nary?' asked Mrs Bob.

'Let me think. Don't go a-interruptin',' replied Bob, walking slowly on with his forefinger pressed to his brow. Then, with a sudden bringing down of his finger on to the palm of his other hand, he said: 'I know. That's the young gent as reckynised one of the bodies at the Singleby Station on the night of the haccident to the down mail last winter; and I've often wondered since if the old gentleman as he reckynised was the one as was hangin' out of the coach window when the mail pulled up hopposite the box; 'cos I heard Master Scott, the Singleby station-clerk, tell him as how the coach the old gentleman was in hadn't left the metals, and that he was the only one killed in her.'

'Well, come along!' said Mrs Bob impatiently. 'There's a parcel o' rubbidge you've been talkin' about the folk. I haven't got no patience with you.'

'And the young lady's his wife?' said Bob.

'Ay, sure-ly,' replied Mrs Bob. 'But they say she ain't much of a lady; leastaways, there's queer folk been to see her at the Grange, and I've heerd tell she was a public singer at one o' them Lunnon music 'alls.'

'Pre'aps the Royal Arcade as is on that bit o' brass the chap give me for a shillin' that same night,' said Bob. 'Why, send I may I if I never!' he added emphatically. Here he stopped dead short again, and, open-mouthed, gaped at a tall man of shabby-genteel appearance, clad, August though it was, in an ulster, who was coming rapidly towards them: at Mr Hearn, in fact, and remained staring at him until he had passed and turned the corner.

'Now, what's the matter?' asked Mrs Martin. 'Martin, you're off your chump, or you've got sunstroke or somethink to go a starin' at folk as though you'd never met people out a walkin' afore.'

'Well,' said Bob abstractedly, 'I'll eat my hat if I ain't seen that chap somewheres.'

'Mercy alive on us!' said his spouse. 'If you're agoin' to stop and stare at every one you think as you've seen afore, we'd a better set down, as folks do at the show. I've no patience with you. Come along!'

The old man came along; but during the remainder of that Sunday morning's walk by no wile could Mrs Martin get him to talk except about these two people he had 'seen afore,' the result being that her mood for Sunday-dinner enjoyment was spoiled.

Now a strange thing occurred. We left Dick Marsden and Leah waiting for Hearn at the

arranged spot, known as Crow Corner, and we saw Hearn pass Mr and Mrs Martin on his way to keep his appointment. But he never kept it, for he did not go so far as Crow Corner. For reasons best known to himself, he turned sharply down a deep, narrow lane which left the main lane at about a hundred yards' distance from Crow Corner, and did not reappear.

Meanwhile, Dick and Leah waited and waited until the young man really grew ashamed of being seen so long at the same spot, and Leah was ready to drop with fatigue.

'He must have missed the train,' said Dick; 'for it is impossible that with the detailed directions I gave him he could have missed the road.'

Leah said nothing, but her face expressed actual consternation. Leah complained of headache on her return from the walk, and kept her room during the remainder of the day. Dick sent her dinner in to her, but it came back untasted; and when he went in to see her, he found her, as he expected, under the influence of opium, lying fully dressed on the bed, almost like one dead.

She did not appear at breakfast the next morning, nor would she have come down to luncheon had not Dick insisted upon it. Afterwards, he spoke earnestly and kindly to her about her new slavery, and warned her that she was undoing all the good she might derive from rest and quiet, and that she was preparing for herself a terrible end.

She said nothing, but sat looking away into vacancy. She drove out with her husband in the afternoon, but hardly spoke.

Dick was now convinced that although he might have got into the neighbourhood of the solution of the mystery, he was still some way from it, for such extraordinary symptoms would hardly agitate the most loving of daughters merely because of uncertainty as to the actions of a father. Immediately after dinner she rose to retire to her room. As she was crossing the hall, a servant met her, saying: 'Please, 'm, Mr Martin would like to see the master.'

'Mr Martin! Who's Mr Martin?'

'The signalman at Causey End, 'm.'

'What does he want?'

'I don't know, 'm. He's in the outer hall.'

Leah stepped to where the old man was standing.

'Good-evening, 'm,' said he. 'I wanted a few words with Mr Marsden, 'm, if I could.'

'May I ask your business?' said Leah. 'My husband is engaged just now.'

'Well, 'm, I jes' come to ask him a question, 'm, that's all,' said Bob, 'about that there haccident last winter to the down mail, which he lost his relation in, 'm.'

'Indeed!' said Leah. 'Well, I'm exceedingly glad I have seen you, and have been in time to prevent you from alluding to that dreadful affair before him. He cannot bear it; and is always much upset when the name even of Singleby is mentioned. But perhaps if you tell me'—

'I'm werry sorry for havin' intruded, 'm, and I didn't mean to take a liberty,' said old Bob. 'But strange idens do get into an old man's head sometimes, and'—

At that moment the dining-room door opened

and Dick appeared. 'Hullo, my man!' he said, 'what is it?'

'Nothink, sir, nothink; I've made a mistake, sir, that's all,' replied Martin, fidgeting uneasily.

'Made a mistake! What do you mean? You seem a respectable man, and I seem to know your face,' said Dick. 'Didn't I see you yesterday?'

'Yes,' put in Leah. 'He's a signalman at Causey End, and he saw us yesterday, and mistook us for other people. That's all—Good-night, Mr Martin.'

But Dick was examining him suspiciously, and indeed the poor old fellow looked very guilty. 'One minute, my man,' said Dick. 'Of course I daresay you're all right, and that it really is a mistake, but'—

'Forty year come Janiwarry in the company's service, sir,' interposed Bob.

'But for whom did you mistake us?' asked Dick.

'Why, sir—the fact is—I—that is, I mean, you,' stammered Bob, stopped short, and looked despairingly at Leah. Then in self-defence he blurted out: 'Well, sir, your lady here says as how you can't abear to heer speak of that there Singleby haccident; but as you take me for what I ain't, I must speak, whether you like it or not. I 'appened to be standin' by when you, and there was a young lady with you, reckynised the body of the old gentleman alyin' at the Singleby Station; and Master Scott, the station clerk, he said to you, said he'—

'One moment,' interposed Dick. 'Leah, my dear, perhaps you had better go; I don't think you are in a fit state to listen to this topic.'

Leah walked, or rather staggered, up-stairs, and Dick invited the signalman into his study.

Here, Martin repeated in detail all that had happened on the night of the accident to the mail-train, and alluded to the coincidence of having met yesterday two of the same people he had seen on that night.

When the old man had finished, Dick said: 'Mr Martin, I am exceedingly sorry for having misunderstood the object of your visit here to-night; and I am exceedingly glad to have been just in time to prevent your leaving the house. This is an extraordinary story you tell, and although I am not at liberty to say what I think about it, should I require your evidence, may I send for you?'

'Certainly, sir. Whenever I'm off dooty, I'm at your service,' replied Bob.

'In the meanwhile, kindly keep your own counsel about it,' said Dick; 'and good-night!'

And Bob Martin went out, lighter in heart and somewhat heavier in pocket than he had been a few minutes before. 'So,' thought Dick, 'Hearn was about yesterday. Why did he not keep his appointment with me, I wonder? And—I wonder what he was doing about the railway on the night of the accident!'

Dick went to London next morning by the early train, which left long before the first blind at the Grange was pulled up. He returned late in the afternoon and asked for Leah. She had gone out before lunch, the servant said, and had not been seen since.

Dick waited dinner, but Leah did not appear. He went up to her room upon the chance of

her having come home unknown to any one for the purpose of indulging her craving. She did not return that night, nor the next day, nor the day after that, nor during the week.

In the meanwhile, a quiet gentleman from London had taken up his residence at the Grange, and in his company Dick made inquiries all along the line of railway between the point where the mail-train had been stopped by signal opposite to Bob Martin's box, and the point where Bob had consigned to the care of the mail-cart driver the man with the sprained ankle who had lost his way. At Brickenden they learned that a man, answering in every way to the description given by Martin of the individual he had succoured, had gone up to London by the last train on the night of the accident at Singleby. Then, in a terrible burst of lurid light, the significance of the doctor's words concerning the concealment by Leah of something from her husband came full upon Dick Marsden's mind, and for the first time he understood her restlessness, her constant craving for change and excitement, and finally, when deprived of these, her resource to opium.

Another week passed, which Dick devoted to discovering if possible the whereabouts of Leah and her father. At the music hall they knew nothing about her, nor had she been back to the old lodging in the alley of Leadenhall Street. He was on the point of putting the matter in the hands of regular detectives, when he received the following telegram: 'Come at once to 100 Goldsmith Street, Drury Lane.—AKHURST.' He started at once, and by mid-day arrived at the address—a poor house in a not very stylish street. A decent servant, however, opened the door and showed him up-stairs. On the landing, Marian Akhurst met him. Her face was very grave, and as she returned his grasp of the hand, she said: 'You are too late, Dick. She—you know who I mean—passed away half an hour ago. It was a terrible death. She cried constantly for you, and, as you did not come, gave me a message of terrible import for you.'

'I think I know it, Marian,' said the young man. 'My poor Uncle Christopher was murdered.'

Marian bowed assent; then she said: 'I was sent for last night, not by Mrs Marsden, but by the woman who keeps this house, for our Institution is, as you know, close by. I found the poor creature hanging between life and death: the room was hardly bearable from the fumes of opium; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could piece together what she had to say. It amounted to this. That being in desperate straits from debt on the evening when you said that your uncle was going from London for the winter, she suggested to her father that the relief which would come by your inheritance of your uncle's fortune would be hastened by his death. Her father instantly jumped at the idea; took a ticket for Dover by the same train as your uncle was going by, and got into his compartment. When the train slackened speed in obedience to signals, and your uncle was looking out of window to see the reason, the crime was committed: her father sprang out of the train, and sprained his ankle in so doing. But she was the instigator of the crime, and the remorse for this was intensified by your kindness to her.'

That was all she could say, except that she hoped for your forgiveness on account of her terrible mental sufferings.'

A year later, the Bennington Society of Ancient Chums was assembled in full strength upon a very special occasion, which was nothing less than the presentation to Mr Robert Martin of a handsome token of respect and affection upon his retirement from the post of President, which he had occupied for so many years, in order to enter upon his duties as butler to Mr and Mrs Marsden at the Grange.

Doubly convivial was the meeting, for that day Dick Marsden and Marian Akhurst had been married at the village church, and the members of the Society wore white rosettes in honour of the occasion.

And yet—will it be believed?—Bob Martin turned up five minutes late, and had to be fined, his excuse, that he had mislaid the copy of the speech in which he had intended to return thanks for the great honour done him, not being accepted!

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHAT is denominated Liquid Air has recently been attracting much attention in scientific circles. As is well known, matter is presented to us in three different forms—the solid, the liquid, and the gaseous, and we have examples all around us of these three distinct shapes which natural things assume. A favourite one for illustration by the physicist is water, for, according to the temperature to which it is subjected, it will represent a solid, a liquid, or a gas. And this question of temperature is one which determines the form in which other bodies than water shall present themselves, among which we need only refer to the metals. For a long time, however, it was supposed by chemists and others that the gaseous elements known as hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen could exist only in one form; and up to within recent times they were described in the text-books as 'permanent gases.' Some far-seeing physicists indeed prophesied that with improved apparatus these so-called 'permanent' gases would one day be found to bow to what seemed a natural law, and would be liquefied. The prophecy came true at the end of the year 1877, when MM. Cailliet and Pictet succeeded in doing that which had baffled the skill of all their predecessors, and two of the gases referred to were reduced to the liquid state. As a natural sequel to these historic experiments, that combination of oxygen and nitrogen which represents the air which we breathe was also exhibited in a liquid form.

MM. Cailliet and Pictet produced very small quantities of these hitherto unknown liquids, for the apparatus which they employed was of but limited capacity. It has been reserved for Professor Dewar, by working with extremely low temperatures, to produce a liquid oxygen and liquid air in such large quantities that their curious and unsuspected properties can be demonstrated very clearly. Thus, he has shown at the Royal Institution that liquid oxygen is highly magnetic, while

it is no longer that active supporter of combustion that it is whilst in the gaseous condition. Liquid air, too, seems to lose all the chemical properties which it possesses as a gas. These experiments are doubtless but the beginnings of a new line of research into the constitution of matter.

Great preparations have been made to observe the eclipse of the sun which will take place on April 15-16. The line of totality passes through both South America and Africa, and the places most favourably situated for observation stations are Chili, Brazil, and Senegambia. The Chili station is under the care of Professor Pickering, and two expeditions have been sent from England—one to Ceara, in Brazil, and the other to Senegambia, where the French have also sent an expedition. It need hardly be said that photography will play an important part in all these observations, and one novel feature is indicated in the employment of a Dallmeyer's new tele-photographic lens, which will afford an image of the sun of unusual size. It has been arranged that two similar sets of photographs shall be taken in Africa and at Brazil, stations more than two thousand miles apart, and with an interval of five hours between them. Photographs of the coronal spectrum will also be taken. It is to be hoped that favourable weather will crown these preparations with the success which they deserve.

The white-lead industry has long been known as one of those manufacturing processes which quickly bring disease and death to those engaged in it, and from time to time improved methods have been described in these pages which have been invented with a view to put an end to such lamentable results. The most recent of these is that of Mr J. B. Hannay, which has for some time been in operation at Possil Park, Glasgow, by which a sulphate of lead is produced instead of a carbonate, as under the old Dutch process. This new white-lead, which is quite innocuous to the workers, is made direct from the cheapest lead ore, which is crushed and fed into coke furnaces. The heat combined with an air-blast causes the lead to volatilise, and the fumes are carried to a tower, where they meet a current of steam. Finally, the lead is absorbed by water, and is run off as a creamy-white fluid into settling-tanks. From these tanks it passes into filter presses, where the white sludge is deprived of its moisture, after which it is dried and packed for market. The operation is quick, the product is good, but more than all, the process does not injure the workers.

Professor Marshall Ward has lately reported to the Royal Society the results of some experiments which tend to prove that the action of sunlight is a far more powerful factor in the purification of the atmosphere than has hitherto been imagined. Among other observations, he has discovered that the *Anthrax bacillus* is killed by direct sunlight, although it will withstand the greatest extremes of temperature. Sunlight acts in the same way in the purification of water.

It has often been noted that those in the habit of using vinegar and oil as regular articles of diet very rarely suffer from choleraic symptoms. M. Haschimodo has pointed out the reason of this immunity from disease, in the fact that acetic

acid and the *Comma bacillus* are antagonistic. After being subjected for fifteen minutes to the action of vinegar containing from three to four per cent. only of acetic acid, it was found that the bacilli are killed. It need hardly be pointed out that good table vinegar contains naturally a larger proportion of the acid.

A scheme has for some time been under consideration for connecting North-west and South-west London by means of an electric underground railway, and recently opposition to it has come from an unexpected quarter. The line, as planned, will pass through South Kensington; and the schools for scientific training there, by the voice of their Professors, declare that the vibration from the line will render exact measurements impossible, while the electrical instruments will be liable to induction disturbances, which will quite prohibit their use. It will be remembered that the existing electric railway which crosses the Thames' bed close to London Bridge is found to cause disturbances of the magnetic instruments of the Greenwich Observatory, nearly four miles away; so that there is some ground for the fears of the science masters at South Kensington that a similar railway only a quarter of a mile from their doors will interfere with the delicate apparatus under their charge.

In his Report upon the terrible accident which occurred to the Scotch express at Thirsk a few months ago, owing to the default of a signalman, Major Marindin points out that there are many ingenious combinations of electrical and mechanical appliances which if maintained in good order would make such a catastrophe impossible, unless a driver were deliberately determined to neglect all signals. He insists that it is the duty of all railway companies to provide themselves with such safeguards as will prevent the safety of a train from depending upon one signalman. On three lines of railway, devices of the kind referred to have been in general use for some years, and have been found satisfactory.

A National Photographic Exhibition is to be opened at the Crystal Palace on Monday, April 10th, and will close on Saturday, the 29th. The nave of this enormous building with its wealth of light is peculiarly fitted for the display of pictures, and it is believed that the Exhibition will be as successful as those of past years. Last year, photography had to give place to the Electric Exhibition, there being no room to accommodate both at the same time.

The new French national theatre, the Comédie-Française, is fitted with a novel form of drop-curtain, which rises or falls at different rates of speed by the touch of an electric button. The movement is brought about by the agency of a small electro-motor, and as the curtain is balanced by a counterweight, the motor has only to overcome the inevitable friction of the apparatus. The current is obtained from the street mains, and the innovation is said to meet every requirement. It may be mentioned that all sparking is avoided by substituting, for the usual metallic contacts, brushes made of carbon, a device first introduced by Professor George Forbes.

Many conflicting reports have appeared with regard to the cost of electric lighting as compared with gas, and those interested in the subject find it next to impossible to obtain reliable

information. In his Report to the Electric Lighting Committee of the Lambeth vestry (London), Mr Preece remarks that it has been the fashion to regard the light as a luxury only for the rich; but experience at Newcastle shows that it is now within the grasp of the poor man. The average cost per electric lamp at Newcastle was last year 6s. 3d., while at Bradford it was 9s. 7d. The great difference in these two quotations is not accounted for.

Zimer's Patent Boat, which is operated after the manner of a cycle, presents many new features. The occupant rides upon a saddle, and the treadles, actuated by his feet, work either a propeller or a stern paddle-wheel. His hands hold a horizontal bar—as in a bicycle—the movement of which causes paddles to work alternately on either side of the little vessel. The boat is said to be far more efficient in a rough sea than an ordinary row-boat, while at the same time it is well adapted for use in smooth water. As the chief work is thrown upon the legs, which are, as a rule, better capable of performing continuous muscular exertion than the arms, it is claimed for the new boat that it is far less fatiguing to use than a row-boat, while at the same time it requires no skill to work it.

Every winter we hear of northern ports being blocked by ice, and it is easily understood that the results to commerce of a long-continued frost must in those localities be most disastrous. About ten years ago the experiment was tried at Gothenburg, in Sweden, of constructing a heavily-built steamer, whose duty it should be to force a path through the ice, so as to keep the port open all the year round. This vessel was constructed, and was found most effective in use. In the year 1885, when the ice was a foot thick, it broke and maintained a wide passage to the open sea, thus affording waterway for incoming and outgoing vessels. This favourable experience of the use of an ice-breaking steamer has caused other ports to order vessels of the same character, Christiania and Stockholm being among the number. One of these was recently described in a Swedish paper as having a spoon-like bow, which presses on the ice and crushes it in. It is also said that the boat is provided with tanks both fore and aft, which are connected by pumps, so that when any extra weight is required at the bow, the pumps are set to work to transfer the water from the stern tanks to those in front of the vessel.

Several cases of poisoning from eating tinned beef having occurred at Ohio in October last, says the *Chemical News*, the food was analysed for tin and lead, the physicians having given it as their opinion that the poison was due to the action of the meat upon the can; but no traces of those metals could be found. It was then suspected that the mischief was due to the formation in the meat of Ptomaines, and the tests for these were at once proceeded with. As a result, it was decided by the analysts that there were no inorganic poisons, such as tin or lead, present in the meat; that the poison after a time lost its toxic qualities, a thing which could not have occurred in the case of inorganic poisoning; further, that a ptomaine called 'Neuridine' has been recorded, which decomposes a short time after it has been formed. Therefore, it is stated, the poison was a ptomaine, and may be identi-

fied as neuridine. It is evident that, considering the immense quantity of tinned meat now sold, and the few cases of poisoning reported, the risks attending the use of this convenient form of preserved food cannot be very great, possibly not so great as those connected with the consumption of fresh meat.

Tuberculous animals are said to be quite common in the London cowsheds, and a Royal Commission is now sitting to consider the question of these diseased animals and the effect upon the community of drinking their milk or eating their flesh. Before this Commission had time to issue its Report, a deputation from the London County Council waited upon the Board of Agriculture to ask for powers to slaughter such animals and to compensate their owners out of the public purse. This shows that at last attention is really being directed by the authorities to this most important matter.

It is said that the recent trial of the dynamite guns on board the United States cruiser *Vesuvius* has demonstrated facts which will revolutionise naval warfare. In describing the Zolinski Pneumatic Gun, some years ago, of which these are the improved successors, we likened it to an enormous pea-shooter, which by a puff of compressed air would send a shell containing half a ton of dynamite with terrible certainty towards an object more than a mile distant. The precision and range have been vastly improved since that date, and the *Vesuvius*, with her three long tube-like guns, represents the most awfully destructive engine of war which has yet been constructed. It is certain that the most powerful ship would be utterly annihilated if touched by one of these explosive projectiles.

The landing of a herd of one hundred and eighty domesticated reindeer in Alaska last summer, along with native Siberian drivers, marks a new departure in the social life of that territory. It is the first herd imported into the Western Continent. The advent of the whalers off the coast of Alaska has helped to exhaust the food supply of the coast Eskimos, while the American fish canneries have been exhausting the salmon supplies in the rivers, so that the population was decreasing with the diminution of the food supplies, and something had to be done to remedy this. Not without difficulty was a Bill for aid passed through Congress, and not without difficulty could the reindeer at first be procured in Siberia. But all obstacles were overcome, and the deer have been lodged at Port Clarence, seventy-five miles south of Behring Strait. Here, after two years' instruction, the native Eskimos, if they prove diligent and capable, will be given a herd of ten reindeer. Other reindeer stations will also be established. It is expected that these animals will take the place of dogs in Alaska, owing to their superior endurance, and capacity for picking up a living where a dog would starve. And of course in the arctic and subarctic regions, besides being a beast of burden, the reindeer supplies the natives with both food and clothing.

The *Handels-Museum* states that at the last meeting at Hanover of the Brunswick-Hanover Society of Beet-sugar Makers, a Berlin doctor made an interesting communication relative to a new substance, called *valzin*, which would appear to be about to supplant saccharin, and will per-

haps be a serious competitor to the sugar industry. This substance, discovered in 1883 by a Berlin chemist, is at present produced in that town according to a patented process. It will be about two hundred times sweeter than sugar, and will not have certain disagreeable properties of saccharin. Several experts are engaged in examining this substance.

The *Paris Journal des Mines* announces that the inauguration of the Corinth Canal has been fixed for the 23d April (5th May) next. According to the conditions of the contract, the works must be finished in May. In any case, they will be actively pushed forward, so that the inauguration fêtes coincide with the above-mentioned date.

The *Adelaide Observer* states that the Central Agricultural Bureau of South Australia were recently notified that the lavender plant had taken possession of about three acres of soil at Black Swamp, in the southern portion of that colony. The settlers in the neighbourhood of the swamp were inclined to look with disfavour upon the 'weed,' which the horses and cattle would not eat, and which spread so rapidly. One of them, however, discovered that the weed was no other than the lavender plant, and very valuable, though not as a fodder. From two to three tons of green stuff taken from it will yield when distilled by a very simple process one hundred pounds worth of lavender oil. In addition it would give sixteen hundred pounds of lavender water, worth eightpence per pound after the first distillation, and one and sixpence per pound after further distillation, which would of course leave a smaller quantity. The settler who was wise enough to make inquiries has decided, acting upon the advice of Mr Molineux, Secretary to the Agricultural Bureau, to plant a considerable area of lavender. The soil, of a light sandy nature, with clay beneath, and fairly moist, is eminently suited to the growth, not only of lavender, but of all scent-producing plants.

A correspondent who was much interested in a paragraph of 'The Month' in the *Journal* of October 29, 1892, as to whether ants are friends or foes to the fruit-grower, writes: 'Here in the Argentine Republic we have at anyrate two kinds of black ants, one of which has a small white hump, and does not touch fruit-trees, &c.; but the other one is our greatest enemy, for where these black ants are it is simply impossible to grow fruit-trees, flowers, vegetables, or indeed anything. These ants do not make mounds, but burrow deep down about six feet underground, although they have been known as low as twelve feet. Here they carry scraps of anything they can lay hold of for their nests; and sometimes they have as many as three or four tunnels going down to them. Some men make it quite a specialty to trace these nests and to destroy them, and large sums of money are paid to have it done. Only last year all our plants, trees, and vegetables were completely eaten away by these ants. For a long time the man whom we employed could not trace the nest; finally, he did so, finding it twelve feet below the dining-room floor. With the aid of kerosene and water he made a pudding of ants and eggs, and we have not had a solitary ant since. This took place in

the country; but it is just the same in town (Rosario), where the people have to grow their plants in tubs, putting little tins of water round the foot of the tubs.'

THEIR WEDDING DAY.

THE village of Tong looked fair enough this June morning. The sun was bright, the sky cloudless. From the old gabled, half-timber cottages near the church the folks had hung coloured pocket-handkerchiefs, blue cloth, red flannel, and what-not—anything for a gala appearance. There was also a string set across from the elm by the lighthouse to the house of old Gumm, the sexton; and real bunting, pennons, Union-jacks, and so forth, hung from the string, and fluttered gently in the summer breeze. Chief decoration of all, however, was the arch of evergreens studded with roses just outside the red-brick house of the Darlings. It bore the words, 'Joy be with thee!' done in white carnations.

Eva Darling was the bride. Her mother had occupied the Retreat—as the red house with the high walls round it was called—for about ten years. She was a widow, and Eva was her only child.

When first the Darlings came to Tong, the villagers did not half care for the new-comers. Mrs Darling kept herself to herself a deal too much for their pride's comfort. But as Eva grew from a girl of ten to a girl of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen, there was no standing against her charms. There was a governess for her in those days. Despite the laws of the Retreat, however, on the subject of intercourse with the villagers, the girl went to and fro with a basket, and, in short, played the part of ministering angel extremely well. Thus she won the hearts of the simple but strongly prejudiced people.

It was only with the gentry of the Great House that Mrs Darling cared to associate. The Great House stood a mile from the church across a spacious reach of undulating parkland, with a pond and a river in it, and some remarkably fine trees. 'Great House' was just the phrase for it. There were about fifty windows in front for the sun to stare at. It stretched like a white buttress between the green of the parkland and the dark wooded hill behind it.

No one could say the Great House was a handsome place. But Mrs Darling was not concerned with mere architectural beauties. From the first, when she knew there were two young masculine Dantins in the family, respectively three and four years older than her daughter, this lady was resolved that one of them should marry Eva. Of course the elder son was to be preferred; but as the younger was rich by inheritance from the mother, it would not matter so very much which made the girl Mrs Dantin.

They were young men of very opposite characters, these Dantins. It is always the case when there are but two in a family. Nature seems determined that the type shall then be varied as much as possible. Philip, the elder, was studious and fond of scientific pursuits. At Oxford, he had kept a menagerie like Frank Buckland. He was a good-looking fellow, but wore spectacles: slow to be angered, but with a temper that when

roused was capable of dark deeds. He was slow in other respects also. Thus, for a while he was sorely distressed when he heard that his brother Jack had wooed and won Eva Darling ere he had settled in his own mind that he himself was ripe for marriage with the same girl. Anon he seemed to smother the resentment he could hardly help feeling; but it was mere 'seeming': his jealousy burned his heart.

As for Jack Dantin, he was the very fellow to secure a girl like Eva. He cared nothing for insects and butterflies, but everything for athletic pursuits and pretty faces. He was a handsome lad, frank and generous. He knew early in his courtship that he had but to ask Eva to marry him. The girl's dark eyes could not keep their secret; her cheek, too, told of it with a blush every time they met. And so they had plighted their troth, and were duly to be married this June morning. They were likely to make a very comely couple at the altar, with the great tombs of departed Dantins north and south of them.

Meanwhile, however, though everything was ready for the bridal procession to leave the Retreat and cross the road, there was delay. It was to be a quiet wedding. A dozen friends of the Darlings were in the drawing-room, talking and smiling and enjoying the perfume of the flowers which lay on the tables. Still, there was clearly a hitch somewhere. The smiles were somewhat forced, and the guests fell silent suddenly now and then.

Mrs Darling made civil forays into their midst at intervals. She was evidently a strong-minded woman, as was indicated by her composed manner, her hard incisive tones, and her cold, searching blue eyes.

Some one was caught whispering, 'Will it not have to be postponed?'

The words reached Mrs Darling's ears. 'Oh no,' she replied promptly, with an icy but sparkling smile. 'Dear Eva is quite satisfied that John Dantin will not fail to be present. He is a man of his word.'

'Yes; but dear Mrs Darling—it is so very odd, this sudden disappearance,' objected one of the guests.

'Three days ago,' added Mrs Darling.—'Yes; there's no denying it. But Jack Dantin is an odd fellow, though an excellent one besides.'

Here Eva herself entered the drawing-room, and all eyes sped towards her. An audible murmur of satisfaction arose, and certain men of the party envied the bridegroom involuntarily. She was a beautiful bride, undeniably. Though pale and disturbed—as any maiden in her place would have been—there was such sweetness in her expression that for the moment people forgot that she had cause for anxiety. Three or four damsels of her own age crowded about her, voluble with congratulations.

'My dear,' said her mother, 'it is a quarter to eleven. We had better start.'

Eva's eyes asked the question that every one else was asking: 'Has he come?'

'Do not fear,' was Mrs Darling's reply. 'Of course he will be there. He will not dare.'—Then she stopped. There had been a momentary flash in her eyes of a very pugnacious kind.

And so the procession formed and walked over the crimson cloth which stretched from the porch

to the garden gate, where the motto, 'Joy be with thee!' looked down on them. A gust of wind set the pocket-handkerchiefs and bits of flannel fluttering merrily. A murmur of voices also greeted the bride's appearance. About once in half a century Tong saw a wedding of this kind. It was a spectacle by no means to be lost. A certain bedridden villager had been carried into the bit of a garden in front of his cottage, bedding and all, to behold the sight.

Twenty paces brought them to the churchyard gate. The graves were nice and green, and the sheep nibbling among them did not seem at all frightened by so much human company. Thus they passed into the church, not without many a furtive glance over the park towards the Great House, which, at Mr Dantin's bidding, was flying the royal banner in spite of young Jack's absence.

Inside, they were met with almost a caressing tenderness by Mr Dantin and a sad shake of the head. 'I am sorry,' he said to Mrs Darling, 'that your resolution was not to be shaken.' The lady tossed her head slightly, and seemed disposed to be angry. 'It is a most extraordinary thing,' she exclaimed, looking at the clock in the west of the church. It wanted eight minutes to the time.

The old rector put a gay face on the business. Why, in truth, should he not? He had buried and wedded so many people that he had come to view neither ceremony as so very important.

'You will have to come again another day, my dear Miss Eva,' he said, 'that is all. You must not mind. It is the linked sweetness of expectation, long drawn out, that is all.'

'But'—and for once there was a touch of petulance in the girl's voice as her eyes clouded with tears—'it is so unlike him. I fear something must have happened to him.—Philip,' she added, making a sudden appeal to the man who was to have been made her brother-in-law—'have you any idea what it means?'

'I? How should I?' was the reply, as the elder Dantin shuffled away.

Philip's face was unusually pale. There was no candour in his eye—even seen through his spectacles.

Outside the church and in the body of the building the whispers were of a more emphatic nature. The village gossips claimed to have a very profound knowledge of the iniquity of young men. It was said openly that Master Jack had no doubt played the girl a sad trick, was, as like as not, at that very moment marrying some one else in London town, and that the best thing they could do for Miss Eva was to take her home, put her to bed, and treat her for hysterics whether she showed them or not.

'Poor young crittur! So sweet-tempered and nice-looking, to be trickit in such a way!'

There were comments on Mr Philip's white face, which led on to comparisons between the two brothers. These were not markedly adverse to the elder son; but upon the whole they were in favour of 'Master Jack,' who was the more free with his money.

'He'll marry she, hisself, yo'll see,' said one woman very positively.

'What—now? Instead of his own brother! I do call that'—

'Oh, you silly!' was the interposed reply—'not jest yet, o' coorse. They'll wait a bit—yo'll see.'

Three minutes to eleven, and still no bridegroom!

For an explanation of this unusually dramatic scene in Tong church we must go back three days. Philip Dantin had striven to keep his rage against his brother within due bounds, but had failed. His stuffed specimens in the subterranean rooms could not console him; nor could his live beasts either. These underground rooms were quite a remarkable feature of the Great House. They dated from the sixteenth century, if not earlier. For a hundred years or more they were disused. Philip, however, persuaded his father to expend money in making them tolerably habitable, and very suitable for the kind of museum he had accumulated. The farthestmost of them was the very 'sanctum sanctorum' of his operations. At its extreme end there was an ancient doorway of chiselled stone several inches in thickness, and beyond that, utter darkness and the beginning of a labyrinth which had not been explored for ages, and was left to itself. It was believed to have no issue.

On this third evening before the day that was to make him a happy fellow, Jack Dantin found his way into his brother's den to have a chat with him. For a time Philip bore with his high spirits uncomplainingly, though Jack's praises of Eva were like so many thorns in his side. Eventually, however, his patience gave way. He uttered an exclamation which made his brother start in surprise.

'Why, old fellow, what is the matter? You surely don't'— He stopped. There was that in Philip's face which told him much.

'Yes; you have guessed it,' said Philip with a shrug of the shoulder. 'It is rather hard; but the less said about it the better. Twenty years hence, it will not matter a straw.'

Jack was silent. He sympathised with his brother more than he could tell in words.

Then it was that, like a lightning flash, the dreadful suggestion rushed into Philip's mind. 'Oh, by the way,' he said casually, 'I wish you would oblige me by giving a hand to this skinned thing. I want it out of my road for a time.'

'Certainly, Phil. Where shall we cart it?' was the reply, as Jack surveyed the gruesome body of a flayed alligator, upon which the elder Dantin had been operating.

'The passage is just the place for it. I'll find the key.'

The key was found; the heavy stone door was swung open; they carried their disgusting burden into the dark corridor; and then Philip, who was nearest the room, slipped back, banged the door, and locked it, and had sped up-stairs and into the park in a remarkably short space of time. He threw the key into one of the ponds, and then fell to congratulating himself upon his diabolical conduct.

Since then, he had not visited his museum. The doors were all fast locked. No one could get access to them. If Jack Dantin shouted till his lungs burst, no one would hear him.

It may be imagined what a wretched yet fearfully glad time this interval before the wedding

to-day was for Philip Dantin. He professed to be entirely ignorant of his brother's whereabouts, but hinted at having seen him striding across country towards a certain large town whence there was constant train connection with London.

The elder Dantin and the servants had every confidence in Jack's reappearance in time for the wedding, and that until the eve of the day itself. Philip, too, expressed his agreement with this view of the matter.

In fact, however, poor Jack, when he realised what had befallen him, gave himself up for lost. It was terrible to remember where he was, under such woful circumstances; and stunning to recall that it was his own brother who had incarcerated him. As the hours sped by, he saw clearly that he was destined to die, and that Philip meant to profit by his death. Like most habitual smokers, he carried matches with him. For a time he was lavish with them; then he husbanded them. The hours passed. His watch told him that it was night. He wound it up, slept, reawakened, and struck more matches.

In the meantime he had thought of many things. But in one thing only did he take any interest. The passion of self-preservation was strong in him, for his own sake and for Eva's. He resolved to try the passages to see if haply he might prove the truth of the old legend which made them a sort of arterial connection between the church and the Great House. The first day was spent in these grim gropings, which seemed like to be only too futile. Their only result was to make him lose himself in the stifling maze. That night he slept he knew not where, with a block of chiselled stone for a pillow. A match-light had shown him that he was in a sort of *cul-de-sac*—a pile of stone fragments, earth, and bits of iron barring the way, as it seemed, to future progress in that direction.

This second night was a sorrowful one indeed. There were times when the poor fellow felt he should lose his senses. At last, however, he slept; and when he awoke, he struck one more match, and then, as Providence willed it, espied on the ground a morsel of coloured glass, as if it had fallen at some time from a window. The sight instantly made him forget his maddening hunger and despair, and he set to work upon the barrier that was before him.

How he toiled at his task! At first he burrowed with his fingers; latterly he used a sharp-edged piece of stone shaped like a chisel. All day he worked. The wall diminished in thickness. A sudden breath of air in his face told him he had made a clean breach somewhere, though he could not feel where. He worked on through the night. His wedding day dawned above, and he was still boring in this noisome hole for dear life and his bride.

Gradually the current of air increased in volume, and at length he had made a passage through which he could worm his way. He looked at his watch by the light of his last match but one; it was nine o'clock of his wedding morning.

Though ready to faint from fatigue and exhaustion, he went on in this new passage, groping like a mole. It seemed to him that he

had lived all his days in darkness. Ten o'clock! half-past ten! a quarter to eleven! At a quarter to eleven he was suddenly dazzled by a faint streak of blessed daylight. It was far in front of him—or seemed so. He ran towards it on hands and knees, touched a wooden door with his fingers, uttered a cry of joy, pushed the door, which yielded, and saw before him a thick red curtain, which he recognised in a moment as belonging to the vestry of Tong church.

Three minutes to eleven, and still no bridegroom! A second later, however, Jack Dantin staggered from the vestry door into the church, and saw and was seen by the wedding party—a sorry spectacle of mud and mire, bruised and bleeding, and with his clothes torn in all directions.

'I am not too late after all,' he cried, and then down he fell by the altar railings.

Some one also fell almost at the same instant. Philip Dantin went pale as a corpse when he saw his brother. He made a step towards Eva, whispered 'Forgive' in a hoarse voice, and reeled upon the pavement.

Philip Dantin's mind was unhinged by his crime and its consequences. He lived for several weeks, and then died. Before his death, however, Jack freely forgave him the cruel deed which he had wrought in a moment of jealousy that was close kin to insanity. The secret of it stayed in his own breast, though others had inklings of it.

Eva Darling was a bride in good earnest three days after her bridegroom's startling entrance into the church.

WHILE I WAIT.

DEAR, while I wait for you, I would not steep
My wearied senses in soft slumber's dreams,
As he who hates the night and waits the gleams
Of gladsome day-dawn—nay, nor would I weep
Through the long vigil, that I needs must keep,
With folded, idle hands, until the streams
Of love-light fall on me, and its glad beams
End the sad watch, or wake me from my sleep.
Ah no! I would my hands had swifter grown
To aid all need—my lips had learned a new
Sweet power to bless—my voice a tend'rer tone—
My eyes a deeper pity—this heart, too,
This poor, weak woman's heart you know your own,
God's perfect peace, dear, while I wait for you!

KATE MELLERSH.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
 - 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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AMONG THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS.

THE Gulf of St Lawrence has its dark isle of woe as well as the Atlantic. Even as Sable Island is the Graveyard of the Ocean, so is the Magdalen group the Graveyard of the St Lawrence. But little is known of this group, which is not surprising, inasmuch as it belongs geographically, although not politically, to the least known (to Britishers) of all the provinces of the Canadian Confederation—Prince Edward Island. It is not a hundred years since an English writer described Prince Edward Island as a rascally heap of sand, rock, and swamp, fit for nothing but a military station and a potato-field; to-day, the island is frequently spoken of as the garden of British North America.

To the north of Prince Edward Island, and to the north-west of Cape Breton, well in the heart of the Gulf of St Lawrence, lies the little group of the Magdalen Islands, responsible for many a wreck, and notable for many things, although even the name may be strange to the average reader. It is placed, roughly speaking, about midway between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland of Nova Scotia, and therefore right in the track of southward-bound vessels from the St Lawrence, and of all, indeed, which do not find it convenient to make use of the Strait of Belleisle. And unlike that of the Bay of Fundy, which separates Nova Scotia from New Brunswick to the south of the Isthmus of Chignecto, the navigation of the Lawrentian Gulf is by no means safe at all seasons of the year. The Magdalens, again, face—although at a considerable distance—the entrance to the Bay of Chaleurs, which, of an average width of twenty miles, separates New Brunswick from the peninsula of Gaspé—notable as the point where Jacques Cartier found his first landing-place.

Gaspé, as also the Magdalens, the Bird Rocks, the islands of Anticosti and Brion, and the Seven Islands, all belong to the province of Quebec. To the north of the group with which

we are concerned just now are the large island of Anticosti, with a sub-arctic climate and flora, a dismal wreck-record, and elaborate life-saving appliances; the verdant Seven Islands, which Whittier calls 'the last outpost of summer upon the dreary coast;' and farther away towards the open Atlantic, the little island of Meccatina, where the Huguenot Robernal abandoned his niece, Margaret, and where he left her in lonely banishment for two years, after losing her lover and her duenna, until she was rescued by a passing vessel.

About three hundred and sixty years ago Jacques Cartier set forth from St Malo with two little ships of sixty tons each, to find out more about the strange lands of Newfoundland and Labrador, discovered by the Cabots and Jaspard Cortereal. He left St Malo on the 20th of April 1534, and passing through the Strait of Belleisle, sailed along the barren coast of Labrador and all round Newfoundland. He then shaped his course to the south-west, and found the Magdalen Islands, upon which he landed to explore, there-after sailing still to the west until he entered the Bay of Chaleurs, so called by him because of the tremendous heat of the July day on which he was 'the first that ever burst into that silent sea.' He landed on the rocky peninsula of Gaspé, and there planted the flag of France, in token of possession. It was not until the next year that he entered the river St Lawrence, and called it so because it was on the fête-day of the saint that he began the ascent of the stream.

The Magdalens, then, are directly associated with the real discovery of Canada by Cartier, and have thus an historical interest of their own—just as Sable Island has, as the scene of the first actual European settlement in North America.

The Magdalen group consists of four islands, the nearest land being Cape Breton, about fifty-five miles off. The islands are named Coffin, Saunders, Wolfe, and Amherst, the largest being Coffin Island. The population in 1871 was 3172: it is now estimated at about 6000.

When Jacques Cartier discovered them in 1534,

he reported the islands as well wooded and verdant, with large tracts of meadow-land alternating with swamp and forest. Little of these forests remain, for the fine trees of the Magdalens yielded such excellent timber for building purposes that they have been practically all used up. Only a few stunted clumps of fir and spruce may now be seen where once were magnificent groves; and indeed so short is now the supply of wood on these once sylvan islands, that the inhabitants are now compelled to import coal for fuel.

The physical aspect of the Magdalens as seen from the sea is imposing enough. They present to the eye a succession of towering cliffs, rising apparently sheer from the sea to a height of from two hundred to four hundred feet. Against these cliffs, the long rollers of the Lawrentian Gulf, after their chase across the Atlantic, beat ceaselessly and angrily, so that the islands seem to be swathed in a perpetual setting of seething foam.

A constant warfare between sea and land is here in progress, and now and again one finds that the sea has been victorious, and has hammered at the base of some grand cliff until the rock has collapsed and mingled its fragments with the strand. On one side, indeed, the sea seems to be wholly victorious, and to be gradually winning possession; but elsewhere one finds quiet lagoons and marshes, which are being slowly formed into dry land by the distributed debris of the shattered cliffs. Thus a constant process of disintegration and reconstruction is here in progress, in marked contrast to the disintegrating process which threatens—or promises, one should rather say with regard to such an area of sorrow—to sweep Sable Island in time into the bottomless ocean.

Although discovered and much admired by Cartier in 1534, the Magdalens do not seem to have attracted any settlers for more than two hundred years. At all events, we find the first evidence of a French settlement about the year 1757—a settlement of ten families engaged in hunting the seal and the sea-horse, and in fishing for cod and herring. Six years later, in 1763, the islands passed, with the rest of what was then known as New France, into the protection of the British Empire. Thirty-five years later, a grant of the islands was made to Sir Isaac Coffin for his naval services during the American war of Independence, less one-seventh of the produce reserved for the support of the church and the clergy.

From then till now the Magdalens have remained in the possession of the Coffin family, notwithstanding the desire and repeated attempts of the Government of Canada to buy them back. The Coffin family cherish the property as a gift of honour, and attach a higher sentimental value to it than the Government are willing to express in dollars.

Between 1871 and 1891 the population of the Magdalens about doubled. Last year it was computed at about six thousand—all French-Canadians with the exception of some five or six hundred English-Canadians and settlers from Jersey. The English inhabitants are engaged as farmers and tradesmen; the French as fishers and merchants.

When Cartier discovered the islands, he re-

ported large numbers of sea-monsters along the shores, with two tusks in their mouths. These were the walrus, although he did not know it, and the early settlers found its pursuit their most profitable occupation. Generally speaking, the walrus was then regarded among mariners as only second in value to the whale; but there was no whale-fishing at the Magdalens. Walrus oil always brought a good price in those days; and then, besides the value of the tusks as ivory, there was the value of the hide for leather. Altogether, walrus-hunting was so profitable that it resulted very much as the Americans fear will the hunting of the fur-seal in Behring Sea—in extirpating the species. At all events, the walrus has been practically driven away by the hunters from the Magdalens, only an occasional specimen being now seen in place of the sportive shoals observed by Cartier.

The hair-seal, however, is still hunted with assiduity and with profit, and the exports of seal-oil are valued at from three thousand to four thousand pounds per annum. Cod are caught in large numbers in the surrounding waters, and form the basis of a permanent industry. Herring, mackerel, and lobster are also fished, but with less steadiness. Of late the curing of lobsters has been introduced, and promises to become a considerable industry.

We have said that geographically the Magdalens belong to Prince Edward Island, to which fertile land the soil of the Magdalens bears a remarkable resemblance; and the fertility of Prince Edward Island is proverbial. The usual crops are oats, hay, and potatoes; and rich old grass-lands have yielded crop after crop of hay without any more trouble than the ingathering. On such fine pastures stock ought to flourish; but the native breeds, presumably the descendants of the first French settlers, are not very good, and an infusion of Prince Edward Island stock has been of late imported with a view to improvement. Fruit does not flourish since the islands were deforested.

The people are poor, but well conditioned—uneducated, but honest and industrious. They are noted for their native courtesy to all, and for the domestic virtues of the women. The female Magdaleners seem Jacks—or Jills—of all trades. They help in the fishing and in the garden, mend the nets, plough the fields, spin the wool of their sheep, weave it into cloth, make clothes for the whole family, and fill up their odd moments with cooking, washing, and knitting.

As on the island of Tiree, there is no licensed house in the Magdalens. It does not follow that because liquor is not publicly sold, it is not drunk. But there is certainly no drunkenness, and the Magdaleners are naturally a sober people. Their chief luxury is tobacco, and so universal and extensive is its use, that it may almost be ranked by them as a necessary rather than as a luxury. It is said, however, that the Magdaleners are remarkably superstitious, and have a profound belief not only in the personality of the Evil One, but also in his personal intervention in affairs of individuals, even to the extent of his meddling with the working of the fishing-boat, or assuming the guise of a friend—with intent to deceive.

The whole appearance of the Magdalens near at hand is suggestive of prosperity—when the white buildings of the homesteads and the marts of the fishing-boats are sighted. But in the distance they are dreaded by the navigators of the Gulf of St Lawrence, especially in certain winds, when the set of the currents makes it a difficult thing to avoid impalement on the jagged rocks of these islands. Shipwreck here, too, implies both total loss and frightful mortality. The sands of Sable Island are slow, if cruel; but these rocks are swift at destruction, and not many hours elapse after a vessel strikes until she beats herself to matchwood. If she does get off, it is only to founder immediately in deep water.

The life-saving appliances are extensive and well planned. The points are well marked with lighthouses; rockets are placed at numerous suitable stations, and the whole system is united by telegraph wires. One reason why the Canadian Government wish to re-acquire the islands is to take still greater precautions against their being the death-trap of the mariners of the St Lawrence.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL*

By J. MACLAREN COLEMAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XV.—PLANS AND PROSPECTS.

WHEN Uncle Harry was gone, Isabel turned her thought again to her father with a new cheerfulness and prospect. If she could contrive to reconcile the brothers, might not they yet live, all three, in happy concord? But she could not yet attempt to bring them together: she must first know her father better and effect considerable improvement in his health and conduct. At present she must act, and neither speculate nor dream. She arrayed herself with care—for she felt it would be an advantage with her father to please his eye—and then went out to take the train to King's Cross. When she left that station she made several purchases, and then entered the bus for New North Road. Arrived there, she looked about for a fishmonger's; and having given an order she went on to her father.

When she was over against Mrs Ackland Snow's she was met by Mr Doughty, newly shaved and brushed. He made her an elegant bow, and walked on by her side, halting a little on his stick. His conversation was impressive, solemn, and somewhat lugubrious. The chief had spent a bad, restless night, and so had he. Had her father, Isabel asked, eaten well? He had eaten the usual 'meal of resistance' about two o'clock—an overdone chop, and little else. But what Mr Doughty chiefly wished to utter at the moment was his unbounded gratitude for what Miss Raynor, he was morally certain, intended to do for her father. He loved and revered the chief—he had been with him for more than twenty years in all variations of temperature and weather—and all he asked for himself was that

he might not be completely cut off from the society of the chief, that he might be allowed occasionally to see and speak with him. And yet another boon he asked.

'I have had a scene with the chief,' said he. 'He wished to know how you found him out, and he asked me full in the face if I had written to you. With his eyes on me I could not prevaricate, as, I confess, I had intended to do: it is an astonishing thing that you *cannot* prevaricate to those eyes of his. I admitted I had written to you. Do not, I beg of you, let him learn that I have written oftener than once; for he would never forgive me if he knew.'

As Isabel entered the little parlour, she saw her father sitting where she had left him the night before, wrapped in an old overcoat, and reading a book. When he rose to greet her, she perceived that he looked gray and pinched with fatigue; and she noted, moreover, that her appearance had called forth in him a dim gush of tender emotion, which passed upon his countenance like a breath upon a mirror. He appeared shyer with her than he had been the night before, and she felt—as only a woman can subtly feel—that he regarded her presentment with distinct approval.

'I knew you would come,' said he, taking both her hands in his, 'but I did not expect to see you so early. Will you excuse me for a minute?'

He retired into an inner room, and Isabel laid aside her hat and jacket, turned to Mr Doughty in haste, and begged his assistance in setting forth the table. Mr Doughty was appalled; for there was, as he said, 'a precarious and perplexing litter' on the table of books and papers. The table was at length cleared, however; and with the aid of a girl tempted up from the basement, who smiled on Isabel in surprise and admiration, the cloth was duly laid. Mr Doughty's spirits gradually rose, till, when Isabel had set out a fowl all ready cooked, bread and butter, and a lettuce and herbs for a salad, and had exhibited a bottle of Burgundy and asked him to draw the cork, he exclaimed: 'Really, Miss Raynor, you appear to me to have made provision for a feast of Apicius!'

There were no wine-glasses to be found; but Isabel thought tumblers would do, and Mr Doughty readily agreed with her; and delicately and lovingly, with just the proper twist, like a father drawing his child's tooth, he drew the cork of the Burgundy.

'Please, 'm,' said the little maid-servant, bursting in, all aglow with excitement, 'here's the winkles!'

'The winkles!' exclaimed Isabel.

'Yass, 'm. The boy's jes' bring 'em from the fish-shop!—on a tray!—such a lot! They do look nice!'

'Oh, the oysters,' said Isabel, and went with a dish to receive them.

'Oysters!' exclaimed Mr Doughty as she went out. 'Let me see; how long is it since the chief and I have tasted an oyster?'

At that instant the chief himself re-entered, clean and clothed, and stood in surprise. He

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We will get jostled about if we stand here. Which way are you going, Miss Raynor?

'I am on my way home to my lodgings,' said she; 'and I was just considering when I saw you if I should go by train or walk.'

'Oh, walk—please, walk,' said he; 'that is, if it is not too far, and if I may accompany you.'

'It is not so very far,' she answered quietly, though she perceived his eagerness and delight, and though these feelings in him gave a nameless delight to herself. 'My rooms are near Baker Street. But I would not like to take you out of your way; and you may be busy.'

'My way lies westward too; and I am not busy. And even if I were, that would not matter. I have been wishing to meet you, and I've met you.'

'But,' said she with a smile, 'you have not been long in London, have you?'

'Two days,' he answered—'two whole days. I came up sooner than I had intended. A good post was offered to me, if I could enter upon its occupation at once. My late chief let me off; he has been very good to me: I have discovered since I came up that it was he that got me this offer. He has so overwhelmed me with kindness, that I have been wondering whether I have behaved quite well to him.'

'What!' said Isabel. 'You think he has deliberately set himself to heap coals of fire on your head?' And she looked at him mischievously.

'Oh no,' said he, suffused with her look. 'I don't mean that. But I fear I am very egotistical: I have not asked you about yourself and your fortunes.'

'Oh,' said she with a laugh, 'my fortunes are not like yours: they are without excitement. My life swings quietly—for the most part'—with a reservation in her mind concerning the past day or two—'between my lodgings and school, and my lodgings. I suppose, then, you are now established as a London journalist. I hope you have done well for yourself in leaving Lancashire.'

'I am assistant-editor and leader-writer on *The Evening Banner*, and my late chief has even recommended me for the theatres on *The Non-such*, which is, as you know, a slogging weekly.'

'He seems, indeed, to be taking a kindly vengeance on you. What else has he done?' she asked with a smile. 'Has he not begged you to be so good as take his own place?'

'No,' said he. 'I will talk no more about myself. I have given myself away to you'—and he laughed, partly because of the ambiguity of his sentence—'but I did not guess you were an ironical person.'

'Did you not?' said she. 'Is it wicked to be ironical?'

'No, no,' said he; 'but if you absolutely decline to speak of yourself, lest I should be ironical, tell me about your uncles. Mr. Suffield has not delighted them yet, I see, with his voice in Parliament; but Mr. Raynor has lectured at the Royal Geographical. You went to the lecture, of course?'

Thus they talked as they walked along the Euston Road. Arrived at the corner of Euston Square by the St Pancras Church with its absurd caryatides, he stopped a moment and pointed

down Woburn Place. 'My lodgings,' said he, 'are down there. They are handy for the office and for the Reading Room of the British Museum. Do you ever go to the Reading Room?'

'No,' she answered, again with a spice of mischief; for a woman is never so irrepressibly mischievous as when she is pleased with her companion. 'Why should I go? I am not a literary person at all.'

'You might be if you liked,' said he; 'but I am glad you are not.'

'Why?' she asked. 'Doesn't your assistant-editorial highness not approve of female writers? Would you like to keep writing a close guild for men?'

'Oh no,' he answered to the accompaniment of a fine frank blush: being but a mere blundering male creature, he wondered at the sharpness of her speech while he liked it. 'I have no opinion on the question in general; I have only a feeling as to particular instances. I have met a few women that write, and I had rather not meet them again: that's all.'

Then there began to flow in the mind of each a current of speculation and desire beneath the matters to which they were apparently giving their attention and of which they were talking. 'Here,' thought Ainsworth, 'is the pleasantest, sweetest, most delightful comrade a man could have—pleasanter, sweeter far than any male comrade; and yet, I suppose I must be cut off from her society except on certain precise and formal occasions when I may meet her in a company! I cannot ask her to drop in and see me; and she cannot—even if she wishes it—ask me to drop in and see her. Mrs Grundy and propriety forbid it, because she is a lone woman and I am a lone man!' At the same time Isabel was thinking that she had not known Ainsworth quite so frankly and buoyantly boyish before. Was it the sense of being in a wilderness of men and women who did not care one jot for his existence that gave him that touch of naïve, irresponsible youthfulness? However it was, she liked his buoyancy and his boyishness, and she said to herself: 'How he would delight in my father!—and how my father would delight in him! How much good they might do each other! How stimulating each might be to the other! And yet I cannot bring them together! Can I? Can I not? Why not? Why not, indeed? Am I ashamed of my father? Do I propose to keep him always hidden? And if I do not, why should I not show him at once, at least to Mr Ainsworth, who, I am sure, will neither misunderstand him nor me?' It is a very subtle and seductive experience that—the sure and certain feeling—which is more frequently based on intuition and understanding than on reason and knowledge—that there is one person who will never misunderstand or mistake you whatever you may say or do: it is very closely akin to a fuller experience which Isabel had as yet no notion she was beginning to undergo.

Isabel, as we have seen, was a young lady who, when she had decided that a course was right, did not review and re-review her decision, and thus postpone action till the ebb of feeling.

'Mr Ainsworth,' said she, 'have you ever heard me speak of my father?'

'Your father!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'I did

not know you had a father! I mean, of course, that I had always supposed he was dead.'

'He has been virtually dead for many years—dead to me and to my aunt and uncles since I was a baby. Some other time I will tell you all about it. "He was dead, but is alive again," she said, quoting but half-consciously the sacred words; "he was lost, and is found." Yesterday I found him; I am just come from him now; and I am going to bring him to live with me—without, for the present, telling my uncles or my aunt anything about it.'

'It is very noble, and beautiful, and filial of you!' said Ainsworth.

'No, no,' said she; 'it is not. Don't use such absurd adjectives. I am merely doing it because I like to do it.'

'But,' said he, 'though it is not for me to question what you propose to do, may I suggest that you may not have considered all the trouble and—and distress that it may entail?'

'I have considered all that,' said she. 'I know what you are thinking of. But he is not a bad man, or a gross man. He is a clever, gentle creature—my poor father!—simple, weak, and docile as can be. You remember Coleridge and his besetting weakness? Well, my father is something like Coleridge. The habit that has ruined him is the same, and his cleverness is of the same kind too. He is coming to me to-morrow, and I want to ask you to do me a favour: come and see him sometimes, and talk to him. He is very interesting, I think: he used to be an editor, and he writes still a little, and he and you may find each other good company; at anyrate, I am sure it will cheer and encourage him to find a young man interested in him.'

'My dear Miss Raynor,' said Ainsworth—and in his impulsive fervour he had to put a restraint on himself not to seize and press Isabel's hand: he grasped and pressed his own instead—'whatever I can do, I will do; but do not use the word favour in connection with it. It will be a precious privilege to please you, and to do anything for your father.'

'Thank you,' said she simply: his fervour made her somewhat shy. 'I am hoping,' she continued, 'to cure him gradually of his habit.'

'You will,' exclaimed Ainsworth in the fullest belief—'you will!'

'And, of course,' said she, 'you understand that all this is for the present a secret.'

'I understand,' said he. 'And—and I appreciate your having taken me into your confidence.'

'This,' said she, stopping at a little gate—the number of which Ainsworth eagerly noted—'is where I lodge. Good-bye.'

She gave him her hand and smiled frankly on him, so that he was penetrated through and through with delight. He looked back after he had turned away, and at the same instant she glanced over her shoulder. She smiled and nodded to him, and he raised his hat and went on, ravished with her charm. Never, he thought, had there been so spirited a poise of head and neck as that she showed when she turned; never, certainly, had he seen so divine and enthralling a smile—a smile that had been all for him!—and never, surely, had there been in all the world a kinder, sweeter, more fascinating, or more beau-

tiful woman than she! The red gold of sunset was glowing behind him as he walked away, and he murmured to himself:

'Rosy is the West, rosy is the South;
Roses are her cheeks, and a rose her mouth!'

HOW THEY TELEGRAPH.

SEVERAL years' practice as a telegraphist in Her Majesty's Post-office so fixes the telegraphic code in the mind that the manipulating of the various instruments becomes almost mechanical, and their signals, to the stranger so mysterious, are as intelligible to the operator as the words of an ordinary conversation. I well remember, however, that for a considerable time after I entered the 'service' the 'spirit-rappings' of the bells and sounders were so much jargon to my understanding, and certainly irritating and confusing to my ears. It takes some time to become acquainted with the different kinds of instruments, and long uninterrupted practice before they can be operated with ease and rapidity. When you enter the service as a telegraph learner, you are kindly presented with a card which contains a faithful representation of the English alphabet as you were taught it at school, with the addition of a number of mysterious dots and dashes, which you are given to understand are the telegraphic signs for the letters; but if these are supposed to be shorter than the letters themselves, you are inclined to think that it is on the principle of the old woman's ideas of brevity, who had a son named John, but 'they called him Johnny for short.' The alphabet card of signs is like the following:

A --	N --	1 .----
B	O	2 .----
C -- .	P . . .	3 .----
D ..	Q .----	4 .----
E .	R	5 .----
F	S ...	6 .----
G ---	T -	7 .----
H	U ---	8 .----
I ..	V	9 .----
J .----	W ---	0 .----
K --	X .----
L	Y .----	
M ---	Z ---	

You are to commence to fix these signs on your memory, and for this purpose are allowed to practise them on a 'dummy' instrument, with two keys like two escaped piano keys, that have widened themselves, and flattened themselves, and blackened themselves in the process of escaping from their legitimate sphere.

You quickly learn that all the dot signals are to be struck with the left key, and all the dash signals with the right. Therefore, the letter E is represented by one stroke of the left key; the letter T by one stroke of the right; while A is a combination of the two. Three taps on the left mean S, while three on the right mean O, and so on. Learning this alphabet is a slow business at first, and the learner generally makes it about ten times more laborious than is necessary by pressing down the keys as though he were playing on them with his feet, or by working them in jerks as though his arms were afflicted with spasms.

The alphabet is gone over again and again and again until facility is acquired. When I was learning, the dots and dashes haunted me all day long, and through the night they disturbed my sleep. Whenever my hands were at liberty, they were tapping away for very life. Was I at the dinner-table waiting to be served? my knife and fork became the two 'keys.' Was I seated in the arm-chair? the left arm became a 'dot,' the right one a 'dash,' and I gradually made the polish fade by the interminable messages I signalled on that old arm-chair. The keys of the piano afforded a splendid method of practice of an evening, and though a tune on two notes is liable to become somewhat monotonous when repeated for the thousandth time, yet it could be varied, you know, by selecting two different keys about every half-hour. Needless to say the family became highly educated in classical music, and were supremely delighted with my performance: at the same time it is but honest to add that they wished it were a harmonium instead of a piano, as then I could have pursued my studies in silence, unless, indeed, I were so stupid as to 'signal' on the pedals with my feet as well as on the keys with my fingers.

When you have learned to tickle the keys in this way, you have by no means finished. You may then be able to *send* a message fairly well, but unless you can *receive* the signals also, you are no good in a telegraph room. Now, receiving a message is an altogether different matter. You may have to take it from a Needle, or from a Bell, or from a Sounder, or from a Morse, and hence you have to learn *four* different methods of speaking, or hearing, the same language.

The Needle instrument possesses a dial the size of a mantel-clock face, in the centre of which is suspended a piece of metal, tapering at each end, and technically called a 'needle.' As the message is signalled to you by some fellow playing on the keys at the distant station in the way that has been named, the needle swings from side to side between two ivory pegs—perhaps they are bone—and you have got to transpose these swinging motions into an intelligible message, it may be either describing a dog-fight or a wedding; it may be ordering oysters for supper or sending somebody to Timbuctoo. When the needle swings to the left, you are to understand it means a 'dot'; when it swings to the right, a 'dash' is indicated; so that your alphabet is then read by *sight* instead of by touch, and when a quick operator is working the instrument, the 'waggles' of the needle are decidedly hysterical, and, to a stranger, utterly incomprehensible.

The learner generally takes the needle instrument first; and I have not yet forgotten—though then but a mere boy—the pride with which I succeeded in reading my first message without assistance, and if I did ask a man to 'send the corn in his own *socks*,' I detected it in time to save myself from getting the *sack*. To make myself complete master of this instrument, I remember I procured a Hudson's dry soap-box, chiselled out a circular piece near the top, and filled up the cavity with a cardboard disc, in the centre of which I pivoted a needle made of tin. I ran a sort of axle from the needle to the back of the box, and on this fixed a crosspiece, attaching to each end of it a bit of elastic; and

these in turn to two wooden keys, which I had persuaded—by some contrivance I now forget, but which at the time I thought highly ingenious—to spring up and down at a touch; and although their motions were something akin to those of the celebrated Spring-heeled Jack, yet it served my purpose, and enabled me to 'telegraph' to my heart's content, at the fireside at home, all kinds of imaginary messages to the four corners of the earth. Had I had to pay for them at a shilling apiece, which was the rate at that time, the fortune of the Inland Revenue would have been made, and the necessity of taxation abolished for all time.

The Bell instrument is to be read by the *ear*. Two little hammers—one on the left, and the other on the right—tap a small metal plate as the distant keys are played, and the message is conveyed by not altogether unmusical sounds; one stroke of the bell on the left meaning E, while one stroke of the bell on the right indicates T. The incessant tapping of these bells in a busy office is another thing to which the embryo telegraphist has to become accustomed; while, when a score of such instruments are clicking at once, one can easily understand that the noise resembles that made in a small factory. Sometimes it is so great that the clerk is glad to stick his head between the bells, so that the hammers are close to his left and right ear respectively, while his writing pad is almost under his nose, and he is straining every nerve to keep up with the terrific operator at the other end, for an expert telegraphist can wire a message at a very high speed on a Bell instrument. In rough and windy weather, several wires running in the same direction will clash together, and then, oh, the utter jargon, the vexations, irritating sounds that these bells give forth! They are instantly put out of tune and temper, as may easily be imagined, when several messages, instead of minding their own business, and running respectably along their own wires, are chunning together on *one* line, and dancing a jig or singing *Auld Lang Syne* with crossed hands.

The next instrument to be acquired may be the Sounder, and here the learner has almost to begin over again, for, instead of having two keys on which to play his little tunes, he is provided with only one. He is told that to signal a dot he must touch the key very lightly, and to denote a dash a little more heavily. Hence, the same code of signals is available, for a light tap indicates E, while a more decided one signifies T. Three light strokes mean S, while three heavy ones cry O! Of course, facility in the use of this key is only attained after a considerable amount of practice, but, once secured, the operator rattles away without a thought, and makes his light and heavy signals with as much ease as an expert phonographer does the light and heavy strokes of shorthand. To receive a message on the Sounder, the ear requires to be trained to the same thing—that is to say, it must at once detect between light and heavy sounds, for the rapid strokes made by the vertical motion of a small brass rod are the only signals he receives. A light sound says E; a heavy one means T; and when a 'demon' sender is at the other end of the line, your reporter, in trying to keep up with a rapid speaker, is 'not in it,' for,

in telegraphy, every word has to be written out at full length in longhand, and the operator has to listen to his oracle amid the click and clatter of a score of other vociferous jabbering machines.

Then there is the Morse instrument, which is perhaps the prettiest of all, for, while you send your message with one key precisely in the same way as in the case of the Sounder, in receiving a message you have it actually written out for you in black and wh—no, not black and white, but black and blue (perhaps it is black and blue through being struck so much). A narrow ribbon of blue paper unwinds itself from the instrument, and by an ingenious yet simple arrangement the signals from the small brass rod, instead of having to be read by sound, are made to mark themselves by printers' ink on to the ribbon; and the telegraphist, seated at the desk, holds one end of the ribbon in his left hand, and by practice draws it gradually along before his eyes, at the same time rapidly reading the dots and dashes, and translating them into 'good old English,' for the benefit of the individual to whom the familiar pink form is to be directed. Thus the dots and dashes of the learner's card are here reproduced by the faithful Morse, and simply require translating into longhand.

It is easy to understand that the addition or omission of a single dot or dash could very soon alter the whole tenor of a message, and the clerk not only requires to read his message correctly as from the signals, but also with intelligence, so as to avoid sense being converted into nonsense. Nevertheless, mistakes do occasionally escape detection; yet, when a word may be so easily altered, it is remarkable that so few blunders do occur, for — . . . — . . ., which means 'bad,' could be easily turned into 'dead,' thus: — . . . — . . ., and consequently the message, 'Your Uncle John is bad,' being received as 'Your Uncle John is dead,' is not at all surprising. 'We got the twins this morning' (— . . . — . . .), would not have been so alarming if the telegraphist had signified that they had received 'twigs' (— . . . — . . .). The man who ordered his 'cap' (— . . . — . . .) to meet him at the station, was enraged when he found his trap (— . . . — . . .) was not in waiting. While the other man who sent for his 'pig' (— . . . — . . .) was fortunately understood to mean his 'gig' (— . . . — . . .).

When the telegraph learner has mastered the Morse instrument, he is surprised to find that a message can be sent and received on it at one and the same time on the same wire—that is to say, a telegram may be travelling from London to Brighton, and another, of a totally different nature, from Brighton to London, on the self-same wire, yet with no clashing or intermingling. When this is done it is termed duplex working; but quadruplex is still more amazing, for four messages can be flashing along the same wire at the same instant without interfering with each other in the least.

Then there is the Wheatstone instrument to become acquainted with. Here, again, something new has to be learned, for three keys confront the operator, and they are manipulated, not by pressure, but by striking them with a small rubber-tipped mallet or punch. The three keys are like typewriter keys, but with rather larger

surfaces, and these are struck merely to prepare the message for transmission. The left key signifies a dot, and the right one a dash, but the middle key must be invariably struck after each letter, just as a typist strikes the space bar after each word. A white paper ribbon passes through this instrument behind the keys, and as they are manipulated, they perforate small holes in the ribbon, until, when the message is finished, the white spotless paper is found to be crowded with hundreds of thousands of tiny holes. But the message has not yet left the office. To send it to its destination the white ribbon thus prepared must be placed in an instrument called a Wheatstone Transmitter. Here it rushes between two small brass rollers at a speed which can be regulated from fifty to four hundred words per minute (where are ye, brave stenographers?), and, strange to say, at the distant station a paper ribbon comes out of their instrument at an equally high rate of speed, but with all the signals converted into the familiar dots and dashes again, as in the Morse instrument just named. The Wheatstone instruments, which are capable of working at such a high speed, are generally used for press messages, long speeches of several columns in length being flashed all over the country, in many cases to half-a-dozen widely separated towns at once, at a rate very much faster than that at which they were uttered; so that it is possible, by the reporter sending the transcript of his notes of the first part of a speech immediately to the telegraph office, to have it pouring into the editor's room at a newspaper office hundreds of miles away before the speaker has finished his address, and the first portion of his speech may be actually set up in type before he has concluded his remarks. The speech, perforated on the ribbon in the way named, may be rapidly despatched to half-a-dozen towns by means of one Wheatstone instrument; and then the same ribbon, without further preparation, may be placed in another Wheatstone, connected with a different group of towns, and signalled to them with equal facility. Thus the Queen's Speech or any other item of public importance is flashed to all parts of the kingdom within a few minutes of being made known.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

MR LANGLAND, of Langland Manor, was not so young as he had been. To many, that may sound a ridiculous truism; but to others, who know that in sentiment and hope, in all that gives value to youth, a man is often younger at five-and-forty than he was at five-and-twenty, it will not appear absurd. At a certain spring-time Mr Langland was at least thirty years older than he had been ten years before. One morning in particular, as he tramped steadily along the narrow footpath over the swelling expanse of arable that crowned his estate, he looked as if he were about done with life altogether, as if he expected nothing more in this world, and were extremely uncertain whether there were another. When he had surmounted the rise of the ground, he stopped and looked about him, tapped his

gniter with his stick, as in the sharp impatience of pain, bit his lip hard—there seemed a sob swelling in his throat—threw out nods around him, as if he were counting the points of the compass, and finally let his head sink, as in the utter perplexity of despair.

All that was observed by a man on the other side of the hedge close by, who stroked a very thin Roman nose with a white and lean forefinger, and raised and dropped his gray bushy eyebrows, as if he would say: 'Ah, that's how he feels about it! Well, now, let me see.' With the impressive 'Hem!' of an unctuous preacher, he pushed aside the straggling, overgrown tops of the hedge and sidled through a gap. The Squire turned quickly, and a new shade passed upon his afflicted face, as of suspicion and dislike, when he saw the man.

'Mr Purvey,' he murmured, not at all by way of greeting, but in a tone of assent to a disagreeable fact. Then, as if recollecting his manners, he added: 'Good-morning.'

'Good-morning, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey. 'A sweet morning—is it not? "He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good."'

'Yes,' growled the Squire in assent. He looked sideways, as if he suspected there was a personal reference in the quotation, and let his look linger a moment up and down the half-clerical garb of Mr Purvey—his black coat and his white shirt front and neckcloth. "And," continued the Squire, "sendeth His rain upon the just and upon the unjust."

'Quite so,' said Mr Purvey, smiling approval. 'This now'—and he turned round and indicated with his stick the neglected, rain-swept furrows, among which couch-grass and weeds and thistles ran riot—'and that'—pointing down at a rich bottom dotted with sheep and lambs—'are illustrations of the way His blessings and His chastisements are received by the two kinds of people. This land turns sour and unproductive and wild with such weather as it does not like; that green bottom is grateful for all weathers, and turns all to advantage and profit.'

'You're too fine and—and figurative for me,' said the Squire with a touch of bitterness in his tone. 'All I know is that that bottom and this upland arable, both o' them, like best what's best for them—a mixture of rain and shine. The bottom, of course, thrives best with more wet than shine; and this arable with more shine than wet. This field, sir, that used to be the finest sight the parish could show, with its straight furrows of rich, sweet loam spread out to sun and shower, has been having for years more wet than human clay can endure, and so it is as you see it—lying—er—fallow, sir.'

'So like the worldly man!' said Mr Purvey, extending his hand and speaking with a roll of rhetorical complacency.

'Eh?' said the Squire with a sudden turn.

'I mean this fallow field'—with an emphasis on 'fallow.'—The Squire looked ruefully round on the land, which now needed all an auctioneer's imagination to pass it off as 'arable.'—'That bottom,' continued Mr Purvey, 'takes the reverses that have made this field so fallow and turns them to the richest uses.'

'You are talking nonsense, Mr Purvey. Excuse me. But that bottom likes all the wet we've

been having as little as this field, though it does not show it so much on the outside. That bottom is as sodden as a sponge; it's sour and rotten, and those sheep on it have, every one of them, got foot-rot.'

'Ah, well,' said Mr Purvey; 'I didn't know that.'

'Of course you didn't. How should you?'

The Squire looked conscious of having the best of what argument there had been.

Mr Purvey considered him, and suddenly facing him, said: 'Well, I hope—indeed, I think—this fine day'—looking up and around—'is promise of a better season for us. Let us have faith, at anyrate. And if you will kindly look in upon me this afternoon, I daresay we shall be able to arrange this business of ours to the satisfaction of both of us.'

Mr Purvey held out his hand. The Squire took it and looked at him in brightening surprise: he felt as if suddenly ushered from the gloom and closeness of a small room into the open fresh air.

'About three,' said Mr Purvey. 'Will that do?'

'Very well,' said the Squire, becoming very red, and giving Mr Purvey's hand a grip which made his eyelids tremble. 'I'm obliged to you, Mr Purvey.'

'Not at all,' said Mr Purvey; 'by no means.'

So they parted. Mr Purvey turned off along the cart-track to the left, while the Squire continued on the path he had been pursuing before his conversation with Purvey. The Squire swung along at a sharp pace for a few yards, and then he suddenly drew up, and looked after the black, spare figure with its hands crossed behind, as if to keep them from doing harm. Could it be that Purvey meant mischief? The benevolent intention he seemed to have towards the Squire's distress was not at all in keeping with what the Squire and the Squire's neighbours had judged to be his character.

Let me explain.

Purvey—whose name is celebrated to all the world by 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids'—was a man of sixty or so, who had dwelt, at intervals, on the confines of the Langland property for three years. He had bought a pleasant little freehold farm of one hundred acres, which the auctioneers had advertised in the London papers as 'a charming residential estate'; he had pulled down the old farmhouse, and built himself, on the top of the hill, where it could not be hid, a gaunt abomination of a villa in concrete, which everybody either laughed or shuddered at. That first unfavourable impression of himself he deepened by opposing the very High, but the very popular, vicar of the parish, and intensified by holding 'Revival Services' in a galvanised iron Mission Room which he had reared on his own property. His black coat, his glib tongue, and his familiar address, and most of all his reputation for vast wealth, drew aside even the elect of the rustics. Yet, notwithstanding these differences, Purvey had been early received as a casual visitor at Langland Manor. His little property 'marched' with Mr Langland's, and he would walk over to the Manor House to discuss with the easy Squire questions of common fences and ditches, saying: 'Don't

you trouble about the cost. You've enough to do, I know, in these bad times, without putting up new fences. But new fences, you see, are a hobby with me, and I may as well spend a few pounds on them as on anything else.' Moreover, Mrs Langland, a gentle, religious soul, came to like a talk with Mr Purvey: his evangelical conversation did her good, she said; and her husband was not the man to say her 'nay' in anything. Then the good lady fell ill, and during her illness Mr Purvey sent her supplies of his Patent Food. It was not a great matter, but the Squire took it as kindly meant: it won his heart more than a greater service would have done. But soon the greater service came also, such a service as must either bind one man closely to another, or totally disserve them.

Mrs Langland died; and on her death the Squire—for reasons we need not trouble about here—found himself in greater difficulties than even bad seasons and vacant farms could be responsible for. Somehow, Mr Purvey got wind of these difficulties, and offered to buy the Fairfield Farm—that on which we have just seen the pair—which ran with his own little estate, and which probably was desirable in his eyes for other reasons. Then the Squire had to explain that he could not sell the Fairfield Farm, because, in law, it was not his: it had belonged to his wife, and the right to it was transmitted to his eldest daughter, Kitty. Upon that Mr Purvey offered to lend the Squire, with his daughter's consent, six thousand pounds on a mortgage of the farm; and the Squire had eagerly accepted the offer.

The mortgage had been effected two years before the date I am writing of, but the Squire had no prospect of redeeming it; no, nor even of paying the interest, in connection with which was a circumstance that made him angry, when he thought of it. At the end of the first year, Purvey had said, when the £240 of interest was almost due: 'About that mortgage, Mr Langland—you've had scarcely time to turn round yet: suppose we let both mortgage and interest slide until next year.' And the Squire had foolishly let the matter slide, and now there was a sum of about £480 due for interest alone! He was dejected, desperate, and suspicious—suspicious that Mr Purvey had led him into a trap. And he was the more angrily inclined to suspicion, that during the past year Purvey had taken several opportunities of letting him know he had a very promising son of a marriageable age. What! a family alliance with 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids'? The vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical son of a vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical father marry his Kitty? It may be called *a priori* prejudice, but the Squire sincerely believed that the son must deserve these epithets as much as he believed the father deserved them; and he resolved that his Kitty's feelings should not be outraged by such an alliance, though the heavens should fall. And the Squire's heaven seemed very likely to fall; for he had no prospect of paying either mortgage or its accumulated interest, and Purvey, if offended, might foreclose.

'Now, what does he mean?' thought the Squire, as he looked after Purvey. "If you will kindly look in this afternoon—I daresay we can arrange

this business—to the satisfaction of both of us?"

'To the satisfaction of both of us:' these were certainly Purvey's words; and Mr Langland as he trudged home kept repeating them to himself—drawing them out, as it were, like an ear-trumpet, and hearing Purvey's voice through them; or like a spy-glass, and seeing Purvey's black back and crossed hands through them.

It began to rain before he reached home; but yet he went to the Home Farm and tramped about the out-buildings, absently looking at and feeling cows and pigs, while he dreamed of what he might do if 'the agricultural depression' would only lift, if the heavens would only be propitious, and cease their persecution of him and his with rain and murrain. And if—oh, if!—he had only a little more capital, what oats and barley would he not raise on that fine upland, what pork would he not breed from his favourite cross of Prince Albert and Berkshire! He felt at the moment as if he could submit to any terms from Purvey to be freed from that chain and clog of pecuniary trouble which he had so long dragged about with him. But when he went indoors and bethought him how cheerful and patient his girls had been under the abridgment of their small luxuries—and under even the reduction of the household—when he saw his bright, beautiful eldest daughter, Kitty, standing in the pantry shelling peas, with her sleeves turned up from her white arms, and with a big white apron before her—he swore a big oath, which relieved him considerably, that never—come what would—would he permit his girl to be saddened and degraded by an unbecoming alliance!

At three o'clock, Langland and Purvey sat facing each other in what was called the library of the concrete villa. Purvey moved a paper or two about, took up an old quill, and began to mend and dress it, and said: 'Well, Mr Langland—he had not arrived at the familiarity of dropping the 'mister'—what about this mortgage? I need not remind you that you have already had the legal notice, and that I can demand repayment this day week.'

'I know you can,' said the Squire, with his hand firmly closed on the head of his stick.

'Well, now, what about it? Am I right, for instance, in guessing—merely, a suspicion, a guess, you know—that you are not prepared, that you do not expect to be prepared, to redeem it next week?'

'You are right, Mr Purvey,' said the Squire. 'I am not prepared yet, nor do I expect to be prepared in a week, to redeem.'

'When do you expect to be prepared, Mr Langland?' asked Purvey with a sidelong look.

'Pon my soul, Mr Purvey, I don't know!' exclaimed the Squire. 'I don't even see any way of paying you the two years' interest. I can manage one with a pinch, but the two!'—He shook his head.—'I thought, Mr Purvey, that we might come to some—some arrangement.'

'Well,' said Mr Purvey, laying down the mended quill and taking up another, 'the fact is, Mr Langland, that I ought not to leave the money out any longer. I can apply it in my business; and to be strictly business-like—as one must be in these days—I ought to put it into the

business, where it will make its fifteen per cent. instead of four.'

The Squire's heart sank. He saw hope slipping far out of his reach; he imagined Purvey already in possession of Fairfield Farm—of Kitty's inheritance!—and he was conscious of a difficulty of utterance.

'Is that an alternative you present to me, Mr Purvey?' At last he said—'to pay fifteen per cent.? Nine hundred pounds of interest every year? I couldn't do it! It is completely beyond my power!'

'I have not asked that you should, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey, with a fiercely genial smile. 'I have only suggested that the money *could* be so applied both to the benefit of the business and of myself: a good business man would so apply it; but I am not a good business man: I have other interests besides business; and I do not propose to withdraw it from you and apply it to the business. That is not my alternative. But I *have* an alternative.' Mr Purvey in mending the pen in his hand split it right up and rendered it useless. He threw it away, and clapping his hands on the table, leaned forward, and looked at the Squire. 'I *have* an alternative,' he repeated.

'May I beg to know,' said the Squire, in an agitation which he could ill conceal, 'what it is?'

'I have a son, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey; 'he is a worthy young man, sir—an excellent young man, though I doubt whether his feet are yet set in the way of the Kingdom. You have a daughter, Mr Langland—a dear girl, a sweet girl, a girl with a gentle and gracious disposition, though it may be she also is still unregenerate.'

('Confound his impudence!' thought the Squire.) 'Will it not be wise, Mr Purvey,' he said aloud, 'to let these questions of religion alone? We may not agree upon them.'

Mr Purvey smiled, and opened his hands with a gentle deprecatory wave.

'Your daughter and my son, Mr Langland, might find grace together. My son, with the fortune he will inherit, might reasonably hope to make a better match—from a worldly point of view, I mean,' he added hurriedly; for an ominous frown and an involuntary flush had appeared on the Squire's face. 'But I had rather, Mr Langland, he married your daughter, Miss Kitty, without a penny, than another girl with fifty thousand pounds. If you can see your way to that, Mr Langland, then the mortgage may run till Doomsday—whenever that may be—at one and a half per cent.' And he smiled pleasantly and cracked his fingers, as if he had made a joke of a very agreeable kind.

'You flatter me—and my daughter,' said the Squire, pulling his beard roughly, to subdue or disguise the look of indignation and ferocity which he was sure must be upon his face. 'But,' he continued, 'you forget, Mr Purvey, that neither I nor my daughter has ever seen your son.'

'You will soon, however, have an opportunity of seeing him. He has been abroad for several years. He is a—— Well, yes,' said Purvey mysteriously, when apparently he was on the point of declaring the occupation or profession

of his son, 'he is as clever a fellow as you'll meet with in a day's journey, Mr Langland. I have written for him to get leave of absence and to come home, and I expect to have him here in three months or so. Then you shall see him, Mr Langland.'

'You will understand, then,' said the Squire, quick to perceive that he might escape from his position with temper and dignity, 'that I can say nothing about the matter you have proposed to me until we have made the acquaintance of your son. You would not have me engage my daughter to—er—a man she has never seen?'

'Certainly not, Mr Langland—certainly not. They shall meet, and they are sure to like each other,' said he, stroking his thin Roman nose in the best of spirits.

A few minutes later the Squire was outside the concrete villa, angry and fuming. To subdue his discomposure, he thought he would take a roundabout way home over the breezy upland. To that end he turned across Mr Purvey's fields to reach the Fairfield Farm. He was but a few yards from the margin of the Purvey property when he came upon a square enclosure of high, close-set boards. He was wondering what that could be, when a man came out of a door in the enclosure, and through the open door he saw that there was a little wooden shanty within.

'What's this for?' he asked of the man, who was an utter stranger, and who looked grimy and oily, as if he had been attending to machinery. 'I haven't noticed this building before.'

'Boring, sir,' answered the man, somewhat curtly and sulkily.

'Boring, eh? Boring for water, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir—boring,' repeated the man, and passed on.

The Squire gave a passing glance of surprise to the fact that he had heard nothing of such an operation being in progress, and then he cast all his thought and attention on his own affairs.

SOME NOTES ON BONNETS.

MALE headgear has often been taken as a theme, and numberless dissertations have been written upon the beauties, advantages, and shortcomings of the 'stove-pipe' and the 'billycock;' but very few appear to have given much attention to the philosophy of Bonnets, or studied the growth and gradual development of those combinations of birds, ribbons, flowers, and feathers which now grace the heads of our fair ones. The male hat has been rendered famous by Lamb and Leigh Hunt, while Carlyle's caustic criticism upon dress generally will always remain unique in English literature. 'Clothes,' he says, 'gave us individuality, distinction, social polity; clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screens of us.' Indeed, in the present day it would seem as if the prophecy of Herr Teufelsdröckh bids fair to be fulfilled. 'One might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion,' to quote an old adage; and it is interesting to glance back and observe the multifarious twists and turns, alterations and additions, which have marked the history of bonnets.

'The fashion wears out more apparel than the

man,' says Shakespeare, and we have not far to seek to ascertain the abundance of this truth. But in this paper it is not our purpose to deal with the vagaries of the head-coverings of man, for wherever fashion is concerned he is but an insignificant cipher, and the sober 'silk hat' to which he so tenaciously clings is of slight consequence in comparison with the fearful and wonderful arrangement of nodding plumes and bobbing flowers which adorns the female head in this nineteenth century.

The earliest headgear of the ladies of Britain was a felt or woollen cap called *huet* (hence our modern word hat), worn by the higher class of Anglo-Saxons; but this was quickly superseded by a hood or veil, which, falling down before, was wrapped round the neck and breast in a very inartistic manner. But not only do we owe the introduction of head-coverings to the Saxons, but in that period the ladies all used on their cheeks a red cosmetic, so that the calling in of art, in the shape of carmine and powder, to assist Nature is not the outcome of refinement, but the preservation of an ancient custom.

During the Danish and Norman periods, the head-dress altered but little in style, and it was not until the thirteenth century that the veils were of gold tissue or superbly embroidered silk, and over them were worn diadems, circlets, and garlands; whilst the wimple covered the head and shoulders, and was fastened under the chin, giving a decidedly ugly appearance. It was in this century, too, corsets were first introduced and worn over the dress.

In the reign of Edward III. hats first became general, and were constructed to resemble a coronet; but with the accession of Richard II. these were discarded; party-coloured hoods came into vogue, and Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* describes the carpenter's wife as wearing a silk girdle, head fillet, and brooch. When the sumptuary laws were revived by Henry V., ladies adopted the expedient of covering their head-dress with a kerchief or veil, and this continued throughout the whole of the fifteenth century. Besides the heart-shaped head-dress and the Turkish turban, ladies now wore upon their heads the ugly steeple, consisting of a roll of linen covered with fine lawn, which hung to the ground or was tucked under the arm. To such an extent was this fashion carried, that it is related of Isabella of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI., that she had the doors of the palace of Vincennes altered so as to admit herself and the ladies of the court in full regalia. Caps with large wings or lappets on each side, similar to those now worn by the Normandy peasants, were also much affected at this period, and were called *bourets*, hence our word bonnet.

The novelty of the later part of the fifteenth century appears from the old chronicles to have been a curious head-dress of embroidered gold-net projecting from the back of the head, and a stiffened kerchief over it spreading out like wings, a fashion which was quickly followed by close caps and cauls, from under which the hair hung down to the waist. Elaboration seems to have commenced with the reign of Henry VIII., for head-dresses were now made of velvet, having long ear-pieces reaching down to the shoulders, and studded with pearls, jewels, and gold. Three-cornered caps of

miniver were also worn, as well as closely fitting caps reaching to the ears, known as the 'Mary-Queen-of-Scots' cap. The forms of the Elizabethan head-dress, we learn from Holinshed, were very numerous, consisting of French hoods, hats, caps, kerchiefs, cauls of net, wire, and lattice caps, as well as the ermine bonnet, the latter of which was 'forbidden to all but gentlewomen born, having arms.'

The French cap remained in fashion until the time of William III., then with the rage for false hair came the periwig; and the cap gave place to the high-crowned hat with ostrich or peacock feathers, and a sprig of yew for mourning. As the wig became the mode in the Georgian era, so did the shapes and styles of caps and hats change almost as rapidly as at the present day. Caps were at first small frilled or puffed; then came the Ranelagh mob-cap, copied from the head-kerchiefs of market-women; the Mary-Queen-of-Scots cap of black gauze edged with French beads; the fly-cap, like a butterfly, edged with garnets, topazes, or brilliants; and Goldsmith's 'Cousin Hannah's' cap, a few bits of cambric and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of the head. Next calashes, like the head of a cabriolet, were appended to the head-dress. Following this came a flat straw or silk hat of small size, trimmed with ribbons, and worn upon the crown of the head; and afterwards a large round gypsy straw hat fastened by ribbons under the chin.

The bonnet—a century before, made of silk, velvet, or cloth—was in the time of the Georges changed to straw, for, about 1724, Gay mentions 'a new straw bonnet lined with green.' The formalities of the eighteenth century received a terrible blow by the French Revolution, and in the ten years preceding 1800, a complete change was effected in feminine head-dress. Periwigs commenced to die out; but straw bonnets, much modified, and broad-brimmed hats, trimmed with long ostrich feathers, were the mode throughout the previous half of the present century. Then came the rage for quickly changing fashion: hats and bonnets altered yearly; and in the last four decades we have had ladies wearing headgear of all conceivable shapes and sizes. There was the straw hat like an inverted saucer, and the tiny flat bonnet perched upon the high chignon after the fashion of Katharine's cap in the play:

Moulded on a porringer.
Why, 'tis a cockle, or a walnut shell,
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap,
A custard coffin, a bauble.

They have been multiform. There was the basket hat, the turban, the flower bonnet, the becoming 'Princess,' the saucy 'Gainsborough,' the 'poke' bonnet with its hideous pea-green strings, and hundreds, nay thousands, of others, that have been in vogue for a brief space, but have now 'had their day,' and been relegated to that oblivion, the capacious sack of the dealer in ladies' wardrobes.

Since the commencement of the fifteenth century, the fantasies of head-dress have been borrowed from Paris, and the *haut monde* of that city has guided the English taste exclusively, until at the present moment everything that is fashionable is French.

Fashion, however, is much more fickle nowa-

days than it was in the earlier half of the century; for whereas at that time a bonnet would be in fashion for a decade or so, and daughters frequently wore their mother's wedding dresses, in these later years the Rue de la Paix asserts its influence to cause an alteration of shapes several times each season. Both from the Parisian milliner's point of view and that of the leaders of Society, these kaleidoscopic changes are highly necessary for the reservation of style to the aristocracy. In these levelling days, as soon as a new 'model' of a hat or bonnet is introduced, the milliners of the unfashionable at once proceed to copy it, with the result that within a month or so of its appearance in Regent Street shop windows, it is worn by the denizens of the Mile End Road when upon their Sunday excursions.

Heavily as these continual changes of fashion may draw upon the purse of the humble and long-suffering husband, nevertheless they are necessary so long as it is the mission of woman to outvie her neighbour in the matter of dress. Materials in the last century were so expensive as to preclude the poor from imitating the rich; but all this has changed in this age of cheapness. Whether the present styles are more becoming than the Gainsborough of our grandmothers or the coal-scuttle of Madame Sarah Gamp, it is not our intention to dispute, it being merely a matter of taste; although we cannot refrain from asserting that many of the hats and bonnets of to-day have been brought to artistic perfection. Their lofty construction may perhaps have annoyed us when vainly endeavouring to obtain a glimpse of the performers at matinees, concerts, and other such gatherings; but fashion delights in extremes, and it is therefore satisfactory to note that they are now worn quite as low as a year ago they were high.

The bonnet is as dear to the feminine heart as the pipe to the man, with the exception that the former is most attractive when new, whilst the latter is rendered more appreciable by age; and this being so, we should neither sneer at what some are pleased to term the fickleness of the fair sex, nor begrudge them their little foibles, expensive though they may be.

SOME HOSPITAL STORIES.

By G. B. BURGIN.

'You don't know Miss X——?'

'Never heard of her.'

'Oh, well, I'm sorry for you. But if you are interested in hospital life in a big city and the things which happen to nurses, you couldn't do better than call on Miss X——. I'll give you a letter of introduction to her. She has devoted most of her life to philanthropic objects, especially in connection with the London poor. Miss X—— will give you more information in five minutes than the average nurse could provide you with in a week. Better go and see her.'

I took my friend's advice, and a letter of introduction, and called upon Miss X—— at eleven one chilly November morning. Miss X——, having comforted a poor woman who complained of suffering from 'nervous nobility,' sent her away, and seeing that I was cold, proceeded to make me some delicious coffee over a

little spirit lamp in one corner of her pleasant morning-room. The room itself was gay with many-hued chrysanthemums, with pretty bits of old china, and quaint Japanese hangings. Behind the curtains were lint bandages, stores of necessities, &c.; but I only became aware of these when something was wanted in a hurry and the curtains were withdrawn. When Miss X—— had disposed of another visitor whose complaint was 'Father's been took bad agin,' she sat down in a comfortable arm-chair, and proceeded to tell me stories just as they came into her head or were prompted by my desultory questionings.

Yes (she said); many girls come to hospitals as nurses after having had some momentary tiff with the objects of their affections. One pretty girl brought matters to a crisis in this way. Her lover had been hanging fire for a long time. Suddenly, she conceived it to be her duty to give up balls and costly dresses and to become a nurse. She went away without a farewell to her lover, who became frantic when he learned that he had probably lost her for ever. At last he was allowed to see her—in her nurse's costume. Her eyes wore a look of chastened resignation; her pretty print dress fitted without a wrinkle; her cuffs and collar were of the snowiest: he thought her an angel of goodness. She stayed a fortnight, and asked us all to the wedding, which took place at St George's, Hanover Square.

After she went, we had a very highly-strung, nervously exalted girl, who wanted three months' hospital training before becoming a missionary's wife and going out to do zenana work in India. But she didn't have much time to learn nursing. Her relations continually came to weep over her and exhibit her to friends, who, in their turn, insisted on the poor girl showing them all the 'interesting cases.' The friends and relatives would keep asking heads of wards if such saints often came there, and wanted to know why she wasn't put in a glass case or wrapped up in cotton wool. I warned the poor girl that she was not fit to go to India; but she went, and died three months after of climate and nervous excitement.

The next probationer was 'Our Lady of the Jonquils.' Her peculiarity was that she wore jonquils at all seasons, and was so distractingly pretty that most of the patients fell in love with her. When it came to her pinning part of a bunch of jonquils on a good-looking young fellow's dressing-gown, and putting the others in her hair, it was thought better that she should return to 'her people.'

'Cinderella,' her successor, was an exceedingly handsome, olive-skinned girl with picturesque tendencies. She could not endure cold, and every morning sat with her feet in the hot ashes of the fireplace when she first came on duty. In a cotton frock, she looked draggled and pinched with cold and was not at all effective; but, later in the day, she had a habit of twisting an Oriental handkerchief in her dark hair and looking like an Eastern queen. A grateful East End patient once presented her with a new half-crown for looking 'so like King Solomon's queen of Sheba, miss.' She fastened the half-crown to her chain and wore it as long as she stayed with us.

Of course, nurses are forbidden to take money

from the patients. Though twopence is a large sum to poor East End patients, a child once gave me sixpence. 'Mother says you've saved my life, and you must have it. She turns a mangle, and when she'd turned that sixpence she said: "Thank the Lord for this; now we can get her something good."' Another grateful patient once brought me an art peacock—green on a yellow ground—to put on my chair. I endured that antimacassar until one of the patients said it gave him homicidal mania, and the ward surgeon had it taken away in order to prevent a catastrophe.

I have frequently numbered policemen among my patients, and like them very much; they are so amenable to discipline when in hospital. One burly fellow was knocked down by a wagon and lost both his legs. He took a most philosophical view of the situation. 'No more rain dripping down my legs on winter nights, nurse. The Government's got to provide for me now.' It was necessary that he should be kept very quiet; but so many of his friends in the 'Force' would drop in at all hours to see how he was getting on, that we had to forbid their coming at all. After a few days, their anxiety to see him overcame their obedience to orders, and they conquered the difficulty by getting passes and coming in plain clothes. But there was no disguising their ponderous walk.

After my policeman recovered and was fitted with what he called 'a be-yew-ti-ful pair of wooden stumps,' I nursed an amorous platelayer through an attack of inflammation of the lungs. When he recovered, he proposed to me, and couldn't understand 'wot you wants to go aworkin' like that 'ere for, when you might marry a decent chap with two quid a week.' He was greatly dejected at being refused, and hung round the hospital for weeks after his discharge, blowing kisses up at the matron's window (he mistook it for mine) with maudlin tenderness.

The platelayer was succeeded by an Irishman. I never knew Irishmen lose their power of 'blarney.' When fairly convalescent, this one was allowed to get up for two hours a day every afternoon. The first day, he enjoyed it very much. On the next day I found Denis strolling about the ward in the early morning and making himself generally useful, but watching me from the corner of his eye all the time. 'Denis, Denis, this won't do.' 'Ah, shure, miss, I had to get up to look at you!'—'But you're to be up for two hours in the afternoon.' 'Shure, miss, it's always afternoon till I see your swate face foreinist the door!' And then I hadn't the heart to make him go to bed again. But he wasn't really so trying as an idiot boy, who was so fond of me that he ate my photograph.

Then I had a sailor, who called himself Jack Johnson; but I don't think that was his real name. He had broken his leg through an awkward fall over a coil of rope on a slippery deck. Johnson was a very nice patient—clean, and obedient to rules, and always good for a merry tale. But when the gas was lowered at night, he often talked in more serious fashion. 'I belongs to a respectable north-country family of decent God-fearing folks, with more fear than love about 'em altogether,' he told me in a moment of confidence. 'I couldn't stand the everlasting prayer-meetings

and the miserable Sundays, and used to shirk all I could. But it didn't do. They preached at me, morning, noon, and night, and promised me eternal punishment in any case. So, thinks I to myself, if I'm to be eternally in disgrace here, and eternally punished hereafter, I'll try and deserve it all.'

I was interested in spite of myself—the lad's reckless, bitter talk was so at variance with his honest blue eyes and sunshiny smile—and listened to the account of his running away to sea. He did not know whether any attempt had been made to track him, and had never heard one word from home for over six years.

When discharged from the hospital, he insisted on leaving me some curious shells, strung into a necklace; and when I objected, he coolly remarked: 'You'd better have 'em. You've been wonderful patient with me; and I reckon you're a good woman. There's a many that isn't that, worse luck for us. If you won't have the shells, I shall know you think I'm past praying for, and I'll chuck 'em into the gutter the first minute I gets outside.'

Months after, he sent me a misspelt, ill-written letter from his mother, telling of her thankfulness to 'them as cared for my boy.' There was also a postscript, in printed letters, from my *protégé*, saying he had not forgotten my advice, but had gone home. His mother and father were very much broken; but, please God, he'd look after them now, and they were free to own they had kept too tight a hand on him. 'You told me, straight, I'd acted cruel to 'em, nurse, and you're right.'

One evening, the patients' tea was cleared away, and they were chatting cheerfully amongst themselves, when the door opened, and a tall, handsome girl was introduced to us as 'The New Probationer!' The new probationer earnestly and thoroughly applied herself to each day's duties. In spite of her queenly carriage, she could make a bed admirably, and gave every promise of becoming an excellent surgical nurse. Still, she puzzled me. The girl never referred to her past or spoke of her future, and her reserve seemed strange in so young a woman, for she always appeared to be putting a strong restraint on her natural high spirits. One night, a girl was brought in who was dying from the effect of a railway accident. When she opened her eyes, they remained fixed on our probationer, who stood at a little distance from the door. I fetched the probationer to speak to the patient, when, to my surprise, a shrill cry broke from the sufferer, and our young nurse dropped on the chair by the bedside, exclaiming in an agitated voice: 'Oh Lizzie, Lizzie, is it really you?' The girl died that night. A few days later, I happened to be at work in my own room when our stately probationer entered.

'Can you spare me a few moments, Sister? I'm going away.' Before I could answer, she was down on her knees by my chair, sobbing on my shoulder as if her heart would break. 'I want to tell you,' she cried, 'about Lizzie, the woman who died the other night. It was all my fault she came by that train; she would never have left her home if I had not run away from mine. She was always a good girl, only rather wilful, and vexed her father because she

wanted to make a foolish marriage. At last, she said, no one cared for her, and even I, who was always her friend, had gone away and forgotten her. It's such a dull little village where we live, you know, Sister, and the people gossip and worry one. Lizzie was always being told she ought to give the man up. The end of it was that Lizzie had a great quarrel with her father, and started off in a rage to join an aunt and cousin, who are dressmakers in some rather poor neighbourhood near London. Then came the railway accident, and you know the rest.'

'Not quite all, I think. Why are you going to leave us?'

'Because,' she answered, 'I have no right to be here. My father did not wish me to come. My mother is dead, and my step-mother is an exasperating invalid; but I'm just going home to make the best of her! Perhaps she will be easier to live with when I go back again. If I had stayed at home and done my own duty, that poor girl might be still alive.'

So she went back to her duty, married happily, and is continually sending me things for my poor people.

Some of the old men are very reluctant to leave a hospital when cured. 'Oh nurse, can't you tell me how to stay in? I've tried all the other places, but this is the best, and I want to stay. I ain't wanted at home. There's no room for the likes of me. The house is too small, and I'm in the way. My friends will raise a trifle every month, if you'll only let me stay.'

Women will often come into our waiting-room just for a warm and a rest. One day I noticed a woman holding her head in her hands and moaning as if in great pain. 'What's the matter with you? Is it anything very bad?' 'Oh no, miss,' she laughed. 'I wanted a rest, and I thought you'd turn me out if I kept quiet.'

Poor people often beg for a dose of medicine in cold weather, just for the sake of getting something warm to drink. One poor old man used to ask for leave to go and see his friends every Sunday, and was driven back in a coster's barrow. 'Father allers likes to 'ave 'is reggler Sunday fit at 'ome,' the son explained; 'so we just loosens 'is 'ankercher an' lays 'im flat on the kitchen tiles till 'e comes to agin. Then we gives 'im a drop o' gin, an' drives 'im 'ome to the 'Orsepittle all werry comferable.'

I should like to take this opportunity of strongly protesting against parents allowing their children to become nurses until they are five or six and twenty, an age which has been fixed as the fitting one by a great many thoughtful men and women who have thoroughly studied the question. We began by taking any young lady who was good enough to leave home and put her time at our disposal. Now, nurses should be weeded thoroughly, so that we may get the very highest type. Nursing makes great demands on the physical strength of any young woman. Besides, there are many sights in a hospital which it is not well for young women to see.

Ladies sometimes come to the hospital and want to adopt pretty children. Once, by a little dexterous manœuvring, I persuaded a lady to adopt a very unprepossessing child. The little thing was brought to me just before Christmas, with frostbitten toes, and livid weals across her

thin shoulders. We cured her toes as well as we could, and washed her. Most of the neglect from which she had suffered was the neglect of necessity. The people who had picked up this deserted waif became too poor to keep her, and were so glad to get rid of her that they didn't trouble to come back. I found out an aunt of the child's; but when the aunt discovered the reason for my wishing to make her acquaintance, she moved, and left the waif on our hands. The girl wasn't interesting in any way. Fortunately, I remembered a certain West End lady who 'did good to her soul' by coming round the wards on Christmas Day to distribute toys. When she came, I said to her in the most heartless voice I could assume: 'Oh, this ugly little wretch is going to the workhouse to-morrow.'

She looked at me, her manner implying, 'These hospital people have no hearts at all.' 'Nurse, I can't bear to think of it,' she said.

'Yes, it is unfortunate,' I replied coldly; 'but no one wants her. She's not a nice child. Ugly, vicious, unpleasant in her habits. The workhouse will probably do her good.'

The lady began to grow indignant, but curbed herself with an effort. 'Would you do me a great favour, nurse?'

'Certainly,' I said, as if it didn't matter in the least, but all the while my heart was thumping away: 'She'll take it! She'll take it!'

'Don't. Promise me you won't let her go to the workhouse until you hear from me?'

'Oh, if you wish it.'

'I do wish it—very much. Thank you.'

Then she went away; but the upshot of it all was that she provided the child with a home in the country, paid a worthy old couple to adopt her, and gave the girl a year in which to overcome her bad habits and equally bad language. Of course, I warned the lady in question that she wasn't dealing with the customary Christmas-card child; but that only made her the more determined. It was not found necessary to send the girl to an Industrial School at the end of the year. She is now a happy, respectable young woman, with a husband and child of her own. Her patroness still thinks it a pity that 'so admirable a nurse should have so little heart.'

OUR GREATER SUN.

ONE soft rich glow, half roseate and half gold;
One sea of sunset glory in the sky—
Its verge invisible, its end untold—
That melts into the blue insensibly.
The source of all the gorgeous scene has met
And passed the far horizon's mystic bar,
But leaves its benediction brightening yet
The evening sky with glories spread afar.

Long years ago, another, brighter Source
Of glory passed our dim horizon line:
Nor can we see that light until, our course
Of twilight o'er, we hail the dawn divine.
Its glorious after-glow alone we see,
Until we wake, Sun of our souls, with Thee.

MARGARET KATE ULPH.

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WEALTH FROM WASTE.

IN nothing is the advance of civilisation and industrial science so evident as in the increasing use made of waste products. What would be untold wealth, if we only knew how to use it, is continually thrown away even now, and goes to pollute the rivers or to poison the atmosphere; but the waste is a mere fraction of what it was only a few years ago, and is diminishing fast. Enough to fill a public library might be written about the successive advances made by the pioneers of industrial chemistry, and the volumes would be as interesting as the exploration of Central Africa, or the search for the North-west Passage. Every few years, some intrepid explorer would freight his ship with the greater part of his worldly possessions, and venture out into unknown waters to face the reefs and sandbanks of engineering difficulties, and to overcome every obstacle by clever navigation. Frequently, the haven was never reached. Some whirlpool of fuel-consumption and working expenses swallowed up both ship and cargo, and the adventurer came back a ruined man.

The most widely known of these so-called waste-products is 'alkali waste.' At Widnes alone, five hundred acres are covered with malodorous deposits of this material to a depth of twelve feet. A disgusting yellow liquid oozes from this mass of ten million tons, and, getting into the sewers, gives off sulphuretted hydrogen, the offensive odour of rotten eggs. When first deposited, the waste contained a million and a half tons of sulphur in an available form, which is irreclaimable in the present state of our knowledge. As the value of sulphur is about four pounds a ton, this represents a loss of six million pounds. The problem not only of how to save this wasted material, but how to prevent the intolerable nuisance arising from it, has occupied the attention of alkali-makers for over half a century. It is only within the last four or five years, however, that a real solution has been found, and only recently that we have wit-

nessed the enforcement of the new process by the alkali inspectors.

In the manufacture of soda or alkali, oil of vitriol, known in chemistry as sulphuric acid, has to be employed. Now pyrites, from which most of our copper is obtained, contains a large quantity of sulphur. This is a hindrance to the copper-smelter, so he sends his pyrites to the alkali-maker at almost a nominal price, receiving it back again with the sulphur extracted. The sulphur goes into sulphuric acid, and, after the soda is made, is found in the tank waste. One manufacturer worked for thirty years and devoted a fortune to solving the difficulty of recovering sulphur, but was unsuccessful. Many others have attempted it, and only partially succeeded. They discovered several chemical processes capable of accomplishing it; but the cost was prohibitory, and Mr Cary was quite right when he said that sulphur recovery 'had long been a sort of Will-o'-the-wisp in the alkali trade, and had lured many a good man to serious discomfiture, if not to ruin.'

Messrs A. & M. Chance, the large alkali manufacturers of Oldbury, are the successful investigators. Their first attempt cost them ten thousand pounds and two years' hard work, but was commercially a failure, although a large amount of experience was gained. The apparatus they had erected for the first venture came in again for the second, which has now arrived at complete success, and will be applied shortly to all the works of this kind in the kingdom. The process consists in using the gases from the limekilns to decompose the waste, thus driving out sulphuretted hydrogen, the gas previously described as having an odour of rotten eggs. This gas—a compound of sulphur and hydrogen—is then passed through a kiln, invented by Mr C. F. Claus, together with a regulated quantity of air. The air supplied is just sufficient to burn the hydrogen, and the sulphur is deposited almost chemically pure in brick receiving-chambers. When one of the end chambers is opened, the interior is like some palace of the genii—long

stalactites of yellow and brown sulphur hang from the roof, and the walls are festooned with graceful wreaths of every conceivable formation. After all the sulphur has been removed, the waste, instead of being thrown away, is used for the manufacture of cement. The sulphur recovered has already reached nine hundred tons per week, and it is expected that in two or three years' time one hundred thousand tons per annum will be recovered by the Chance-Claus process. This will be sufficient to supply all our own wants, will leave the money we now pay to Sicily in our pockets, and sixty or seventy thousand tons will remain over for export.

Another important product in the alkali trade, muriatic acid or spirits of salt, was for a long time thrown away; and the canals round Widnes contained such a quantity of it that the barges had to be copper-fastened, as iron disappeared rapidly under its action. The acid is now most valuable. All the bleaching powder of commerce is made from it, and less than five per cent. is allowed to escape into the air.

In our gas-works, substances are being converted constantly from nuisances into valuable sources of profit. In fact, in these works, as in many others, the original object of the manufacture has become almost of secondary importance. For instance, in the alkali trade just mentioned, the soda itself is sold at a loss, the deficit being covered by the profit on what was formerly wasted. Tar and ammonia were at one time the bugbears of gas engineers; now, they enable gas to be sold at half its original price. To tar we owe carbolic acid, creolin, and other disinfectants; magenta, Hoffman's violet, and all the beautiful series of aniline dyes; sulphonal, antipyrin, and many powerful drugs; besides other things too numerous to mention. There is hardly any substance in the world of organic chemistry that cannot be obtained, directly or indirectly, from coal-tar; and yet the other day, a gas engineer told the writer that he had just purchased sixty tons of tar which had been lying at the bottom of a canal for twenty or thirty years. Ammonia, which is washed out of the gas during purification, was formerly as great a nuisance to gas-makers as tar, but is now one of their chief sources of revenue. Without sulphate of ammonia, derived from gas liquor, it would be impossible to grow beet sugar, and the demand for this important manure is almost greater than the supply. Several works in the coal districts are devoted to the production of the hard, dense, coke used in metallurgical operations. Until recently, all their tar and ammonia was lost; but now they are as careful of it as the gas-makers. In iron-works, too, an immense quantity of capital has been expended in apparatus for recovering these products.

This brings us to another important section in which interesting progress has been made, almost since yesterday. Every possible device is being used in the great factories for economising fuel. The ashes and cinders from the furnaces are washed and separated by expensive machinery, every particle that will burn being returned to the fires. Forced draught, worked by means of steam-jets, is fitted to an increasing proportion of our boilers; for with this adjunct they will burn the finest dust. Indeed, it may safely be said

that they can be driven with the refuse from the other boilers. At our coal-mines, great improvements are now in vogue for rendering every atom of carbon brought up from the pit saleable. The coal is passed through mechanical washers and sorters, which separate it accurately into properly graded sizes. Not only is the coal rendered more valuable by being properly sorted, but even the finest dust is thus brought into use and compressed into briquettes. Every one has noticed the glittering veins of pyrites scattered through the coal. This pyrites contains a large proportion of the sulphur, and if not removed, goes into the air as oil of vitriol when the coal is burnt, besides destroying rapidly the furnace bars and other iron-work it comes in contact with. By washing, the pyrites is removed, and in addition to improving the quality of the coal by its absence, has a considerable value of its own. As it is, an enormous quantity of sulphuric acid is belched forth into the atmosphere both from factory chimneys and private houses, and any one living in our great cities has a very unpleasant personal experience of the injury it does to health and vegetation. The alkali inspector's Report tells us that, in St Helens alone, 36,108 tons of sulphur are annually poured into the air and lost. This finally represents 110,580 tons of sulphuric acid sent to pollute the atmosphere. In London, there must be fifty-five tons of sulphur or one hundred and eighty tons of oil of vitriol deposited on every square mile of land during the year.

Numberless other instances of wealth saved from waste might be quoted, if space permitted. In Cornwall, they have been working for years on the extraction of tin from the refuse thrown away by previous generations; companies even being formed for raising lost tin ore washed out to sea by the rivers. In France, artificial silk is to be made from a wood preparation by an apparatus copied from the spinnerets of the spider; and a few days ago, the Society of Chemical Industry was informed of the possibility of converting into vinegar the fine pulp carried away in suspension by the water used in paper-making. 'Waste not, want not,' is the motto throughout; and in the fierce rivalry which now exists between the manufacturers of our own and other countries, the competitor who finds the best use for his waste products must ultimately drive his opponents from the field.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAP. XVI.—'DANIEL WAS PREFERRED BECAUSE AN EXCELLENT SPIRIT WAS IN HIM.'

THERE can be no doubt that Daniel Trichinopoly won more and more upon his new master's confidence and liking. That day in Liverpool when George Suffield met and said farewell to Alan Ainsworth, Daniel had given such a sample of alertness as his master could appreciate. Somehow, Daniel had learned that Mr Gorgonio—the ugly Greek—had just received a consignment of exceptionally good Egyptian cotton, and was about to put it on the market. George hurried off to Gorgonio's office, saw a sample of the

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cotton, bought it at a cheap rate—for Egyptian was at that time quoted in the market at a somewhat low figure—and congratulated himself on the possession of Daniel.

'But, Daniel,' asked George, when they met at home, 'how did you know anything of Mr Gorgonio?'

'Mister George,' answered Daniel—for he had begun to drop 'Sahib' as unsuited to the usages of English commerce—'it will be an astonishment that I was met in the noble and great city of Liverpool with a gentleman of my own India, even and truly Mr Tanderjee, Parsee from Bombay.'

'Ah,' said George, 'Mr Tanderjee: I have done some business with Mr Tanderjee.'

'The same time I must say Mr Tanderjee take me with much talk, in our own language—oh yes!—to Mr Gorgonio. And with regard Mr Gorgonio is not Greek, etc. etc.; Mr Gorgonio is Perse.'

'What do you mean, Daniel?' asked George. 'He is Parsee, too?—or Persian?'

'Yes, Mister George,' answered Daniel. 'The fact is he is Perse of Persia. But I must say he has live etcetera in India, and he know to say in my language thing of all sort—oh yes! So just the same time we speak of cotton. With regards I hope you find, Mister George, that Mr Gorgonio is a nice gentleman for business.'

'Oh yes, Daniel,' answered George, and turned away, looking at his watch, as a man does who doubts he has been mispending his time.

But it was possible thus to ignore Daniel, to blot him out, so to say, whenever one was so minded; for Daniel was never obtrusive, never seemed to take offence, and was always gentle, bland, and smiling, and went and came softly. Indeed, his affection and his watchfulness were rather those of the cat than of the dog; and he purred softly his approval and satisfaction, his submission and attachment. Oh yes; Daniel was soft; so soft and gentle that one could not help stroking and liking him. It is probable George Suffield liked him all the more by reason of his difference from the Lancastrian faithful servant of whom he had near him an admirable example in old Tummias, who neglected no duty, and grumbled and growled very loudly if he saw any sign of his master neglecting any.

But Daniel's success with his master was not a complete satisfaction to himself. For while the many wondered at it as a thing out of nature, a few resented it as a slight to themselves. Whenever Daniel passed through the village the wives came to their cottage doors with babies in their arms, and stared at him as he went by, and made depreciatory remarks, not caring whether Daniel heard them or not. 'Be't a man or a monkey?' they would say. 'Be th' creature black a' through, dost think? Eh, what th' young mester sees in th' mon I canna mak' out!' And they, further, opined that Daniel worshipped images in his own country, and was probably guilty of other black and foreign practices. In spite of these things Daniel smiled on the children as he went by; but they hid their faces in their mothers' bosom or skirts, in fear of his black face and white turban. It was difficult, however, to endure the resentment of those who, like himself, were near the person of the young master, and

who thought they had a greater right to the confidence of the master than a black man and a stranger. Of these the most resentful were old Tummias and the Tame Philosopher. Tummias would cock his eye at him over his bent old shoulder and demand: 'Hast nought to do in tha own outlandish country?—hast never a feyther or mother belonging tha?—that thou mun come and slide thysen into th' place o' an Englishman?' adding reflectively, while he narrowly considered Daniel this way and that: 'Conna think what th' young mester sees in tha! Aw ha' seen mony a better mon stuck in a field to scare th' crows fro' th' turmits.' Then Daniel would smile and say: 'With regard, Mister Tummias, you are an old man; but it is possible to say you are not more wise than an ass; so just the same time why I listen, why I respect? Eh?' And Tummias would angrily reply: 'Things is changed wi' me sin' I was young, see tha!—or I'd box tha for that!'—upon which Daniel would smile sweetly and still go and come softly.

But the resentment of Tummias was nothing to that of the Tame Philosopher—at least, in Daniel's opinion; for Daniel, while he despised Tummias, feared the Philosopher. It is not very easy to account for such fear. It is probable that to Daniel's half-barbarous mind M'Fie appeared the incarnation of learning—had he not seen how the great Sahib Suffield listened to him?—and, by that token, of witchcraft and general power to do evil; it is probable, too, that M'Fie imposed on Daniel's imagination by a resemblance to the missionary who had turned Daniel's parents—and so had turned Daniel—from Buddhism to Christianity. That resemblance was less in the Philosopher's garb, speech, or conduct, than in the fact that he filled a certain sort of missionary office. The elder Suffield on his migration south had cast about in his mind for what provision he could make for his Mentor without investing it with the odium of charity, and he had hit upon this, which was suggested to him by the desertion of an old chapel by a very ancient and feeble religious folk: That the Philosopher might prelect and hold classes for the advantage of such as cared to come on certain week-nights—to be chosen by him—and discourse on Life and mortality by the old dial and among the sinking and decaying tombstones of the little burying-ground. And the Philosopher did so, to his own infinite satisfaction; and he called the place *Acadêmia*, not because of its likeness to a place where boys and girls acquire the rudiments of learning, but because of its similarity to a famous Greek school of philosophy. The Philosopher was always learned in his allusions. Moreover, the Philosopher redeemed his missionary character in Daniel's eyes by a remarkable oration on an advertised evening. It happened that the incumbent of the new village church—whose tower was built up as the tower of Jumley-Jee—had preached a pointed sermon on the text, 'And he hath made of one blood all nations,' because he had heard of the contempt and derision in which the blameless Daniel was held by his parishioners. Thereupon the Philosopher capped the incumbent's performance by giving on a week evening a lecture on ethnology. A good many people came together, and Daniel was also among them, and, to his great delight, heard himself—

there could be no manner of doubt it was he—alluded to as 'a member of the great Aryan, or Indo-European, family of nations, and second-cousin of every Englishman.' That oration produced a very reasonable protest from Daniel. He waylaid the Philosopher on his way home from the Acadēmia and spoke him fairly.

'With regard, O Guru,' said he gently, 'your so wise, good, and beautiful talk, etcetera, have made me think very much—oh yes!—in the head. With attention, I am, what you say, Indo-Europe—yes? I am of the great India: I am in Europe—ra—is it not? Then, by argument, I am in the race, family, household, etcetera, of the English—is it not? I beg to understand, O Guru; because why, you are the wise one, the learned one, the teacher of good and true things, and so forth.'

'Yes, Daniel, my friend,' crackled the conceited 'teacher of good and true things and so forth'—'most certainly, according to the best accessible evidence, you are, to all intents and purposes, of the same race as I am myself.'

'With regard, then, O Guru of the same race,' said the triumphant Daniel, 'why, then, do you not like that I am with or by the respectable Mister George? We are as one, and another—you and I—so just the same we have our respected chance, luck, etcetera. Mister George like to have me, as dressing-boy, confidential servant, what-not, etcetera: why not you like that he like? Eh?'

'Do I not like, indeed?' said the perplexed Philosopher. 'Assuming, Daniel, my friend, that I do not—remember, that I am not *admitting* that I do not: I am only *assuming* that I do not, you understand—we come to the great difference, eternal and insurmountable, between Opinion and Sentiment. Opinion is one thing: Sentiment is another: they are distinct the one from the other, and they do not necessarily touch or affect each other;' and so on the Philosopher crackled and maundered for ten minutes, Daniel completely losing himself in toiling after him and endeavouring to find a clear meaning in his maze of words.

Not many days afterwards it was made manifest that the Philosopher, however pious might be his opinion of Daniel's equality in physical and mental attributes, had no opinion at all of Daniel's moral qualities. George Suffield had asked the Philosopher to dinner one evening, not so much because he promised himself delight or edification in his company, but because he had promised his father that he would be 'kind' to him. M'Fie came rather in a grudging and morose than in a grateful and expansive mood; for he considered that, had his true friend, the elder Suffield, been at home, he would have been asked not once to dinner, nor twice, but as often as he cared to go. He was therefore somewhat distant and metaphysical with George during the first half of the meal, the more so that Daniel was present waiting at table. But George was good-humoured and talkative, the food was excellent, and the wine was good, and the hazy reserve of the Philosopher gradually disappeared, and he became his casual, crackling self.

'Do you happen to know anything of cotton, Mr M'Fie?' asked George.

'Cotton, sir?' said M'Fie, speaking with a

dewy comprehensiveness. 'I know all about cotton—all, I asseverate. I know cotton to be a plant grown in various parts of the world, most largely, I believe, in the United States of America.'

'And what of India, Mr M'Fie? Cotton is grown largely in India—is it not, Daniel?'

'With regard, Mister George,' answered Daniel, smiling demurely, 'very much. But the Guru knows—oh yes!'

'—whose fruit or pod,' continued M'Fie, 'was, I doubt not, expressly designed by the Devil for the debasement and enrichment—though the terms, indeed, are synonymous—of this county of Lancashire.'

'One may call that,' said George with a laugh, 'the abstract, or brief chronicle of cotton.—What do you think of cotton, Daniel?'

'With regard, Mister George,' answered Daniel, humbly crossing his hands on his breast, 'I believe me to understand cotton as very good thing for the manufacture, the trade, and the business, etcetera. The native coolie of India, he would have no clothes to cover, no turban to keep the heat from the head, if there no cotton. With regard, me—I myself—would have no turban, if no cotton.'

'That, sir, only serves to convince me the more,' said M'Fie, without looking at Daniel, 'that the Devil is in it;' and he crackled very loudly into a dissonant laugh.

'With permission, may I say,' added Daniel, 'the respectable Sahib Suffield—he have no house, no mills, no clothes, no food, etcetera, if no cotton? Is it not?'

'Pardon me, sir,' said the Philosopher, still not looking at Daniel, but fixing his eye on the sparkling stopper of the port decanter; 'my admirable friend, George Suffield, is one of those who would live in the land, and verily would be fed, whatever happened to cotton, or if there never had been cotton; my dear sir, the very fowls of the air would bring George Suffield food, if he ever wanted it!'

'Still, Mr M'Fie,' said George, after a side-long appreciation of the enthusiastic encomium on his father, 'I think you are very unfair to cotton; considering that you and I and all of us eat cotton and drink cotton, build our houses of cotton and get our clothes out of cotton, find our pleasure in cotton (pass the wine, Daniel), and make our money of cotton!—No, Mr M'Fie, you must not depreciate cotton, especially since I have this very day invested a considerable sum in Indian cotton.—Daniel, you can go: we shall not want you any more.'

Daniel went, summing up with his eye in very doubtful and suspicious fashion the attitude and attention of the Guru. When he was gone, M'Fie broke forth. 'Young George Suffield,' said he, 'for all things had tended to make him valiant, I think it my bounden duty, as your father's friend and as profoundly your well-wisher, to tell you that in the general opinion you are too thick with that son of India and of darkness. He is too much with you, and you place an extravagant amount of confidence in him.'

'Ah,' said George, with perfect self-satisfaction and good-humour, 'you think that—do you? At least you say that is "the general opinion;" but it is yours also, I presume?'

'I don't shrink from declaring,' said M'Fie, 'that it is mine also. My dear young sir, if you must give confidence and take counsel, are there not old and tried friends of your father to whom you may turn, men of your own race and speech—like your humble servant—who have borne the burden and heat of the day?' And the Philosopher tried to look as if he had borne an extraordinary amount of burden and heat.

'No doubt,' said George, still good-humoured, 'there are men of that sort.'

'There was once, sir,' said M'Fie, with a pointed and inspired expression on his shrivelled countenance, 'a great king in Israel who was succeeded in the kingdom by his son. That son meant very well, but by comparison with his father he was a little king, a *roi faiblant*. At a critical moment in his own and his kingdom's history he turned from the old men who had counselled his father, and took advice from the young men who knew nothing, and he came to grief: ten-twelfths, sir, of his kingdom was rent from him! The name, sir, of the father was Solomon, and the name of the son was Rehoboam; and his history is set down as a warning for all time. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!'

'And the point,' said George, smiling, 'lies in the application, as Cap'n Cuttle would say. But even Solomon took counsel with the Queen of Sheba—didn't he?—and she was blacker, I imagine, than even Daniel. For it's Daniel's colour you object to—which surprises me, Mr M'Fie, after your lecture of the other evening.'

'My dear young sir,' crackled M'Fie, in as brittle a temper as he ever permitted himself, 'it is not the black of Daniel's skin I object to, but the black of Daniel's mind. I would object just as much, no less and no more, to the black of a white man's mind. But speaking in general, sir, I would say that the history of Daniel's race and the history of himself, perhaps, also, predispose him to be wily, snaky, and crafty: craft is the inheritance of strength to which that kind of man is born; and speaking specifically, I would say that Daniel gives evidence that he is crafty and treacherous.'

'What evidence?' asked George, still good-humoured, but disposed to treat the question seriously, since he saw that the Philosopher was bent upon being serious.

Then the Philosopher expatiated at somewhat tedious length on the evidence of untrustworthiness and craft afforded by the honeyed (or treacled) smoothness of Daniel's speech, the softness of his step, and the cold, resolute frankness of his eye. Moreover, he asked, why should Daniel, a stranger and—comparatively speaking—a foreigner, profess such attachment and devotion to the person of young Mr Suffield, if he had not some secret end to serve?

'Well, Mr M'Fie,' said George finally, 'let us say no more about it. I am obliged to you for your intention of serving my father's son in the matter; but, believe me, he is not likely to do me any harm. There is nothing of any consequence entrusted to him: he is merely my servant, and as such I tell you frankly I like him and mean to keep him.—Now, have another glass of port.'

By-and-by, when it was time for the Philosopher to go home, George expressed his inten-

tion of accompanying him part of the way: the night was fine and warm, and he would like the walk. The Philosopher's cottage was on the farther side of the village, and their nearest and pleasantest way lay across the park and through the clough, where the brook wimpled and the rabbits frolicked. They had passed out of the park, crossed the brook, got well into the clough, and were within easy sight of the works, when George stopped with an exclamation. 'Is that a light?' he cried, pointing to a small building included in the wall which girdled the works.

'There certainly,' said M'Fie, 'seems to be a small light, from a candle or a lantern, moving about within that window on the upper floor under the tree!'

'Yes!' exclaimed George. 'That's the counting-house! And, by Jingo! the light must be in my private room!'

With that he started off, running towards the light, followed with labour by the Philosopher. They had run to within a stone-throw of the window when George again stopped short before something huddled against a bank. 'What's this?' he said, stooping.

'That'll be the creature's hat or turban,' said M'Fie.

George put out his hand and touched the huddled thing. 'No! Daniel's clothes! His turban'—turning them over—'and the rest! He can't have drowned himself?'

'Nay, nay, sir,' crackled the Philosopher. 'Be sure his end will not be by water! Let us push on first, and see what that light may mean. Have you any means of getting in without going round to the lodge?'

'I have the key in my pocket,' said George. 'There is a private door in the wall.'

So he ran to the door and put the key into the lock, while the Philosopher stood a step or two off and watched the light. Almost as soon as the key sounded in the lock and the door opened, the light went out.

'It's gone!' exclaimed M'Fie. 'The light's gone!'

'Stay there and see,' said George, 'if anybody comes out.'

M'Fie waited without, in some trepidation—extremely doubtful whether he could tackle the midnight marauder, who was certain to make a dash for escape—while George felt his way into the outer office, where he struck a match and lighted the gas—no one was to be seen—thence into the inner office and lighted the gas—still no one to be seen—whence an iron corkscrew stair led up to his private room. He climbed the stair, and lit the gas there also. There was no one—no one to be seen secreted anywhere; but there was evidence that some one had been there; for he could not so far have forgotten himself as to leave drawers open, even if he had left them unlocked. He opened the window and called to M'Fie: had any one come out? 'Not a soul; not a creature,' answered M'Fie. He left the gas burning throughout, and went to M'Fie.

'Now, Mr M'Fie,' said he, 'I come to you for advice. I am sure we cannot both have been mistaken: we saw a light in that window. I enter and pass through all these rooms, and search them: I see, I find nobody; and yet I am

tolerably certain the drawers of my writing-table are not as I left them. What in this crisis do you, my father's old friend, advise me to do?"

"What do I advise, my dear young friend?" exclaimed M'Fie, loud enough for all the birds in the trees to hear. "I would advise you to find the head that should have been inside your hat, or turban, we saw a few minutes ago."

"Daniel again!" said George. "Very well; let us find Daniel."

He locked the office door, and they both returned to the place where they had seen Daniel's clothes. When they reached it, they saw, to their amazement, Daniel himself seated on the bank, completely clothed, all save his boots, which he was in the act of putting on.

"Where have you been, Daniel?" asked his master. "What have you been doing?"

"Been, Mister George? Been doing, Sahib? With regard, I have been in the water of the little river what flow delightful, sweet, cool, etcetera, down there—oh yes! With regard again, a second time, I have caught two pretty fishes for the Sahib's breakfast"—he showed a pair of trout lying near him—"so just the same time I put me into the water of the nice little river, because the water was sweet and cool, etcetera, and I was not. I wash me, and I put my clothes upon me again.—And that, Mister George, is the whole story."

BOTANICAL 'SPORTS.'

Few people who visit our flower-shows, except those who are, as it were, actually behind the scenes, are aware of the curious freakishness of Nature, to which we owe the immense diversity of foliage, flower, and fruits which we find exhibited. Many doubtless impute this to high culture in the shape of extra warmth and protection, coupled with richly manured and prepared soils; and in many cases, the huge size and splendid development are so largely due to these adventitious aids, that without them a speedy retrogression is found to ensue. As a familiar instance of this we may cite the heart's-ease or pansy, which in some old neglected gardens will be found to have reverted altogether to the wild type, such as we find it in many parts of Great Britain, though of course in such cases it must be an open question whether the original, presumably fine blooming, plants have themselves reverted, or whether they have perished altogether, and only left their seedlings behind, of which the nearer normal types alone have survived in the struggle for existence. In any case, we have here the reversal of the process by which the horticultural varieties are obtained, since in the one case Nature left alone selects the hardiest and eliminates the tenderer but more highly developed forms; while in the other, man steps in with his ideal of a perfect blossom, and by eliminating the small and hardy ones, and artificially protecting and cherishing the finer types, at length establishes a strain of infinite superiority, so far as size, make, and colour are concerned, the cream of which we see at the shows aforesaid.

If, however, Nature did no more than yield a larger development as the results of higher feeling and special protection, our florists would make but little progress. When, therefore, we find a magnificent double crimson flower—say a dahlia five or six inches across, and built up in the most symmetrical manner from centre to circumference—evolved from a simple single star-shaped normal bloom of a quarter the size, and of a bright yellow tint, we must obviously look for something more than mere feeding; and we find this something more in the freakishness to which we have alluded. In the ordinary course of Nature, as we all know, a seed produces a plant so nearly like its parent, that practically it cannot be distinguished from it when fully grown; and the blossoms are so nearly like each other as to be practically identical. The various parts, too, of the plant, shrub, or tree, are to all intents and purposes replicas of each other in leafage, general habit of growth, and so on. Now and again, however, this rule is broken through in all the cases named, the seed producing a plant differing more or less from the parents; individual blooms may appear differing widely from the rest; or portions of the plant, such as a root-sucker or branch, may be thrown out of widely different character from its companions.

These divergences are the cultivator's opportunities, and hence those who raise large numbers of any special flower, fruit, shrub, or tree are always on the lookout for 'sports,' as they are termed, through which they arrive from time to time at types differing widely in all respects from previous ones. This aid is immensely enhanced by the fact that when once the normal form of a plant has 'broken,' its capacity for further variation, as a rule, increases enormously, and the cultivator has then merely to raise in large numbers and do his selecting on a systematic basis in order to arrive sooner or later at his ideal type. To obtain this ideal is, however, by no means a straight and simple matter in many cases. Tulips—to take a special instance—when raised from seed require several years before they reach the blooming stage, and even then the innate possibilities of the blossom may not appear for several years more, the first blooms differing markedly from the type which the experienced grower expects, and obtains later on; so that patience is a very essential factor in the raising of new varieties through the seed.

The capacity for further variation, too, cuts both ways—that is, there is reversion as well as evolution, so that many seedlings are inferior and worthless. We have heard from one of the best authorities on dahlias, for instance, that for every new variety of value, thousands of inferior seedlings have to be raised; and not only raised, it must be remembered, but raised to blooming point, which is by no means done in one season with the majority of bulbous plants. Another drawback with which the florist has to contend is the liability with some of the finest types to become inconstant, and revert after a brief period of promise—a very aggravating fact, indeed, when a flower, it may be of quite a new type of form and colour, and hence of great value, harks back, with greater or less suddenness, to some progeni-

torial form, and leaves but a memory behind it. So great is this power of variation through the seed in many highly cultivated plants, that no reliance whatever can be placed upon the seed as a means of reproduction of a new type, which has therefore to be propagated by cuttings or division of the roots.

This brings us, however, to another phase of the matter—namely, bud-sports, in which new forms are generated in some occult way in the bud instead of in the seed—an offset, or, it may be, a branch, then appearing with different characters from its fellows. Many curious examples exist of this; the double dark crimson hawthorn, for instance, originated upon the pink variety, a branch appearing one season laden with the crimson flowers, from which branch a large stock was speedily raised and disseminated far and wide. The white moss-rose was a bud-sport upon a red moss-rose bush; and singular to relate, when this shoot was removed for propagating purposes, it was replaced by two others which gave the striped variety. A large number of chrysanthemum varieties have originated in this fashion, though the sport is usually confined to variation in colour, the widely differing types being mainly due to seed variation.

As a rule, sports of this class are permanent—that is, they retain their character when propagated by cuttings or division; the offspring from seed, however, are more or less liable to revert to the parental form. It is also not an uncommon thing to find partial reversion exhibited, branches appearing with the parental character reasserted; thus we have seen the pink hawthorn with branches bearing white blossom, the ancestral blood having locally got the upper hand. Perhaps one of the most singular instances of this method of variation is seen in the peach and nectarine, both of which in many well established cases have appeared on the same tree; that is, a tree which had previously for many years only borne peaches, suddenly produces a branch which bears nectarines instead. Nay, more; instances are recorded where a single fruit has been half peach and half nectarine. Peach-stones have yielded nectarine trees, and *vice versa*; and in fact, the two fruits, different as they are in appearance and flavour, would seem to be two forms of the same thing, just as some plants bear two sorts of flowers.

From the examples given, which may be multiplied almost *ad infinitum*, it will be seen that the saying, that 'Nature does not move by jumps,' is hardly justified by facts, since every one of these cases of 'sporting' is more or less of a jump, and in the extreme cases a very wide jump indeed. The florist, as we have seen, has his field of operations immensely widened by this capacity, which enables him from time to time to exhibit new types of floral beauty, which would otherwise never have been dreamt of. But he does not need to confine himself to mere selection; by cross-fertilisation among his types, he can combine them to any extent, and thus produce an endless range of form and colour, which he can mould and modify almost as he will until he attains his ideal, whatever that ideal may be.

One of the most striking examples of what can be done through the variability of the seed induced by simple sporting, and without the aid

of cross-fertilisation at all, is seen in the well-known Shirley Poppies. These poppies, which range through every tint, from the purest white, through all shades of pink, to darkest crimson, the grades including innumerable subvariations, in the shape of marginal tints, so that practically it is difficult to find two plants alike in flower, were all raised from a common corn-poppy which the Rev. W. Wilks of Shirley Vicarage, Croydon, found in his garden there when he first took possession. The garden had partly become overrun with weeds, and among them a number of common corn poppies had established themselves from the neighbouring fields; one of these Mr Wilks observed differed somewhat in tint from the ordinary; he therefore marked the blossom and secured the seed when ripe. The following season the offspring showed several distinct breaks; and by continued selection—one feature of which was the constant elimination of all plants showing the normal black centre—in a few years the now well-known and wonderful strain of delicate flowers became distributed far and wide, and were named Shirley Poppies from their place of origin.

With annuals, as in this case, where each season yields a fresh crop, a much speedier evolution is of course practicable than in the cases previously cited, where years must elapse ere the plants reach the seeding and blooming stage. Of course, when a flower breaks away from the normal in this fashion, and in later generations yields a range of distinct tints and forms, as in this case, a considerable amount of the subsequent variation may be imputed to the crossing of the different flowers by bees, &c., the inherent tendency to vary in the resulting seed being thus materially enhanced. In a previous article on 'Fern Freaks,' the peculiar capacity of ferns, and especially of those species native to Great Britain, was particularly dwelt upon. The freakishness of Nature in these plants is probably unparalleled in any other branch of botany, the abnormal forms, which are constant both in themselves and in their progeny, numbering many hundreds, reckoning those only which have been found perfectly wild in the various districts where ferns luxuriate.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER II.

MISS KITTY LANGLAND—or, to be strictly accurate, Miss Langland, for she was the eldest—was an extremely charming, handsome, and ingenuous girl of some two-and-twenty—of that naturally good, bright, gentle, refined, and innocent, and not too clever type which it is to be hoped England will cultivate and cherish till the end. With no eye whatever to the main chance, she yet had a very narrow and prejudiced view of the kind of man she would like to have for lover and husband. She had a pronounced aversion to the genus 'cad,' under which generic title she somewhat unreasonably included all who made money, or a living, in business, or who stood behind counters or sat at desks. It never entered the simple prejudiced mind of either her father or herself that Mr Purvey's son could be other than

a 'cad,' with his hands crossed behind like his father's when he appeared unoccupied, as if to keep them from picking and stealing. Had her father begged her to agree to marriage with him, I have no doubt she would have said: 'Yes, father—for your sake;' for she had the good woman's passion for self-sacrifice. But her father presented no such petition. On the contrary, his argument ran to unnecessary fullness the other way, and Kitty only too readily mingled her indignation with his at the 'insolence' of Purvey's suggestion.

'The cool impudence of the man!' she passionately exclaimed. 'His son! The idea!' (Kitty was not very eloquent.) 'A poor, little, mean, vulgar, long-nosed thing like himself, no doubt! The cheek of it!' (Kitty was modern enough to know, and to use a word of slang now and then.)

'But now, Kitty, my dear,' said her father, 'we must think what we are to do. We've got ourselves into a mess!—At least, I have dragged you into the mess with me!'

'Don't say that, father dear,' said Kitty, tenderly embracing him with arm and look. 'Let us think.'

And Kitty sat down to think violently. I have said that she was not too clever—not too actively clever: very active cleverness tends too commonly to nerves and thinness; and nerves and thinness are to be discouraged in women—but she had a practical wit of her own, and in a little while, after one or two ineffectual suggestions, at which her father shook his head, she presented him with a workable plan.

'The Fairfield Farm, father,' said she, 'is worth more than six thousand pounds—isn't it?—even in these bad times.'

'Certainly it is, my dear,' said her father, looking up from his own cogitation.

'Very well. Let us go up to town, and boldly tackle some of the horrid business people that manage these things; and let us raise enough to pay Mr Purvey all we owe him, and then never see him again.'

'Yes, we might at least try that, my dear,' said the Squire, desperately thrusting his head into the first opening that presented.

The sun, therefore, when it looked through the London haze next morning but one found Kitty and her father occupying lodgings in Clarges Street. How the Squire fared in his attempts to negotiate a larger mortgage on the Fairfield Farm does not concern us here; but an adventure of Kitty does.

It was 'the season,' but—since they had not come up for the season, because the Squire could not afford it—they had resolved to let none of their friends in town know of their presence. The Squire, however, had gone to his club one morning when he thought no one would be there, and had run almost into the arms of his old school-fellow, Colonel Swetenham, just returned from India. The Colonel insisted on coming to call on the Squire's daughter; and the result of his calling was an invitation to dinner—a 'quiet dinner'—at the Colonel's house. Mr Langland and his daughter went, and found that the hospitable Colonel's quiet dinner-party consisted of thirty people. Miss Langland was taken down by a handsome, reserved, sun-burnt

young man, a Mr Godfrey, who had returned from Burma in the ship with the Colonel.

Kitty and her companion were both shy, and they were perhaps the more attracted to each other at first for that reason. They began in the usual way, by uttering inanities such as a grim and earnest philosopher like Thomas Carlyle would wonder that any two human beings, set even for a moment together 'between the two Eternities,' could ever bring themselves to speak. The earnest Thomas would recommend 'silence' rather than that; but, unfortunately, silence at a dinner-table would be considered rude or exceedingly awkward. And, after all, the human mind is so blessedly constituted that it may easily progress from the 'intense inane' to the sane and pithy, even as Kitty and her companion did.

Kitty's companion first opined it had been a very fine day, and Kitty agreed with him—with the reservation 'for London.' Then Kitty's companion supposed that she was come to town for the season, and Kitty answered: No; her father and she were only up from the country for a few days on business—frankly adding, with a laugh, that her father could not afford that year to stay in town for the season. Kitty's companion glanced at Kitty, and that was the first sign he gave of interest in her. To show interest is to excite interest; and Kitty began to consider her companion more closely, and to find him very handsome and very agreeable.

'Times, I suppose,' said he sympathetically, 'have been very bad in the country?'

'In our part of the country they have been,' she answered.

'What, may I ask,' said her companion, 'is your part of the country, Miss Langland?'

'Sussex,' she answered.

'Oh,' said he, with a fresh spice of interest, 'I'm going down to Sussex in a few days.'

'Sussex,' she replied, with a smile, 'is a large county, Mr Godfrey.'

'I might retort,' said he, also with a smile, 'with your own observation, Miss Langland. Sussex, it is true, is a large county, and it has, I believe, more than one spoil—the productive and the unproductive.'

'Ours is the unproductive,' she answered mischievously; then relenting, because he seemed really to wish to know the exact locality where she dwelt, she added, 'we are in the north.'

'It is to the north I'm going,' said he with still livelier interest: 'to the neighbourhood of North Stanstead.'

'How odd!' said she. 'That is our neighbourhood!'

'Is it, indeed?' he exclaimed. 'How singular! One might almost say there is the long arm of coincidence evident in that. What kind of country is it?'

He probably meant one thing, while she took him to mean another.

'Oh,' she answered, 'there are some nice people. But, you see, we are so near town that a good many horrid business men have settled down about us.'

'It must be dreadful,' said he, considering her, 'to have one's privacy invaded by mere business people. I suppose they make themselves very offensive?'

'There is one dreadful old man,' she burst out, being full of the subject which troubled her, 'that has built a frightful villa in concrete near us.'

'Concrete?' exclaimed he. 'Why in concrete, of all materials? For cheapness?'

'No,' she answered; 'I think not. Concrete is one of his fads—as everything ugly and hypocritical is. His house is concrete, all his walls are concrete.—I believe,' she added, with a laugh of enjoyment at her own unusually sharp wit, 'he is concrete himself!'

'Better, perhaps he may think,' said her companion, 'to be concrete than abstract.'

'A dreadful, ugly, mean, and mischievous old man!' she continued, without heeding his remark. 'You must have seen his name about: it is at railway stations and in the carriages, on omnibuses, and everywhere: "Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids."'

Kitty's companion started a little, cast a quick glance on Kitty, and smiled; but Kitty did not see these phenomena: her eyes were on her plate, and her attention was given to the deep-seated grievance that moved her, to which she could not give expression.

'Oh yes; I have seen the name,' said he. 'And,' he added with a laugh, 'the fact is the man is the very person I'm going down to see on a matter of business.'

'Oh, Mr Godfrey!' Kitty exclaimed. She cast on him a glance of alarm and distress.

'I am very much obliged to you,' said he, reassuringly, 'for letting me know the kind of man he is. But, surely,' he continued, 'the old man must have done something worse than build walls of concrete, for you, Miss Langland, to call him such names?'

There was an exquisite compliment in the tone and emphasis of 'you, Miss Langland.'

Kitty was pleased; she blushed a little. 'Perhaps,' she admitted frankly, 'I have spoken more in anger than I should. But we don't like Mr Purvey: he is—he is not a nice man. My father, though, could tell you more about him than I can.'

And then they talked of other things, and, in the common phrase, they 'got on very well together.' Kitty's companion lost his reserve of manner; and Kitty herself became so interested in him and in his doings she discovered he was a scientific person—an engineer and mineralogist, or something of the kind; for he had been several years in India in the service of the Government, and lately he had been in Burma to look for two such different things as ruby mines and coal-measures—she became so interested that she thought it would be 'nice' to know more of him.

When the ladies retired, it was to be remarked that Mr Godfrey made haste to have a word or two with his friend and host, after which they both moved down to where the Squire sat.

'I want, Langland,' said the Colonel, 'to particularly introduce to you my friend Godfrey. He is going down to your neighbourhood to-morrow on a small matter of business: he is the kind of clever fellow, you know, that just takes a look round, and then tells you, like winking, what kind of rocks are underneath, and what the rocks contain. I hope you'll be good to him.'

'Charmed, I'm sure,' said the Squire.

Then they all three talked, and when they had talked for some time, Mr Godfrey withdrew.

'He seems a clever, agreeable fellow,' said the Squire.—'Where did you say, Swetenham, that he was going to stay near us?'

'He is going down to a man named Purvey,' answered the Colonel, 'and I suppose he will stay there.'

'At Purvey's?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Oh!'

'Why?' asked the Colonel. 'Is Purvey an objectionable person?—a sort of person a man shouldn't know?'

'Well,' said the Squire, feeling and considering the slender stem of his claret-glass, 'it would perhaps be scarcely fair to say that. But I don't like him—he is not generally liked—and he has played me a very ungentlemanly trick. He may think it's business-like, but at anyrate it's ungentlemanly—But,' said he, looking up suddenly with a shrewd frown on his brow, 'you said your friend was going down on business; what business can Purvey—"Purvey's Patent Food," you know—have in Mr Godfrey's line?'

'Godfrey,' said the Colonel, dragging out his moustache, and trying to see the end of it, 'has been asked, I believe, to pronounce an opinion on the results of some boring operations.'

'Oh, ah! Boring!' exclaimed the Squire, looking very curious. 'I saw only the other day that some mysterious business of that sort was going on. Purvey has been very secret about it.'

'Frankly, Langland,' asked the Colonel, smoothing out his moustache, 'would you say that Purvey is a man that I or my friends—should have nothing to say to?'

'Well, frankly, Swetenham,' said the Squire, looking up again from the contemplation of his glass, 'I don't think I ought to go so far as that. I am tempted to call him a canting, grasping, and scheming old rascal; but then I admit there would be a great deal of personal feeling in saying that. The fact is, I have had what he would call "a business transaction" with him, and he has got me in a corner with it. The other day quite in a polite, canting, business-like way, I admit—he offered me the choice of alternatives: either to settle that business out of hand—which was impossible—or to compound it easily and advantageously by accepting his son, whom we have never seen, as a husband for my daughter!'

'For Miss Langland, you mean?' said the Colonel, quickly and nervously tugging at his moustache.

'Yes; for Kitty.'

'And what did you do?'

'I was civil,' said the Squire, smiling wryly. 'I couldn't afford to quarrel with him at the moment, and I put him off: I had a week in hand, and I thought I might find some way of settling his business and clearing off all connection with him. That's why we came up to town.'

'I see,' said the Colonel, and he appeared to be looking very deep indeed. 'Will you meet me at the club to-morrow morning, and we can talk more fully of that, if you like?'

They withdrew to the drawing-room; and the Colonel took an early opportunity of having a few words aside with his young friend Godfrey, after which Godfrey was assiduous in his attentions both to Miss Langland and to her father.

They became so pleased with each other that they parted with great kindness and cordiality.

'We shall be home in two days or so, I think,' said the Squire; 'and we shall be delighted to see you.'

'You are coming to see us, then?' said Kitty. 'I am so glad;' and then she blushed a little, as if she feared she had been too frank.

'Mr Langland has been so good as to ask me,' said Godfrey. 'I should like to give myself the pleasure of seeing you before, I fear, you will be ready to receive me.'

THE ROMANCE OF THE MARKET-PLACE.

IN and around the Market-place was the heart of every old-world town. High Streets, squares, public gardens, quays and wharfs, might have reflected the grandeur and wealth of the town more distinctly in the eyes of the stranger; but they bore the same relation to the market-place that the veins and arteries bear to the heart in the human body. History in these old towns seemed to be centred about their market-places; and the fact that, business having become more centralised by improved methods of communication, the inhabitants of so many so-called market towns now flock to central depôts, gives the faded, forlorn aspect of many a market-place just that romantic gloss which is given to an old building by mantling ivy and crumbling walls.

The mediæval market-place appears to have played very much the same part in civic life that the newspaper press plays to-day. The voice of the people, which only growled and grumbled or sighed and moaned amongst the back streets, broke out in full volume in the market-place. News, until it received the market-place stamp, was uncertain and untrustworthy. In the suburbs it was a mere whisper; in the by-lanes and back streets it became a rumour; in the High Street it gathered force and arrested attention; in the market-place the voice of Authority confirmed or contradicted it.

The special correspondent was there in the shape of herald or messenger. The 'Society paragonist' was represented by the retailer of back-stair news or alehouse gossip. If a man wanted a servant or a situation, or a house or anything belonging to a house, he went to the market-place. Fashion in the cut of clothes originated with the gallants who swaggered there. If a man wanted to hear the last ballad or lampoon, he went there. When printed books were rare and costly, popular fiction was to be heard at the booth of the public story-teller, and sermons at the tub of the public preacher. In the market-place the popular hero received his triumph, and the criminal met with his deserts; war and peace were proclaimed there; new laws were announced there; festivals, fasts, holidays, and celebrations were notified there; in short, if a man wanted to keep up with current opinion and current events, it was necessary for him to frequent the market-place.

The dogs, the secret tribunals, the despots, the inquisitors, feared plots which were hatched in the market-place far more than those which were concerted in out-of-the-way nooks and

corners; for a sudden, well-timed swoop might crush the plot of the back room; but to defy the market-place was to defy the People, and the tyrant who turned a deaf ear to the appeal or remonstrance which came from a single house or a single street, found it his best policy to face forbearingly the clamour of a market-place crowd.

If there is any life at all in a town it will show itself in the market-place. The transaction of actual business may be very small; but people flock together and move with some approach to briskness; there is a hum of voices, and a clatter of feet, and a rumble of wheels, and the inns do a comparatively roaring trade, and the local dogs are startled and hustled into activity, and tradesmen spend less time than usual lounging about their shop doors.

The romance of the market-places of decayed old towns is so fascinating that we are apt to forget how really pathetic it is. When Romney and Rye and Sandwich were flourishing ports, when soldiers and sailors and merchants and toilers crowded the streets, many of which are now grass grown, and big ships lay alongside the now deserted quays and wharfs, we may revel in fanciful presentment of the scenes upon which the grave old houses in their market-places must have looked, for these old Cinque Ports were fighting as well as trading towns, and more than once showed themselves worthy of their proud title—the eyes of England.

When the eastern fen country was dotted with splendid abbeys, we may imagine that the market-places of the little towns which clustered around them, such as Ramsey, Thorney, Whittlesea, and Crowland, not to speak of those in places which have retained their importance, such as Ely, Boston, and Peterborough, must have been active business centres, although nowadays the stillness and desolation, and the disappearance of the ancient water-ways which served as roads, necessitate large drafts upon our fancy.

With what stirring memories of old days the Grassmarket and the High Street of Auld Reekie are linked! What a procession of historical and romantic figures pass before us as we stand under the old cross in the market-place of Merrie Carlisle!—William of Cloudesly, Fergus M'Ivor, Prince Charlie and his men, Meg Merri-lies or rather her prototype, Jean Gordon, marching boldly along through the crowd, shouting:

To wanton me, to wanton me,
Ken ye what maist wad wanton me?
To see King George hung up at Rome,
To see King Jamie crowned at Scone,
To see England taxed and Scotland free,
This is what maist wad wanton me!

and then hustled away to her death in Eden River; Hobbie Noble and a score of romantic rascals passing to their deaths on 'Haribee'; the burghers whispering the news of the rescue of Kinmont Willie by the Bold Buccleuch, and many others.

So crowd the figures in the other Border market-places—Percy and Douglas, Christie of the Clinthill and Dandie Dinmont, Widdrington, Little Jock Elliot, Scotts and Armstrongs, Turnbells and Rutherfords from the Scottish side of the Border: Charltons and Fenwicks and Roddams and Forsters and Musgraves and Robsons

from the English side—all pass before the old gray houses and over the time-worn stones, and keep us moralising over a string of trite quotations: 'Autres temps, autres mœurs,' 'Tempora mutantur,' &c., 'Sic transit gloria mundi,' until we feel a melancholy which corresponds well with the stillness and lifelessness around us.

Not a whit less fascinating is the romance which lingers around the market-places of the old-world West of England towns. What a buzz and a stir there must have been in Plymouth and Dartmouth and Totnes and the Tor Bay towns in the old war-times, beginning with that famous summer's evening when the little Scottish craft dashed in with news of the approach of the Invincible Armada, continuing throughout those long years of hammer and tong work between Englishmen and Frenchmen, and only ending when the last privateer sailed proudly in with her string of prizes!

What famous figures must have walked and talked in the market-places of the North Devonshire towns when the rage for conquest and plunder on the fair seas stretching away towards the Spanish Main was at fever-heat, and the most potent, grave, and reverend signiors lost their heads for a while, and embarked their fortunes in adventure ships! Drake and Raleigh, Grenville and Hawkins, Frobisher and Hudson, brighten up the now dusky old houses with their picturesque attire, and wake the echoes with their brief, sailor-like talk in that terse speech which we still love so well.

Later on comes William the Silent on the scene, first in quiet, fishy old Brixham, then at Newton-Abbot, proclaimed king in the market-place amidst solemn silence at a spot still marked by a stone; finally, at Exeter, where his court was first recognised as a formal substantiality.

Still more stirring are the associations of west-country market-places with the ill-fated enterprise of Monmouth. It was in the market-place of Lyme, in Dorsetshire, that his first standard and blue flag was set up. It was in the market-place of Taunton, every house of which was decorated with flowers and greenery, where he received at the hands of a bevy of fair young Somersetshire damsels a banner gorgeously embroidered with royal emblems, and where, a few days later, he was proclaimed king. The same pageantry filled the market-place at Bridgewater a week later with an enthusiastic crowd, and still later, stirred little Frome into excitement. But excitement of a very different kind was soon in store for these same market-places. From the moment the first batches of fugitives came pouring into Bridgewater with the news of Sedgemoor, a reign of terror set in, the memory of which is fresh to this day. What Kirke and his 'Lambs' began, Jeffreys completed. In the market-place of Winchester, Alice Lisle, already condemned to be burned, was beheaded. At Dorchester, thirty 'rebels' were hanged in the market-place. Throughout Devonshire the market-place of every town which had furnished Monmouth with soldiers became the scene of executions. In all, three hundred and twenty 'rebels' were hanged during this terrible circuit, and as publicity was an essential of the punishment, we may be sure that the majority of them met their fate in the market-places of their native towns.

Turning Londonwards, we pause in the busy, lively Oxford of to-day. In its old market-place, Crammer, Latimer, and Ridley suffered martyrdom for their faith; later on, here was proclaimed that Parliament of Charles I. which defined the gulf between him and his opponents; and still later, the voice of the people rose angrily and furiously at the high-handed dealing of James II. with the Fellows of Magdalen.

Finally, what pages of history are unfolded to us as we think of ancient Smithfield when standing in the beautiful Smithfield of to-day. They are pages which range from the days when gallants thronged to win their spurs at the jousting ground of the 'Smooth Field,' when William Wallace met his heroic death and Wat Tyler got his deserts; when, under Mary, the 'pale martyr' in his sheet of fire was an every-day entertainment for the inhabitants of the quaint old houses; when 'Bartlemy' Fair was a vigorous and flourishing saturnalia, until we reach the 'Old Sniffle' of Thackeray and Dickens with its scenes of blackguardism and revolting cruelty; and then the reformed Smithfield which we know.

Not less striking is the interest and romance of the foreign market-place. No one with an atom of sentiment in his composition can stand in the Piazza del Erbe at Verona without thinking of Montagues and Capulets, Speed and Launce and Launce's dog, and the mighty Scaligers, whose gorgeous tombs are hard by. In the Place of St Mark at Venice were enacted all the scenes which make up the intensely interesting drama of the Queen of the Adriatic's history. The Forum of Rome was the 'hub' of the Old World; Roman history and the Roman Forum are indissolubly linked together: most of the greatest and wisest and grandest and vilest men of the Old World must have known its features familiarly, whether in all the pride of their stateliness and beauty, or as melancholy relics of a dim Past dotted about the cattle-market, such as we see it on the famous canvas in the Dulwich Gallery known as the 'Campo Vaccino at Rome,' whereon are graziers from the Campagna bartering their beasts on the site of the rostrum whence Mark Antony delivered his oration after the murder of Cæsar, a herd of oxen cropping the grass off the base of the Column of Phocas, and a party of citizens carousing amid the venerable pillars of the Temple of Saturn.

The market-places of Antwerp, Haarlem, and Utrecht still speak to us of the terrors of the Inquisition, and the wholesale butcheries of Alva and his lieutenants; whilst those of Madrid and Seville and Valladolid tell us still of the glories of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Columbus, and of *autos da fé* innumerable. It was from the market-place at Wittenberg that Luther started at the head of the procession of university grandees to burn the Pope's Bull on Elbe banks. He who goes to Bruges or to Ghent, or to Ypres or to Nuremberg, and sees not their market-places with an intelligent eye to their past, performs but ill his holiday duty. Past these quaint old houses of the Flemish guilds in the Grande Place of Brussels must have poured the British regiments on their way to Waterloo upon that famous eve. In the Piazza della Signoria of Florence, the forum of the old Florentine commonwealth, all the stirring episodes of the city's history were

enacted; and as we gaze on the Palazzo Vecchio, on the Bargello, and the exquisite Loggia, Guelphs and Ghibellines, the Medici, Savonarola, Dante, Michelangelo, Alfieri, Machiavelli, and a score of other names 'familiar in our mouths as household words,' come to our minds.

Far away over the seas we still find the romance of the market-place, strong and suggestive, if not so varied and intense as in the historical cities and towns of the Old World. In the fair, half-forgotten, long-neglected islands of the West Indies, but newly awakened from their slumber of long years, the market-places are the centres of whatever life and animation there are—be it under the pretentious arcades at Kingston in Jamaica; or in that strange old back street in the capital of Trinidad—the Earthly Paradise of Charles Kingsley—or in the funny, dilapidated old square at Scarborough in Robinson Crusoe's island of Tobago; or under the great palm-trees at Roseau in Dominica; or where the hardy *portoueses* come in from the country-side to the *halles* of Martinique and Guadeloupe; or in the full blaze of the sun at Basse Terre, St Kitts; or buzzing and chattering and laughing around the 'Green Man' in busy Bridgetown, Barbadoes.

In Havana, in South America, old Spain confronts us in the dirty, ill-savoured market-places; but old Spain amidst tropical surroundings, for these old centres were founded long ago by the 'Conquistadores,' and, despite the changes of centuries, are still distinguished by many of their old characteristics. Old houses look down upon them, successors of other old houses burned in the terrible times of Captain Teach, Blackbeard, Morgan, Lewis Scot, John Davis of Jamaica, François l'Olonaise, Captain Avary, Robert Kidd, and a score of other bold, merciless rascals, whose very names made ships' captains tremble in their shoes, and sent the women of the coast towns fleeing into the churches. The dark, bright-eyed faces are Spanish, save where the irrepressible 'black stain' shows itself; the language is that of old Spain—as much purer than that of modern Spain as is the French of Quebec purer than that of Paris. But for the rest—waving palms, deep blue sky, black patches of shade only accentuating the trembling white glare of light—in short, the tropics.

Even in prosaic North America there are market-places with a halo of romance about them. Boston State House, which in old days stood in the midst of Boston market-place, has seen many of the scenes which led up to the severance of Britain and her American colonies. The old 'Tory signs,' by which are meant the arms of Great Britain, were many times torn down and burned ere war was actually declared; and after the Declaration of Independence, were enthusiastically burned by the crowd. Lion and unicorn still remain, but nothing more. It was here, too, that occurred in 1770 the riot between the mob and the British soldiers known as 'the Boston Massacre,' five people being killed, and amongst them the first black champion of Liberty, Crispus Attuck. Faneuil Hall, hard by, also stood in a market-place, and is known as the 'Cradle of Liberty,' from the number of patriotic meetings held here under the patronage of America's greatest orators in the old stirring times.

Busy enough must old Salem market-place have been in the good times of the town's prosperity as a seaport, and also the scene of constant excitement when the persecution and execution of witches was in full swing. Through the market-place of placid, dreamy Concord town must have raced Earl Percy's red-coats upon that fateful April day, 1775, after the 'embattled farmers' had driven them from the bridge hard by, and the shot had been fired which was heard round the world. All through the New England States, indeed, there may yet be seen old-fashioned market-places each of which is more or less richly associated with the great deeds of these and preceding troublous years; and the fact that the names of most of the towns are the names of towns in old England by no means lessens the romance which comparatively a short time has woven about them.

The topic is well-nigh inexhaustible; but sufficient ground has been traversed to show that in every town with the smallest pretension to distinction or antiquity, the market place will be found to be a central point of interest, if not for itself, for the associations which are linked with it.

S A F E D.

THE city of Safed is picturesquely situated high on the mountains of Naphtali. 'Ras-el-Jelil' is a name common among the natives (The head of Galilee). It is the highest city in the land, being 2700 feet above the Mediterranean, and 3380 feet above the Sea of Galilee. The castle-hill is the highest point to westward of the range of hills lying between the Jordan Valley and the Wadies Leimûn and 'Amûd. It is almost severed from its fellows by the Wady Hamra, where gardens are always green, watered by perennial springs. Of the once noble castle nothing remains but a confused heap, visible from afar. The city is built around this hill in the form of a horse-shoe, open to the north, spreading a little up the hill beyond the wady to the east; the 'toe' peering over a little mound southward, whence the whole extent of the Sea of Galilee is seen.

The view from the castle-hill is wide and varied, although not so extensive as that from the neighbouring height of Jebel 'Anaân. The road to Damascus winds through olive groves north-eastwards, and disappears between two rounded grassy hills that guard the descent to the Waters of Merom. On the hill-side to the left two little hamlets, 'Ain Bîrch and 'Ain-ez-Zaitûn, are huddled closely together beside the springs from which their names are taken, whose tiny silver streams glide under the shadow of fig, pomegranate, and vine that clothe the cultivated slopes below.

The mud walls of many villages marking the sites of ancient Galilean cities stud the landscape to the north and north-west. The old fortress of Gischala is only just hidden by the shoulder of a hill. Over against us to the west is the Jermûk range, cut off from the Safed hills by Wady Leimûn, or, as it is sometimes called, 'Wady-el-Tawahîn' (Valley of Mills), from the number of primitive mills with ivy-covered walls in the midst of brambly thickets, driven by the water

which flows all the year round in the bottom of the gorge. The rocky precipitous sides are in some parts not less than 1500 feet in height. Deep in the bosom of the valley is a curious intermittent spring, a constant source of wonderment to the natives, who call it the 'well of the demons.'

Jebel Jermūk, a finely-shaped mountain, the most northerly point of the range of that name, is the highest in Palestine, rising to a height of 4000 feet. On the gentle slope at its western base stands the ancient synagogue of Meiron, a sanctuary and place of pilgrimage to pious Jews all over the world. Strange tales are told of their doings at the great festival called the 'feast of the burning,' which is held here annually. It has been attempted to identify this place with the Meroz so bitterly mentioned in the song of Deborah. Tabor appears like a great dark beehive sitting at the corner of the magnificent plain of Esdraelon, which, beyond the uplands of Nazareth, stretches away to the base of Mount Carmel by the sea. Little Hermon, with the white-walled church on its north-western slope, marking the site of Nain; Gilboa, of tragic memory; and the mountains of Samaria beyond; Ebal and Gerizim raising their proud shoulders above their fellows, as if to boast of their ancient fame, are all visible from where we stand. From no point are the blue waters of Galilee seen to greater advantage. Deep set among surrounding hills, when Spring throws her mantle of dazzling green over the land, it is a veritable 'sapphire in the midst of emeralds.' The curiously arranged hills of Jaulān, volcanoes of the antique world, whose fires have been quenched for ages, lie eastward like huge dark masses rolled down from the majestic sides of Great Hermon. Beyond them we see the far-stretching plains of Haurān, the wealth of whose soil is not yet known to this generation, the giant forms of the Haurān mountains—Jebel-ed-Druse—looming up on the edge of the desert some eighty miles away. To the south-east lie the beautifully rounded, thickly-wooded hills of Gilead, yielding pasture and shelter to the flocks as of old; and when the air is perfectly clear, the grim heights of the mountains of Moab may be seen touching the sky away in the south.

The high and isolated position of Safed renders it comparatively secure from epidemics, notwithstanding the insanitary conditions that prevail. It is the most populous city in Northern Palestine; but anything like accuracy in estimating the numbers in this country is impossible. Of Moslems there may be from five to six thousand; Christians, between two and three hundred; Jews, from twelve to fifteen thousand. Two influences, acting in opposite directions, affect the calculation of the Jews. The census is given in by heads of communities, who are always more or less open to corruption. The returns made to the religious heads are sure to be as large as possible—that is, as large as they can with decency be made. The pious contributors of alms for the support of the holy Jews in Palestine regulate their subscriptions to some extent by the numbers to whom relief is to be given. If the numbers can be increased a little, there will be all the more for the *bona fide* recipients. Scrupulousness in securing advantage has not been a distinguishing mark

of the race since the day on which the artful Jacob deceived poor blind old Isaac. On the other hand, a tax is levied by the Government on all Ottoman subjects, at so much per head of population. The same interest which in the former case leads to increase, in this prompts to diminish the returns; the result, of course, is that there are no reliable statistics. The figures given may be taken as a fair approximation.

Education is at a low ebb. Education, properly so called, has indeed, until recently, been beyond the reach of the inhabitants. Among the Jews, the ability to read Hebrew, whether understanding it or not, is common enough, and many of them can write and reckon sufficiently to be able to manage a little shop; but, there education stops. Only a few who have been out in the world on begging expeditions have any general information, and this they are by no means desirous to impart. Judaism resembles Romanism very closely in the manner in which the knowing ones try to keep the common people in ignorance. Among the Arabs, again, outside the Government circles, men who can read and write to any purpose are as scarce as snowdrifts in Palestine. The soil, which has been so little disturbed by cultivation, and is so thinly sown with wheat, affords magnificent opportunities for the growth of weeds and thistles. Weeds and thistles there are in abundance. The minds of Jew and Gentile are dominated by superstition. Their religious observances are cherished in proportion as they derive their sanction from superstition. This accounts largely for the bitterness of their bigotry. Many are the strange customs to which these people yield willing homage: what follows is a fair example.

The night of July 12, 1889, I spent in Safed. The moon rose with all her Syrian splendour, revealing beauties in the landscape unsuspected under the fierce glare of the sun. We watched her slow ascent into the cloudless heavens, and amused ourselves awhile trying to identify places around, wrapped in the clear amber of her beams. We had not long retired, when a loud crash resounded through the still night-air, followed by the clang of drums and an indescribable mixture of noises, increasing in volume every moment, produced by clashing tin cans and crockery, thumping upon boards with great sticks, firing of guns, the hoarse shoutings of men, the piercing voices of children, and, high above all, the shrill cry of the women—a peculiar cry, uttered in times of great excitement, whether of joy, of sorrow, or of anxiety. The din grew thicker, and the swelling sound floated away over intervening valleys, to echo among the moonlit hills, as one part of the city after another awoke to the seriousness of the occasion, to contribute its share to the general uproar and confusion. We came forth in haste to learn the cause of the alarm. The streets below us were filled by a wildly gesticulating mob, howling fiercely, with eyes of flame directed to the moon. Instinctively we looked towards the pale queen of night, and saw a little black notch, as it were, cut out of her bright circle. As I listened intently, by-and-by from the babel below I was able to distinguish clearly the words, shouted over and over again by every member of the crowd, with every variety of emphasis: 'Ya hoot dusher kamarna!

Ya hoot, minshan Ullah, dasher kamarna, ahsan ma natla' lak binnaboot!' Which may be rendered: 'O whale, let go our moon! O whale, for Ullah's sake, let go our moon, or else we'll come up to you with a club!' The look of terror on the faces of many showed that they only too firmly believed what the words indicated. Nothing was more certain to them than that a great whale from the vasty deep had risen from the dark waters to wipe out the glory of the night by making a supper of the moon. Children cry for the moon; but he had already gripped it in his awful jaws! Their only hope of saving her lay in their power to give the whale such a fright, that in trembling he should let fall his prey and flee for his own life.

As time passed and the dark shadow spread more and more over the face of the moon, their excitement grew almost to frenzy. The whale did not seem to care for their threats, and soon their beautiful moon would be gone beyond recall! Full three-quarters of the golden disc were obscured ere the shadow began to move off. Then gradually a jubilant note rose from amid the clangour. The shouting and the crashing and the clashing waxed merrier, as if a great weight were being lifted from the minds of the mob. They rushed hither and thither with quickening pace, hallooing, and vapouring their clubs: ere long the voice of laughter was heard, and at last, amid a burst of shouting, clashing of metal and staves, accompanied by a discharge of musketry that made the mountains echo again, the shadow passed from the rim, and the moon swam away gloriously in the translucent air. The crowd speedily left the streets; and soon the defenders of the moon were seen stretching themselves on their rugs on the roofs, each one perfectly satisfied that in rescuing their beloved moon from the jaws of the whale he had well earned a night's repose.

A native gentleman of more than average intelligence had joined us while we watched the strange scene. I asked how the custom could have arisen. He told me that 'once upon a time' a famous astronomer resided at the court of a certain great king. He was a wise man, and as such honoured of king and people. A man who has knowledge of 'the stars in their courses' is held to be wise in things far beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. His counsel was sought in affairs of the highest importance; and his skill in meeting difficulties and in giving suitable advice, combined with his well-known probity, secured for him not only the admiration but the confidence of all. From his observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies, he had calculated that on a given date there would be an eclipse of the moon. In a moment of unhappy inspiration he told the king what would take place. The king, like so many children of the Orient, was superstitious to a degree. He did not doubt that some potent evil spell had fallen upon his long-trusted friend; and that, were he left free, he would by his enchantments produce the effects he had prophesied, and perhaps blot the moon out of the heavens. Repressing all sentiment, as Eastern tyrants so easily can, he ordered his quondam counsellor to be put fast in prison and kept there until the time should pass and the event declare whether or

not he had spoken honestly. The astronomer went to prison, but waited confidently the hour and the event that should set him free. At length the appointed night came, and exactly at the hour indicated by the astronomer a bit seemed taken out of the moon. But, alas! the king slept; for any one to awaken him it would be certain death: if he did not see the eclipse, there would be no escape for the astronomer. Anxiety gave way to anguish as the shadow spread, covering almost the entire disc, and still the king slept. Suddenly rousing himself, the prisoner declared to his custodians that a great whale had come from the distant floods to swallow the moon, that unless the people made a fearful noise and frightened him away, they would never see their moon again. At once there arose on every hand a confused noise, and mingling of loud discordant voices such as had never been heard in the city before. As the sly astronomer had intended, it penetrated to the ear of the sleeping monarch, who forthwith strode out to learn the cause. With his distressed subjects he looked at the moon, and lo! it had happened according to the words of the wise man. He sent messengers hastily to the prison to fetch him forth; and when the moon escaped from the shadow and soared in beauty once more amid the blue, she looked down upon the astronomer restored to his honours, his royal master seeking by all means to efface from his worthy counsellor's mind every trace of his recent humiliation.

To the populace it was unnecessary to give further explanation; hence the belief so prevalent even up to the present time, that in the gloomy twilight of the unfathomable abyss there is a fearful monster, who, consumed with a desire to devour the moon, is ever ready for an opportunity to pounce upon it. An eclipse is simply an attempt on his part to give effect to his desire—an attempt in which he fails, simply because he is so well watched and shouted at and threatened that his courage fails him just when success is touched!

THE LAND OF THE SETTING SUN.

CHILDHOOD has many charms; but perhaps the most potent, to one who has long battled with the world, is its perfect innocence, and its implicit belief in those marvellous stories that the adult pours into its listening ear. Yet the child never marvels, nothing is too improbable, everything seems quite rational and proper. Fiction is unknown to him, and every word he hears sinks into his receptive mind as a truth. He stores these facts in his mind, and in a wonderful way at some future time he marshals them and sets them forth to the utter confusion of the adult. The child lives in an atmosphere of poetry; his imagination is most vivid. When the teller of the tale has quite forgotten it, the child's mind is busy dwelling on the wondrous scenes of that fairyland known only to childhood, where the elves and the pixies dance their revels the live-long day, and where the birds and beasts and fishes suffer no harm to come to the poor mortal who strays thither. Everything has a tongue in this land; the flowers have eyes to see, and they whisper more to each other than did the reeds

of King Midas. No evil exists in this far-off country; the child knows none; he has not yet eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; everything is good, and everybody is actuated by good motives. Alas that such pretty notions should one day have to be dispelled!

It is many years ago now, that my little sister and I set out together for the Land of the Setting Sun. The beautiful golden clouds had gathered in the west; in the glorious perspective, waves were rolling in upon a glittering blue lake, girt with trees of burning silver and gold. Fairy palaces arose, whose amber-coloured turrets shone with a wonderful and alluring brilliancy. I longed to tread those paths and to wander adown those sunny slopes by the blue and shimmering lake. It was to this beautiful country that my mother had gone—so nurse had told me—and I longed to see her whom I had never known. So I secretly determined to journey thither. My little sister I loved dearly, and could not think of parting from her, so, putting her hat on and wrapping her cloak around her, we were ready to start. How surprised would our mother be when she saw us coming in at those gates that nurse told us of; she would know us at once, of course. But how should we know her—our dear mother? Among all the beautiful ladies who would greet us, how could we distinguish her? I hastily ran and took down a miniature which was hanging in my bedroom, and upon which I used to cast my eyes when I awoke in the morning. My mother—they told me—was like that—but more beautiful. This likeness I put in my pocket; and around my sister's neck I suspended with a ribbon a locket containing a circle of golden hair—our mother's. Telling her we were going a long journey to see our mother, and pointing to the beautiful golden west, the land we had both heard of and both longed to reach, I took her hand in mine, and thus, hand in hand, we took our way down the garden walk to the Land of the Setting Sun.

The nightingales sang to us as we passed up a winding lane that led into the open country and the moorlands. By the road-side grew clumps of fir-trees, and through their branches streamed the rays of the sun, casting a strange light into the depths of the stilly copses. The sinking sun from behind the hill-tops lit up the whole country-side beyond the meadows and across the slopes. Never since have I seen such a sunset. It was one of those quiet evenings in June when the whole sky grows lurid at sundown, when the day is slow to die, and when twilight lingers long before fading into night. The scene had changed somewhat; the blue lake was no longer visible, it was hidden by tall gray mountains, at the foot of which stretched beautiful fields of emerald green. The palaces had vanished, and in their place grim castles frowned from the tops of craggy heights. Across the western sky stretched a red chain of clouds; but in the east, black and threatening was the aspect and dark 'messengers' scudded across to the west. The wind began to grow cool, and there was an ominous rustle in the leaves upon the trees. The birds were now silent. Darkness was fast overtaking the daylight; and travelling with it, under its shadow, seemed to be a small tempest, such as often succeeds a more than usually bril-

liant sunset. Large spots of cold rain began to fall, and I wrapped my little sister's cloak closer around her as we hurried onwards. We were on a wide-spreading moor, and still we went on till the night closed in. The rain now began to fall faster, and the wind made a low sobbing noise as it swept by us. We grew afraid as we hurried past gaunt trees which seemed to assume gruesome shapes. Then in the darkness we could discern twinkling lights, and at last we came up to one, which, being in the turf, we took for a fairy light; but, alas! no fairy answered us when we called; and I remember wondering why the rain did not put the tiny lamp out. Then my little sister began to cry most bitterly, and placing my arms around her, I found that her cloak was wet through, and I had not noticed till then that my jacket was the same.

We struggled on. I only remember how the night grew blacker, and that finally we came to a big house; and how, after pulling a long handle hanging at the portal, a terrible clanging of bells and barking of dogs and flashing of lights ensued. What followed I can but faintly remember. I have a dim recollection of seeing a beautiful lady that I thought must be my mother, and of sitting before a blazing fire; then I must have fallen asleep. When I awoke, it was broad daylight, but the room seemed strangely different from my own, and yet, there, hanging on the wall before me, was my mother's miniature. In the night I had been dreaming. I dreamt that soft and sweet voices were calling to me, and kind hands were gently smoothing my burning forehead. I was thirsty. My mother cooled my lips, and her voice lulled me to sleep again. But could I be awake? By the window grew honeysuckle, that I never had known was there; and standing against the blue sky was a red farmhouse that I had never seen before. I shut my eyes to see if it were all real; but on opening them again, I saw the beautiful lady bending over me, and I called her 'mother,' and asked where I was; but, kissing me, she bade me be very quiet, and told me that I had been very ill, and that soon I should be well again.

Day followed day, and I would watch the sky grow blue and the clouds sail across; and the song of the birds in the orchard came in with the soft balmy air at my window. I would talk to the lady, and for hours she would sit with loving face and listen to my prattle. I told her how my little sister and I had started for the Land of the Setting Sun; and when I asked her where my sister was, she told me that when I was stronger she would tell me; and I said I was strong now; and bending over me and covering me with kisses, she told me that my dear little sister had gone to the land where our mother was—that I might go to them, but that they could never come to me; and in telling me she cried; and I cried too, for I felt how lonely my path in life would be without my mother and sister; but putting her arms around me, the lady told me that some day I should join them in the Land of the Setting Sun, in the land that knows no night.

I am old now; many sunsets have come and gone since then. The lady who sat by my bedside, and who afterwards became to me more than a second mother, is no more of this land, but

has gone to join my mother and sister in that brighter country of no shadows. The world has taught me many things since then; but how willingly would I give up much of my knowledge for the possession of the innocence of a little child. The longer one lives in the world the more one becomes of the world; and it seems to me that since my childhood I have turned my back upon the sunset, and have wandered far away from that land. I am fast approaching what men call second childhood; and in those days that are to be, when the sky is lifted up as a curtain and I catch a glimpse of that other land, then shall I, my labours ended here, once more set out to reach the Land of the Setting Sun.

ARCAS PLATE.

A NEW process for the electro-deposition of an alloy of silver, or, in other words, of producing what are known in common parlance as plated goods, marks an important advance in the commercial history of electro-plating, and is worthy of some passing comment. The 'Arcas' process has been perfected after much time and skill to remedy many of the defects inherent in ordinary electro silver-plating and also in nickel-plating. As is well known, a great drawback in the use of silver-plating is the large amount of labour requisite to keep it bright and clean; for any trace of sulphur in the atmosphere and in all towns, sulphur is invariably found in the air—combines at once with the silver, speedily forming a sulphide of silver, or tarnish, which has to be removed by much rubbing and polishing-powder.

Needless to point out, much waste results from this process; and many thousands of ounces of silver disappear annually under the polishing-brush. Electro-deposited silver has, moreover, the disadvantage of being comparatively soft, and the wearing away of prominent edges is apt to leave the underlying basis-metal exposed, entirely spoiling all appearance. Nor, moreover, is nickel-plating an altogether satisfactory process, for its application is a limited one, being unsuitable for forks, spoons, &c., owing to the readiness with which vegetable acids attack it and render cleaning a matter of much difficulty. The porosity of the nickel coating, moreover, allows moisture to penetrate to the basis-metal, and start corrosion; whilst a certain tendency to crack and peel off is always discernible, in consequence of the inherent brittleness of the metal in question.

As is well known, standard silver as used for coinage and plate is alloyed with about eight per cent. of copper, for hardening purposes, in order to resist the constant wear and tear of daily handling. Unfortunately, the presence of copper renders the tendency to tarnish even more marked. To remove the drawbacks incidental to ordinary electro-plating, to nickel-plating, and to standard silver, the arcas process has been perfected and patented. The exact composition of Arcas Silver is not made public; but the alloy employed is such that the silver has the same durability imparted to it as if copper were used, whilst the tendency to tarnish is not merely unaffected, but actually diminished; so much so, that arcas-

plated articles merely require the application of a damp cloth, followed by a dry leather, to render them thoroughly bright and clean, all plate-powder being absolutely unnecessary.

It is almost superfluous to add how wide a field of operations is thus opened for a metal so readily cleaned and so labour-saving, in an age when manual labour is dispensed with in every possible form. It is not too much to say, that in every large hotel, club, restaurant, and shop, as well as private house, a metal which does not require continual cleaning, and is not a constant source of labour and expense, will be gladly welcomed. It is impossible to catalogue the innumerable number of articles of daily use, ornaments, fittings, &c., which can in future be rendered impervious to the ravages of tarnishing if plated with arcas.

Turning now to the important question of cost, not only is Arcas Metal in itself economical, as requiring the expenditure on it of little or no labour, but its first cost is stated by experts to be considerably cheaper than ordinary silver-plating. For two years the patentees of arcas-plating have been engaged in perfecting their process; and a large number of tests and experiments, too numerous to mention, conducted by scientists and practical men of the highest repute throughout the country, abundantly testify to the desirable qualities possessed by the new alloy.

ONCE MORE.

Once more along the river-side
Are willow-tassels swinging;
Once more among the woodlands wide
Are robins gaily singing;
Once more the gorse blooms on the fells,
The heather on the mountains;
Once more the cowslips ring their bells
Above the laughing fountains.
Once more the wood anemones
Are fluttering in the shadows,
The daisies star the verdant leas,
The buttercups the meadows;
Once more the languid violet opens
Her dewy eyes at morning;
Once more the southern-lying slopes
The blue-bells are adorning.
Once more each truant breeze that blows
Through wood and forest searches,
To steal from orchard boughs their snows,
The perfume from the larches;
They set the lances of the wheat
In mimic tilting motion,
And speed once more the swallow fleet
Across the briny ocean.
Once more the whirring cornrake cries
Amid the dew-wet clover,
O'er woodlands green the cuckoo flies,
A merry, careless rover;
The leafy woods are all a-chime,
The skylark's notes are thrilling;
Once more a gladder, blither rhyme
The poet's lays are filling.

M. ROOK.

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A FEW WORDS ABOUT READING.

It was a saying of Hobbes's, that if he had read as much as other men, he would doubtless have shared their ignorance. A sentence so bold could only afford to be made by one endowed with great gifts for knowledge and thought, and possessed of the grain of a true genius. Most of us, unless we have fallen into the lamentable error of believing that we are geniuses ourselves, have to be content with thinking over again the thoughts of other and greater minds than our own. Happily, the existing tendency towards shorter hours of labour and the cheapening of books affords more opportunity and increased facilities for reading. As to what it is we should read, much must be left to age and taste and habits of thought.

It may seem superfluous to say here that one cannot put old heads on young shoulders; yet it is a truth of which many parents require to be reminded, who are very anxious for their boys to 'get on,' and who deplore with uplifted eyes their offspring's fondness of 'adventure books.' That is the tendency in the average boy. Occasionally, the precocity of genius asserts itself in a Goethe, a Shelley, or a Byron; but, speaking generally, childhood is mentally prone to follow after the new and the wonderful. It is a principle the operation of which should not be interfered with as long as a boy's excursions into the realm of fiction are kept within reasonable bounds.

The real dawn of literary taste is to be found in our nursery classics, the fairy tales of our childhood. No matter how old, how worldly-wise we become, the potent spell of those legends never loses its sweet sway over our minds. They are often mercilessly mangled almost beyond recognition by the modern pantomime manager, their plot obscured by a bewildering splendour, and the simplicity of the favourite themes lost in a maze of magnificence; but however much adapted and mutilated and expurgated, childhood has still a literature of its own. We

remember that its scope was very limited, and that, far from familiarity breeding contempt, it wouldn't have been half the fun if we didn't know what was coming. How we used to listen time without number to the same old stories, laugh at the same old jokes, and cry at the same old points. How we used to sympathise with ill-used Little Claus, and jeer at the discomfiture of bullying Big Claus. Then came *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Swiss Family Robinson*; after which we revelled in Indian frontier warfare, and dreamed of Heartless Horsemen and Mohicans that should have been extinct, but lived to disturb our sleep. Anon we devoured *Jack Sheppard* and *Tom Cringle's Log*, made friends with Marryat and Kingston, and lived for a time in an atmosphere of sea-fights, dare-devil midshipmen, pirates who had never heard of scruples, and bloodthirsty buccancers. Then was the time that no man could come fully up to our ideal of a hero who had not captured with a single frigate half-a-dozen feluccas crammed between decks with slaves, or scoured the seas as the captain of a bold privateer with a roving commission, unless he had led a cutting-out expedition or run the blockade at mid-day. The next age shifts into the gorgeous imaginings of the *Arabian Nights*, which fixed on the retina of our memory images of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, who helped the benevolent Genius to bring old Scrooge back to sympathy and friends. But as we grew older the wants of our nature widened, and we found to our anxiety that we were growing out of our books just as we had grown out of our clothes.

It is the period immediately following that marks a most important epoch in intellectual life, for then it is that its future is to a great extent moulded. Habits are contracted and characters formed early in life, and it is probable that the colour of a person's reading is mainly determined during the time of hobbledehoydom, when he is in process of passing from the limp and lanky school-boy to the set and rigid man. Just at this time is a most critical period in his career, for now it is that

he obtains a new outlook into life. Previously, he has been concerned with the miniature world of school, and looked at the greater world only with the eyes of a school-boy. But now, entering a business or a profession, he enters into a larger life, and begins to look about him with an air of deeper inquiry. And the more he reads of contemporary literature the worse does he become, for the air is thick with controversy; nothing is too sacred to be contradicted, and the spirit of 'sweet reasonableness' seems to be dead.

The difficulty of finding something to read in an age when half the world is engaged in writing books for the other half to read is not one of quantity but of quality, so that the question, 'What shall I read?' inevitably suggests the parallel query, 'What shall I not read?' The wisdom of writing, according to Mr Lowell, consists in knowing what to leave in the inkpot. Applying the same truth to reading, it may be said that he who reads most wisely is the reader who knows what books to leave uncut. If the number of books extant in the time of Solomon was so great as to call for comment, Carlyle has far more reason to bewail the prolific press of to-day: 'Still, undaunted, rushes on the great array of Publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the grave, cries "Give."'

The awful power of the omnipotent daily paper as an engine for good or evil can hardly be over-estimated. Nine men out of ten, though they will not admit it, have an almost superstitious veneration for anything in print. The City man, at lunch with a friend, delivers himself, not of his own opinions, but of those of the daily paper which he has swallowed with his breakfast, so that the political argument is not Jones v. Brown, but the leader-writer of the 'Daily Slasher' v. him of the 'Morning Scribbler.' In a very busy age, it is doubtless a great saving of time and trouble to buy an opinion ready made for a penny; but the habit is fatal to the faculty of pronouncing an independent judgment. As a matter of fact, however, since the establishment of free libraries, there has been a manifest improvement in the class of books read. Librarians tell us that history is more in demand, and that the best books are gradually superseding in the estimation of the people those which might be considered of a less favourable tendency. This is good news; but there is still much room for improvement, and only in proportion as we realise our individual responsibility in this matter, and act up to it, shall we be able to help to raise the tone of the public taste; for it is certain that degrading and vicious literature is supplied in answer to a demand, although it is probably just as sadly certain that writers and purveyors, finding that such a demand exists, do not hesitate to lead the way where formerly they cautiously felt it.

In choice of reading there are two cardinal principles which should ever be borne in mind—first, that it is necessary to keep fairly abreast of the principal thought and news of the time; and second, that it is essential, in order to a right estimate of present events, to cull at any rate some of the choicest flowers of the literature and history of the past. To keep fairly apace with

general thought and news, newspapers and magazines are indispensable, though too much attention cannot be paid to Emerson's advice in this regard—to learn the art of quickly and profitably assimilating their contents. To be for ever wrapped up in a newspaper, and to depend entirely on it for mental sustenance, is truly a humiliating position for people 'heirs of all the ages, foremost in the ranks of time;' but it is a common one, for there are thousands who, never reading anything else, are content to let their intellects starve in the midst of plenty. It is indeed this very plenty which is so embarrassing. The majority of people who read at all, read too much and think too little, falling into the error to which Schopenhauer alludes when he says that the safest way of having no thoughts of our own is to take up a book every moment we have nothing to do.

The second principle that has been indicated—that it is necessary to obtain a well-proportioned view of present events—involves the reading of history, biography, philosophy, and fiction. It is a striking comment on the prevalence of popular ignorance that a sensational murder will provide a month's topic for conversation, while the publication of a profound work which is the result of long years of toil will pass unheeded. A people educated by reading that which would give them a just sense of proportion could not fail to discriminate between the relative importance of the two events. For this purpose English literature is admirably adapted, Lord Macaulay averring that there is in the English classics a body of teaching power which the literatures of Greece and Rome cannot rival. 'No people has on the whole written so much and so well,' says the Rev. Stopford Brooke; 'no people can point to so long and so splendid a train of poets and prose writers.' It is no part of our intention to presume to mention 'the best hundred books,' nor to disparage unduly the works of modern authors; but when there is so much that is standard in our language, so much that has stood the tests of time and trial, it is impossible not to sympathise with that bookseller, justly proud of his conservative tendencies in the matter of literature, who replied, on being asked for a copy of a modern theological novel, 'I sell nothing which time has not mellowed.'

But, though nobody has a right to prescribe the books for another to read, a direction may be indicated which experience has proved it is desirable to take. That direction may be briefly pointed out as the one which contains the gems of our language. There are many of them—quite enough to occupy the time which the average man is able to devote to reading. When he has read these he will have a right to explore the bypaths of literature; but only when he has exhausted the first class should he begin to dabble in the second, third, or tenth rate. In fact, once this taste for the best is cultivated, any other than it will pall upon the ear and fail to satisfy the mind. The reader becomes intuitively aware when a master spirit is talking to him, for he feels that what he is reading bears an intimate relation to universal humanity as well as to himself, and therefore possesses a vital interest for all. This is the true test of whether a book is merely parochial or belongs to the wide

republic of letters. No matter how exalted or how humble the theme, if it appeals to our common humanity it is literature in the true sense. 'The *Compleat Angler*, with its freshness and simplicity and overflowing love of Nature, and the *Natural History of Selborne*, wherein, says Carlyle, 'Parson White has copied a little sentence or two faithfully from the Inspired Volume of Nature,' are as truly literature as the sublimities of Milton's cathedral diapason.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XVII.—THE HISTORY OF A GREAT SUSPICION.

To Isabel the early days of her father's sojourn with her were days of comparative rest and peace. A subdued zephyr of excitement, indeed, breathed through them, but they were devoid of anxiety and incident. Her father had been brought by Mr Doughty, as she had arranged, and he had settled down with her readily and cheerfully. The first thing he had done on entering her sitting-room had been to run his eye over her book-shelves, and the next had been to sit down in her easy-chair with a book that was new to him; and thus he had continued. She had found a lodging for the faithful Doughty a door or two off, and he hung about the chief-in-attendance or on guard—while she was absent at school. The first two days being Saturday and Sunday, she was able to be present herself pretty constantly. On Sunday evening she went to Rutland Gate—it had been arranged that she should dine there on Sundays, and she feared that if she intermitted the habit, awkward questions might be asked—but she went with an even mind; for she left Mr Ainsworth in conversation with her father, on the understanding that he would stay till her return. It was not, then, till Monday that her father had occasion to note her absence during the greater part of the day. On her return from school she found him disturbed.

'My dear child,' said he, before she had well entered, 'I cannot permit this! Alexander has told me that you go out teaching in a school every day: you mustn't do it any more, my dear!—You understand, my dear,' said he, taking her hands and looking tenderly on her, 'that your father is going to provide for you: it is but right and proper that he should: it is a duty and a pleasure he has neglected too long.'

'You are very good, father,' said she; and for the moment she was as grateful as if his desire had been carried into act; 'but I cannot give my teaching up at a moment's notice. I must go on for another term. You understand—don't you?'

He understood, and he assented; and thus she temporised.

But from that hour he began to be full of schemes of work. He discussed them with his daughter, he discussed them with Alexander, and he discussed them with Alan Ainsworth—discussed them with such eloquence, subtlety, and completeness, that it seemed as if he must sit

down at once in the heat of his subjects—but he always put off the writing till 'to-morrow.'

'There now,' said Ainsworth one evening, when he was wrought to as great a pitch of interest as the expositor himself—'there you have material for at least three first-rate articles! Set to and write them, and I pledge myself to find a place for them. Make a start to-night.'

'Let us talk the subject out a little more thoroughly first,' said Mr Raynor: 'I'll make a good beginning early in the morning when I'm alone.'

Thus the days slipped away; but Isabel, at least, was not disappointed, for she had built no hopes on her father's promises of performance. Her father's intentions were always of the best and noblest, and it was but a vice of the body—she told herself—become an iron habit that he could not give them effect. He was, of course, too clever a man not to be aware of his own weaknesses, and he had still too much conscience not to be bitten sometimes with a rage against himself. His rage was commonly impotent, but it was honestly felt. But in saying that much I am anticipating somewhat; for all the evidence he gave of self-contumely in those early days, when he was still fresh to the change in his surroundings, was in a certain conversation with his daughter.

'I am,' said he suddenly, 'a worthless wretch, my dear! I have no will. Or, at least, I should say I have a will, but have lost the force to make it work. I do not mean to accuse myself of absolute idleness—no, no; that would not be fair to myself; and I have reasons enough for self-reproach without adding imaginary ones—but in all things that concern my moral feelings I have sunk into a strange apathy and cowardice. During all the years I have neglected you, my child, I have been filled with shame of myself; God knows not a day has passed but the thought of you has gnawed at my heart—and yet somehow I could do nothing! It seems amazing and preposterous, but there it is!'

'You are morbid, father dear,' said she. 'You are not strong; but you will get stronger. Wait, and your will-power will come back.'

All these things Isabel laid up and pondered in her heart, with the result that she pitied him with the ungrudging, infinite pity of a strong woman, and was resolved more than ever to protect him with all the resources of her love. It was well for him that she was thus powerfully drawn to him early, for the bond that bound them was soon to be sorely tried. The trial came about in this wise.

Uncle Harry had been more disappointed than he could have imagined by Isabel's refusal to live with him. He admitted to himself that she had been quite sweet and reasonable about it, and that he really had no grievance; but yet he had been so long used to command and to be obeyed, to say to this man 'Come,' and to that 'Go,' and to find action follow in unhesitating consequence, that it chafed him to find the inclination and purpose of another running counter to his plans. So he brooded on her refusal, and turned over and over her reasons for it. Moreover, his many years' intercourse with wily Asiatics had made him very suspicious, and somewhat prone to put two and two together to make five. Isabel

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had made two or three singular admissions: she would have accepted his offer if it had been made a week—or even three days—before; she had in that time taken upon herself, or incurred, some responsibility of which she could not speak, and which, therefore, must be open to objection—and she clearly knew some one who—in plain words—was given to drink. What wonder is it that these strange confessions should coalesce in Uncle Harry's mind, accustomed to examine and deduce, into one coherent statement? Isabel had become entangled closely with some dissipated ne'er-do-well, whom, in her generosity, she was about to marry to save him from his vice! That is too common an event with women not to have seemed plausible even in the case of Isabel. Having got thus far, Uncle Harry became alarmed, and could not forbear to communicate his fears to Mr Sufield.

'It's rank nonsense, Harry!' said Sufield. 'As I've told you before, you've lived among those black fellows so long that you're as suspicious as a Justice o' the Peace!'

'It may be rank, George,' said Uncle Harry; 'but it's not nonsense. Look at the way the girl has lived the last few years!—having the complete control of her own movements, and making what acquaintances she liked! Do you know what friends and acquaintances she may have made? No, of course you don't.'

'I've never heard her speak of any, and she has always been a frank, open girl, Harry. The only young man she knows and cares about, besides George, so far as I'm aware, is Alan Ainsworth—and, of course, he's out of this question.'

'When did he tell you,' asked Uncle Harry, 'that he had come up to London?—come up earlier than he had intended? A day or two before my talk with Isabel—wasn't it? Her "three days" would just cover that! That's a curious thing.'

'Bless my soul!' exclaimed Mr Sufield. 'You actually imagine that Alan can be the man? But you don't know him! Harry, you're no better than a Grand Inquisitor!'

'I'm only inquisitorial,' said Uncle Harry, slightly huffed, 'in the interest of my niece and yours; and it might have been better if you had been more inquisitorial long ago.' And he marched into the garden, where his tent was permanently pitched.

The excellent Sufield sat confused. If these things could be, he would have to rearrange all his preconceptions of both men and women. He wondered, and then he began to doubt; and when an honest creature like him once begins to doubt, he doubts in a thorough, straightforward way characteristic only of himself, and by no means to be reckoned with. He turned immediately and wrote to Ainsworth that he would like to see him as soon as possible on an important matter. Ainsworth, of course, came on the summons, but yet Sufield had had time to go over his doubts, over and over again, till he had trodden them down almost as hard and fixed as beliefs. He received his young friend privately in the Library.

'I call this my snuggery,' said he, in a kind of parenthetic apology; 'though there's nothing very snug about it—is there? I smoke a pipe

here sometimes; but I don't seem to mix well wi' the wigged old chaps on the wall there'—indicating certain severe portraits of past politicians and statesmen of the house of Padilham.—'They don't know me, and they appear to think I'm taking a deuce of a liberty in trying to make myself comfortable in their company, though the Lord knows I pay enough for it. Yes; I smoke a pipe, and make my head swell wi' solid information out of Blue-books; but I'd rather be sitting by my own fireside wi' a long clay, having a good talk, as we used to do.—But sit you down, Alan, my lad, and never mind the old chaps. By the way, my niece, Isabel, and you seemed to hit it off pretty well last time I saw you together. Have you seen anything of her, by chance, since you have come up to London?'

'Yes,' answered Ainsworth, somewhat embarrassed; 'I happened to meet her in the street.' He thought that in saying so much he was admitting as much as was fair to Isabel.

'Well,' said Sufield, after having mentally noted the admission. 'And how are things going with you? Very busy, eh?'

He moved uneasily about the room while he spoke, and kept his eyes off Ainsworth.

'Yes, Mr Sufield,' answered the young man, 'I'm fairly busy; and things are going on as well as can be expected, as the doctors say.'

'You find no difficulty about settling down in London, I suppose? If you find any difficulty, come to me, you know—come to me. I'll be always glad to do whatever I can for you, as I've told you.'

'You're very good, Mr Sufield,' said Ainsworth; 'and I assure you, if I were in any difficulty, or if ever I may be in a difficulty, there is no one to whom I would more unreservedly come than you.'

'I'm glad to hear you say that, my lad,' said Sufield, and considered his young friend's countenance a moment to observe signs of a rising confession. But he saw none. 'You see, my lad,' he continued, 'London's a place that makes a young fellow live always on the strain, like a man balancing himself on a tight-rope, or like a man I saw once on the Spa at Scarborough that walked on a globe and worked himself and his globe up and up on a narrow gangway twisting round and round to the top of a high pole. A young man like you that has to put his head into his work gets excited, gets over-excited, maybe, wi' working overtime, till human nature won't stand it—unless the man's a horse—and says "No, no! Let me rest a bit." But the young man won't let his nature rest; he whips it up, and jogs it on wi' stimulants. And then he comes a cropper, and is done for.' Again he considered his young friend, but still he saw no signs of compunction, or even of self-consciousness. 'I once knew,' he continued, 'a clever lad like yourself—a dear friend he was, and a kind of relation, which you are not, not yet.' Upon that Ainsworth blushed, and Sufield thought: Ah! there's something here! 'He was in the same line of work as you are in,' said Sufield. 'He was a very promising lad, and was getting on quite swimmingly, when suddenly he went under.'

'Dead?' asked Ainsworth, interested.

'No, my lad. Shipwrecked!—Lost—lost! It

came suddenly to us, but not to him! He knew for a long time, though we didn't, that he was ruining himself and his family wth his stimulant.—not drink, but something quite as fatal to him!

'What? Not opium?'

'Yes, my lad. Opium it was.'

FLAX-CULTURE IN SCOTLAND.

In following out the treatment of this subject, the writer will avoid all theories that have not been tested by facts and experience, and will endeavour to explain the most approved method of flax-culture as briefly as is consistent with an intelligent understanding of the process.

The flax-plant, of which there are many varieties, is cultivated in nearly every country in the world; but the common species with which we are acquainted, and which is raised specially for the fibre, is indigenous to Europe, Egypt, and part of Asia.

Our principal supply of the raw material is imported from Russia, where the plant has long been, and still is, cultivated more extensively than in any other country in the world; but there the culture of the crop and preparation of the fibre receive less care and attention than in any other flax-producing country. This neglect may be accounted for by the immense tracts under crop, and also by much thinner sowing than is practised in other countries, in order to give the plant greater strength and more numerous branches, to prevent its being laid during the violent thunder-storms that prevail about the time it is in flower. The result of this treatment, however, is a coarse fibre, and also a very much inferior yield to that grown thicker, and under more favourable circumstances of soil and attention in its early stages.

Germany, Austria, and France follow Russia as flax-producing countries, and in each of these an average area of over two hundred thousand acres is kept under this crop. In Holland, flax is grown principally for the seed, and the planting and growth of the crop, as well as the time of pulling, is regulated for this purpose. By properly maturing the seed, the quality of the fibre is injured, and renders the subsequent process more difficult; but the Dutch farmers are amply remunerated by the high price obtained for the seed, which has for agricultural purposes a world-wide fame, and is chiefly sown in Britain, although Riga seed is also used, and preferred by some growers as being more hardy.

It is Belgium, however, to which we must turn to see flax in the highest state of cultivation, where nothing is neglected that can in any measure improve the quantity, and more especially the quality, of the crop. Here proper rotation of crops, superior tillage, and liberal manuring of the land, are attended to in a manner not seen elsewhere, and to this the careful, plodding Belgian farmers owe their success in raising other crops as well as flax, and which has earned for them the reputation they enjoy of being the most successful agriculturists in the world.

In Flanders especially, the crop under our notice receives the most careful attention. The

fields resemble well-kept gardens, and here the very finest flax is produced, such as is employed in the manufacture of the famous Brussels lace. It brings in the market one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds, and often as high as two hundred pounds, per ton; indeed, sometimes exceeding in value the land on which it was produced, and so exceedingly fine that a Belgian pound of the raw material has been spun into a thread four thousand miles long.

Flax-growing has spread more in Ireland than in any other part of the country, notwithstanding that the soil of England and Scotland is almost, if not altogether as suitable for its cultivation. This can only be accounted for by the numerous small holdings, and the perseverance of the farmers with the crop, which has caused scutching-mills to spring up to deal with the straw and prepare the fibre for the market. About eighty thousand acres of flax were grown in Ireland last year, producing a fair yield; but the quantity of fibre obtained from this acreage is not sufficient for one-fourth of the Belfast manufacturers alone.

We have already referred to the very primitive mode of culture in Russia, and the consequent poor return. The inference plainly is, that the more intelligent Scotch farmer, with richer land and better appliances, would rear superior crops both in quantity and quality. In proof of this, Irish flax brings in the market nearly double that of Russian; and a quantity of dressed flax grown recently in Fifeshire brought ninety pounds per ton.

In addition to these more favourable conditions attending the realisation of the crop at the present time, a new industry has arisen within the last few years which utilises the fibre in the straw. It may not be generally known that a company now exists in Dundee which will purchase the crop from the farmer as it comes from the field, delivered at the nearest railway station. This method of disposal gives a much quicker return, if not so large results as from preparing the fibre for the spinner, and certainly removes the objection raised by some who would grow flax but are uncertain of a market, and afraid of the difficulties attending the retting process. Until a few years ago not a single field of this crop had been reared in Fifeshire for a generation, when Messrs John Fergus & Co., of Leslie, and some Dundee spinners, turned their attention to the subject; and through their enterprise in supplying seed, and also in renting land for the purpose, they have succeeded in inducing farmers throughout the country to plant in small patches during the years 1887-88 an aggregate of about one hundred acres.

With the farmer, of course the main consideration in making a departure from the usual rotation, and introducing a crop that entails more labour than those to which they have been so long accustomed, is the vital question, How will it pay? Now, this query can be put in fewer words than its answer; as not many farmers keep separate accounts of each crop they cultivate, and among the many Irish growers, scarcely a third plant over two acres, and even those have very little to show in the way of book-keeping. The profits of flax-growing vary considerably, more so, perhaps, than any other crop; climatic influ-

ences, exposure, value of land, price of labour, and other factors enter in and disturb any calculation, however carefully made. We are, however, in possession of some facts which will help us to a certain extent in answering the question, and although the returns for the different years show a wide variation, still something like an average may be arrived at. From the causes above mentioned, wide fluctuations must be looked for, so that even a fairly struck average may be to some extent misleading, as adverse circumstances have a tendency in some years to become cumulative. The correct way, therefore, of presenting the matter is to give a few examples showing the experience of others, and allow growers to draw their own conclusions.

The average cost of producing an acre of flax in Ireland is between eight and nine pounds, including the expenses of retting and scutching; but there, it must be remembered, the cost of labour is less than with us, and further, there the small farmer and his family frequently work their own land, and employ few if any assistants. The return of an English farmer gives the total expenses connected with growing an acre of flax as eight pounds, which realised him as taken off the field the sum of twelve pounds. Something like this return was experienced by most of the growers in Fifeshire.

An experiment was made in Aberdeenshire on two acres of very stiff clay land with an easterly exposure. This test as to the profitable nature of the crop was considered a most severe one, the season being so unfavourable, and the land of the very poorest description. The total cost of production, including rent and twenty loads of manure, was £12, 13s., and the crop was sold green at the nearest railway station—that of Udney—to a Dundee merchant for £20, leaving the very fair profit of £3, 13s. 6d. per acre.

In 1886, '87, and '88, experiments were made by a well-known firm of bleachers near Perth, with the result of an average return for the three years of over £6 per acre. This result, we think, needs no comment, further than to say if it is not sufficient to induce farmers to give the crop a fair trial by sowing a few acres, then the agricultural depression of which we hear so much cannot be so severe as is generally supposed.

We are satisfied that even a higher return would have been got had the fibre been prepared for the spinner, being supported in this view by some returns from Ireland, showing a gross income of from thirty to forty pounds per acre. Our object, however, is to prove that the processes of retting and scutching, with their attending difficulties, may be dispensed with, and a very fair return obtained by disposal of the crop in the manner above indicated.

There is scarcely another plant which acclimatises itself so readily under different conditions and in so many countries as flax. Speaking generally, it will thrive in the greatest variety of soils, but, like most other plants, 'The better the land the better the crop.' Any land not too sandy, or peaty, or of a cold, stiff, clay nature, will suit flax; but the best yield will be obtained from a good deep loamy soil.

Much of the success of a flax crop depends on the selection of seed, and growers cannot be too careful in this respect. To ensure a good result,

the very best seed procurable must be got irrespective of price. With beginners, seed-buying must in a great measure be a matter of good faith. Seedsmen only should be dealt with whose word and recommendation can be depended upon. Although a knowledge of quality can only be gained by experience, the germinating power can be tested before sowing by planting one hundred seeds in a pot and watching results.

Dutch or Russian seed, or, better still, a strain through both countries, is the most suitable of imported kinds. Some of the best crops, however, have been raised from home-grown seed, which, we think, should be more used than it is for this purpose, being certainly better adapted than that grown in foreign countries under so different conditions of soil and climate; besides, the best qualities are not always exported by flax-growing countries, but reserved for home use. The Irish Flax Company strongly advocates its own matured seed, and some tested lately showed a maximum germinating power of one hundred per cent., which has never yet been reached in any imported kinds. Besides, the careful saving of seed either for sowing or feeding purposes largely increases the return to the grower.

The field in which flax is to be sown is better to be ploughed in autumn, after a liberal supply of farm manure, and allowed to remain in the furrows all winter, exposed to the pulverising influence of frost. In spring it should be ploughed not too deeply across the furrows, then harrowed and rolled till the soil is fine, as flax must have a firm seed-bed. The best time for sowing is from the middle to the end of April, when all danger of frost is past; and splendid crops have resulted from sowing the first week of May. Not less than two and a half bushels of seed should be sown per acre, and on poor land this quantity may be increased with advantage. The seed should be scattered as regularly as possible, then lightly harrowed and rolled. When the plants are a few inches high, the crop should be carefully weeded by children or women, on hands and knees, and against the wind, as likely to do less damage to the young plants. The operation should be performed when the ground is damp, or a prospect of rain, which gives the plants a better chance of recovering than in very dry weather. When the ground is very clean, and labour for this purpose difficult to procure, weeding may be dispensed with, although it is always beneficial, and has sometimes to be repeated.

When the straw begins to turn yellow, the foliage to droop, and the seeds to change to a pale brown colour, is the proper time to pull the flax. In pulling, the same lengths of straw should be kept as nearly as possible together, and tied in small sheaves five or six inches through. This facilitates the after-process; and if rippling is intended, the bundles do not require to be opened out. The sheaves should now be set up in the field on their root-ends, like corn stooks, to winnow, after which it is ready for the market, if the grower wishes to realise the crop at this stage.

Flax can be thrashed much in the manner of grain, after being well dried, but greater care is required, so as not to break the straw, and thus injure the fibre. Sometimes it is put through

rollers properly adjusted, which pulls off the seed-bolls. More frequently, however, the seed is removed by a process called rippling, and being the most approved method, we shall shortly describe it. The small sheaves are repeatedly pulled with a quick motion through an upright iron comb with round teeth, about one foot high and an inch apart, and with blunt, tapering points. This comb should be firmly fixed to a frame; and on the opposite side to the worker a large box should be placed, or a sheet spread on the ground, to receive the seed-vessels as they fall. The bolls, after being thoroughly dried, can be put through the mill and cleaned.

Experience has shown that the yield of fibre is increased, and the seed also improved, by allowing both to remain in the straw over the winter months, and the rippling delayed till the seed is required for next year's sowing, and the retting until the warm weather has set in.

The next and last operation to be described is that of retting, or rotting off the straw, and is by far the most important and delicate the crop undergoes. On the proper manipulation of the flax at this stage depends to a considerable extent the quality of the fibre. There is no difficulty, however, that may not be overcome with care and attention; and, as has been already noticed, this method of realisation being the most profitable, amply repays the labour expended. The retting process is generally adopted by growers both in Ireland and on the Continent.

Water for retting is better to be exposed to the sun for several weeks before the flax is put in, unless soft or rain water can be had, which is the most suitable. Water containing a large proportion of lime or iron is unsuitable, but any water in which soap will not curdle is soft enough for steeping flax. When slowly-running water is conveniently near, it may be used to advantage. Retting is often performed in the rivers of Belgium and Holland, where the flax is steeped in crates or perforated boxes.

When running water is not obtainable, pits should be dug about forty feet long, eight feet wide, and four feet deep, this being the size capable of containing the average growth of one acre. These pits should be lined with clay and made water-tight.

The flax is then closely packed, root-end downwards, although flax has been retted successfully in any position. A row of sheaves may be placed on the top, laying the bundles flat. On the top, boards weighted with stones should be placed, to keep the sheaves under, and the whole then covered with water to the depth of a few inches above the boards.

At first, the flax will have a tendency to rise as fermentation begins, and stones will have to be added to keep it down; afterwards, the load must be diminished, as the flax will settle down of itself, and this is one of the first signs that the retting process is approaching completion. During the summer months, a week to ten days is sufficient to rot the straw; but as the time varies with the temperature and nature of the water, great care has to be exercised.

A more simple form of retting called grass or dew retting is adopted in some parts of the Continent, and being a safer as well as an easier process for beginners, we give details. Instead of

being put in pits, as described above, the flax is spread out thinly on the grass until the fibre parts readily from the woody stem as given above. As can be understood, this is a more lengthened process, and requires about a month's exposure to sun, rains, and dew before being ready for scutching. This style of retting is often adopted when grass fields are available for the purpose, and is very prevalent in Russia, which has been already referred to as the greatest flax-producing country in the world.

For the benefit of those who do not care to undertake the retting operation, a market, as already stated, now exists for the straw in its natural condition. Although not in a position to give details of the process, we understand the straw is treated mechanically by a machine recently invented for this purpose, details of which will soon be made public. From inquiries among the growers in Fifeshire, we learn that fully three-fourths of the crop during the years referred to was disposed of in this manner in Dundee at prices which left a better result than any other crop on the farm.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER III.

NEXT afternoon, Mr Godfrey, in the company of Mr Purvey, was strolling towards the mysterious wooden enclosure. At the outer door Mr Purvey knocked. Within, there was the sound of a machine stealthily and softly grinding and gnawing like a monstrous rat. Mr Purvey repeated his knock more loudly, and the machine, as if alarmed, ceased its gnawing, just as a rat might. Presently there came the sound of a leisurely footstep within; the lock was undone, and two bolts withdrawn, and the door was opened about two inches. Through the opening a man peered, first with one eye, and then—as if to enjoy a variety of view—with the other.

'It's me, John,' said Mr Purvey, with his fullest and richest roll of complacency.

'Oh!' said the laconic John, and opened the door, with a suspicious look fixed upon Mr Purvey's companion.

'I've brought a scientific expert, John,' said Purvey with a familiar smile, 'to see what you're about.'

John locked and bolted the door again behind them.

'No wonder,' said Mr Godfrey, 'that Mr Langland said you were very secret about it!'

'Did he say that to you?' asked Mr Purvey, with a self-gratulatory smile.

'No; to my friend, Colonel Swetenham.'

They entered the shanty, where was another man, of a more responsible and less sulky demeanour than John. For some time Mr Godfrey was engrossed with the things shown and the explanations given by that man, and Mr Purvey was engrossed with Mr Godfrey's attention. Mr Godfrey said little: he looked, listened, and examined. He was especially interested in lumps of dirt, crushed rock, chalk, and what not, that reposed on a long bench. They were shaped like sections of the heart or pith of an enormous cane—some were black as the blocks of charcoal of a common filter—and they bore tickets labelled

'500 feet,' '750 feet,' '1000 feet,' and so on. His examination over, Mr Godfrey turned to leave without saying a word, and Mr Purvey went out with his eyes on the ground, followed by Godfrey.

'Well, what do you think?' asked Mr Purvey at once, when they were again outside the enclosure, returning towards the concrete villa.

'It is not very promising,' said Mr Godfrey, 'so far as it has gone. But I should judge that you have just hit upon the thin end, or tongue, of a measure.'

'Just what I thought myself,' said Mr Purvey.

'And I think,' continued Mr Godfrey—'though I must give a good look round before giving a decided opinion—that the measure lies that way'—indicating the Fairfield Farm—'and not this.'

'That is your opinion,' said Purvey, stopping again and looking on Mr Godfrey with a wistful puckering of his brows—'subject, of course, to revision. I suppose you don't know whose land that is? It is not mine. It is Mr Langland's, or at least his daughter's.'

'That seems a pity, doesn't it?' said Mr Godfrey, and he looked as if he anxiously awaited the elder's reply.

'Well,' said Mr Purvey, fixing his eye on the horizon and balancing his statement with his forefinger, 'it is—and it isn't. I should have liked, of course, if it had proved to be on my side; but I haven't reckoned on it—never do reckon on things of a speculative nature—and I shall be well pleased if it proves to be on Mr Langland's side. It has been, indeed, with a view to the probability of that result that I have made the experiment near the border-line, for I thought it might chance to benefit Mr Langland as much as myself; and if it benefits only him and not myself, I shall not complain. He is a worthy gentleman,' he continued, bringing his eye to bear on the young man; 'but he has not the slightest capacity for business, and therefore he has a very muddled view of the dispensations of Providence. If this should suggest to him that the richest bounties of the Giver of all Good are not on the surface, I shall be glad.'

'You would like him to understand, I suppose,' said the young man, in a kind of thoughtful surprise, 'that Providence is conducted on strictly business principles?'

'Well,' said the old man, with a certain irritation, which he tried to rub from his nose with his ever-active forefinger, 'I don't quite approve of that way of putting it.' He said nothing more, but walked on again with his hands behind him; and after a pause, Mr Godfrey again spoke.

'At anyrate, I understand you will feel no disappointment to speak of if your boring should show, or suggest, that Mr Langland's field is valuable, and not your own?'

'No disappointment at all. Why should I? But'—

He related in a very friendly and confidential way how he held a mortgage on the Fairfield Farm, not with any view of becoming finally possessed of it, but to draw closer such 'friendly connection' as there had always been between the two families—how it was the portion of Miss Langland—how he was interested in Miss Langland—'She is a good, sweet, dear girl, as, I

daresay, you discovered'—and therefore interested in making her and her possessions as valuable as possible: all that he set forth with great fullness, and with a subtle mixture of generous feeling and self-interest.

At first, Mr Godfrey listened with surprise and dislike, but finally with understanding. He had seen more of the business man in all his relations than had the Squire and his daughter, and he had considered him without prejudice; and he now perceived how readily both Miss Langland and her father had misunderstood Mr Purvey, who was, after all, a tolerably simple-minded creature, with a kind of sincere religious feeling and genuine kindly heart, subject, of course, to his ever-dominant commercial instincts and prepossessions. And if, in coming to that conclusion, Mr Godfrey was himself a little prejudiced—well, there it was; Mr Godfrey was himself a kind of business person, and, therefore, who can blame him?

He was so reassured by that conversation that Mr Purvey was not quite the man Mr Langland and his daughter supposed him to be—if such reassurance was necessary to the purpose with which he had come to Sussex—that he developed an enormous amount of energy. He began to make a careful survey of all the ground. He studied a geological map of the district; and he tramped for miles around, over upland and lowland, considering possibilities and likelihoods, and making notes in such strange spots that the casual farmer or labourer who chanced upon him took him for a Government surveyor or Revenue officer reckoning how much more taxing the poor land would bear. These things done, he went to Mr Purvey and set forth his conclusions, which amounted to this—that the Fairfield Farm was a far more likely ground for successful boring than Mr Purvey's own; and Mr Purvey considered him, as if he would have liked to ask if he or Mr Langland had engaged him to survey and take stock of the situation.

'Now,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I would like to ask Mr Langland to let me try a boring experiment on that top field: have you any objection to my asking him?'

'Objection? No!' said Mr Purvey, settling his glasses well on his nose to look at the young man (they were then in 'the library' of the concrete villa). 'Why should I object? But Mr Langland may; firstly, because he has, I think, an absurd, old-fashioned feeling that only the skin of the earth, so to say, is to be used for growing crops, and that the Almighty has not given us any right to pry into its bowels; or, secondly, because'—fitting together the tips of the fingers of both hands with a smile—'Mr Langland, I fancy, cannot afford the expense of a boring operation.'

'I won't ask him to,' answered Mr Godfrey promptly. 'I shall tell him at once that I propose to do it at my own cost—out of mere scientific curiosity.'

'Oh!' said Mr Purvey, closing his hands in a clasp. 'In that case, he may not object at all: I should think he will not object.'

'Then, of course,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I must tell him of your boring, of which he knows nothing yet?'

'Of course, you must,' said Mr Purvey, resett-

ling his glasses, and considering the young man again; 'and you may tell him that I have kept it secret till I knew something certain of the result, for the purpose of giving him a pleasant surprise if the boring suggested any advantage to him.'

'Oh, quite so,' said Mr Godfrey. 'I'll tell him.'

And Mr Godfrey next day went to call on the Squire. He was at home, and received him kindly, though somewhat sadly: his expedition to town had not been so successful as he had hoped it might be.

'I have called on you, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey, when they had exchanged greetings and courtesies, 'for a special purpose.'

'Yes?' said the Squire, seeing in prospect some new disquietude added to his burden of anxiety, and setting himself firmly to receive it.

'I think you know,' continued Mr Godfrey, 'that I came down here on business of Mr Purvey's.'

'Yes,' said the Squire, casting about with alarm if the business could concern him; 'I remember.'

'Mr Purvey, I have found, had set going a boring experiment—boring for coal!'

'Boring for coal?' exclaimed the Squire, staring, and grasping the arms of his chair. 'Coal!—Is he mad?'

'Not quite,' answered Mr Godfrey, smiling. 'There is coal underneath all these downs, you know: there can be no doubt at all about that. The only doubt is, "Will it pay to work it?"—And that was what Mr Purvey, being an energetic and daring man of business, was determined to test.'

'Humph!' grunted the Squire, still vigorously grasping the arms of his chair, as if to make sure he had hold of something solid, if it were only wood.

'He has kept it quiet, Mr Langland,' continued Mr Godfrey.

The Squire interrupted him: 'That people mightn't think him cracked.'

'Not quite that, Mr Langland,' said the other. 'He is the last man, I think, to be afraid of that. He kept it quiet, he has asked me to tell you, that you might have an agreeable surprise if the result of the experiment, when I had examined them, promised well for you—for your land.'

'Agreeable for me!—Promised well for my land!' exclaimed the Squire, transported from one surprise to another. 'And do they?'

'They do,' answered Mr Godfrey, 'promise very well, indeed, for you—and nothing at all for himself.'

'And he has asked you to tell me that?'

'He has asked me to tell you,' answered Mr Godfrey.

'What dodge is he up to now?' asked the Squire, trying hard to look crafty.

'No dodge at all, I think, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey. 'I believe he is quite sincere—in this, at least.'

'Well,' exclaimed the Squire, shifting his chair and resettling himself, with a wondering eye on his visitor, 'you astonish me, Mr Godfrey!—His experiment is really promising for me and not for him, and he asked you to tell me!—But how promising, Mr Godfrey?' he asked with a slight frown of suspicion. 'Promising of what?'

'Promising of great profit,' said Mr Godfrey. 'You know what it would mean to find a coal mine on your estate.'

'Yes,' said the Squire gloomily, 'I know. I have seen the kind of thing: smoke and blackness, rows of ugly cottages for miners, dead trees, and rowdy, drunken men, and the nearest little town made a pandemonium. But yet'—he pondered.

'With proper management,' said Mr Godfrey, 'most of these results may be prevented; and a goodish mine would be worth to you from five thousand to ten thousand pounds a year.'

'So much as that!' exclaimed the Squire with open eyes. 'But—but,' he stammered, 'how do you set to work to get it?'

'Well, first of all, Mr Langland,' said Mr Godfrey, 'I want you to let me try a boring experiment on that top field of yours close to Mr Purvey's property.'

'But,' murmured the Squire, again downcast when he bethought him that the experiment must cost money, 'will that be expensive?'

'Not very.—But I wish you, Mr Langland,' said the young man hurriedly, 'to let me bear such expense as there may be. I would do as much any day to gratify my scientific curiosity. And,' he added with a smile, 'if we find a mine, I suppose you will let me have the first bid for the lease of the working?'

'Certainly, certainly,' said the Squire, now rubbing his hands in excitement; 'try it by all means.—But I am forgetting. That field is part of my daughter's property: I ought to consult her. Will you permit me to call her in?'

'Certainly, certainly,' said Mr Godfrey, with almost as much expectation as the Squire had inspired the words with.

The Squire withdrew, returning very soon to say that he found his daughter was out.

'I suppose,' said he with a feverish kind of wistfulness, 'that you want to be getting on with that?'

'I do,' answered Mr Godfrey, his mind fixed with regret on the absence of Miss Langland.

'Will you come to dinner to-night?—Yes, that will do. Come to dinner; and then—then we can discuss the matter thoroughly.'

An hour or two later, Kitty Langland returned. She and her sister had gone for a walk—there was little driving or riding in those days of household reduction—and on their return they had met—

'Whom do you think, father? That Mr Godfrey, with Mr Purvey leaning on his arm!—leaning almost affectionately on his arm! He seemed at first inclined to stop, but he didn't. He only raised his hat, and—what do you think?—blushed!—positively blushed! I had no idea that a man who has been all about the world and who has mixed in all sorts of good society could blush!'

'Did he blush, do you think, Kitty,' asked her father with a mischievous twinkle, 'for the company he was in, or because he was overcome with the sudden vision of you, my dear?'

'Don't be silly, father!' said Kitty, but she looked down—to smoothen her gloves.—'But you seem in good spirits, dear,' she observed, raising her eyes again.

'Well, yes, I am,' said her father. 'Mr

Godfrey has been here to tell me a most remarkable thing. I went to find you to assist in the interview, but you weren't to be found.'

'What did he say?' asked Kitty timidly, while a glowing flush rose and suffused all her countenance to her ears.

'Say!' exclaimed her father. 'Mr Godfrey is an extremely clever young man, and I believe he is twisting that Purvey round his finger!'

Then her father told her the whole wonderful business which Mr Godfrey had come to disclose; and as she listened, her wonder and her pleasure grew, and her gratitude to the man who had thus suddenly turned their anxious and gloomy outlook into a halcyon prospect.

'And he is coming to dinner to-night?' she said, rising. 'I am glad you asked him, though I'm afraid we can't give him anything very nice at such short notice.—But, father,' she added, returning after she had taken a step or two away, 'don't you think you ought to have asked Mr Purvey too?'

'Asked Purvey too?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Why?'

'Well,' said Kitty, 'he is, after all, Mr Godfrey's host, and—and our neighbour, and he really seems to have behaved rather nicely in this matter, whether Mr Godfrey has induced him to, or not; and if Mr Godfrey doesn't mind him, why should we? We might send a message over.'

'But won't Purvey,' said the Squire, feeling his beard, 'be in that way encouraged in those pretensions of his—about his son, I mean?'

'His pretensions about his son!' exclaimed Kitty contemptuously. 'We can soon dismiss them—if this business turns out as Mr Godfrey expects!' (Ignorant, unbusiness-like Kitty saw herself in the possession of from five thousand to ten thousand pounds a year a week or two thence!) 'I wouldn't marry his son on any account now!'

She was conscious of the doubtful meaning and emphasis of the 'now,' and she glanced dubiously at her father. But he was intent upon this immediate matter of the invitation to Purvey, who had never yet dined in his house.

'Very well,' said he; 'I'll send a message.' And he went to write it.

other, in order to procure the king the earliest intelligence of the events that passed in the course of the war that had arisen with the Scots. A proclamation was issued by Charles I. in 1631, that 'whereas to this time there hath been no certain intercourse between the kingdoms of England and Scotland, the king now commands his postmaster of England for foreign parts to settle a running post or two between Edinburgh and London, to go thither and come back again in six days.'

From the earliest times fire has been used as a means of communication. Æschylus, 500 B.C., describes the communication of intelligence by burning torches as signals; and Polybius, the Greek historian, who died about 122 B.C., calls the different instruments for communicating information *pyrsa*, because the signals were always made by fire.

A few centuries ago, beacon-fires were used to summon the people in cases of invasion; and in the Highlands of Scotland the fiery cross was sent round as a signal for the clans to rally. The chieftain killed a goat, and having made a light wood-cross, he burnt the ends of it in the fire and extinguished them in the goat's blood. This was called the Fiery Cross. It was given to a speedy and trustworthy courier, who ran at full speed with it to the next village or hamlet, where he gave it to the chief resident, mentioning at the same time the place of rendezvous. It was again sent forward with equal despatch to the next village, and so it passed through the whole district. Olaus Magnus mentions a similar method in use among the Scandinavians. The incentive message to mutiny in India in 1857 was conveyed by means of a *chupattir*, a kind of native unleavened cake.

Cardinal Wolsey, when chaplain to Henry VIII., was sent on a special mission to the Emperor Maximilian, and accomplished the return journey between London and the Netherlands in about two and a half days. This was extremely fast, when we consider the state of the roads and the slow sea-passage between Dover and Calais. Robert Carey, to announce the death of Queen Elizabeth to King James, rode from London to Edinburgh, a distance of about four hundred miles, in three days, resting at night.

In the last century, running footmen were kept by all the county families. Sir Walter Scott relates his having seen them accompanying the state carriage of Lord Hopetoun. The old Duke of Queensberry ('Old Q.') was one of the last to employ them. They wore a light kind of livery, and generally carried a pole or stick about six feet high; in the top of it, which was hollow, they kept a little wine or a hard-boiled egg. They sometimes covered forty or fifty miles a day, and were extremely useful at a period when steam and electricity had not even been dreamt of. Such a messenger is reported to have been sent one evening from Hume Castle to Edinburgh on business for his master the Earl. He was back at Hume Castle the next morning, having accomplished the journey of seventy miles—thirty-five each way—in a single night. Another runner is said to have gone one hundred and fifty miles in forty-two hours, to get some medicine. Even at the beginning of the present

STRANGE MESSENGERS AND MODES OF COMMUNICATION.

It is indeed strange to contemplate the different means which man has employed, and the various methods adopted in various countries, to carry news, both in times of peace and in times of war. The first posts are said to have originated in the regular couriers established by Cyrus about 550 B.C., who erected posthouses throughout the kingdom of Persia. Augustus was the first to introduce this institution among the Romans, 31 B.C., and he was imitated by Charlemagne about 800 A.D. Louis XI. was the first sovereign to establish posthouses in France, owing to his eagerness for news, and they were also the first institution of this nature in Europe. This was in 1470, or about two thousand years after they were started in Persia. In England in the reign of Edward IV. (1481) riders on posthorses went stages of the distance of twenty miles from each

century, news travelled very slowly. In 1811 the news published in the Paris papers had taken the following number of days to reach Paris, the average speed being about seventy miles a day: from Strassburg, Lyons, and Brest, six days; from Antwerp, seven; Rome, eleven; and from Madrid, twenty-one days. To realise what a revolution steam has created in conveying news, it is worthy of note that the mails from Japan were recently conveyed to London within twenty-two days—a little more than the time required eighty years ago to cover the distance between the Spanish and French capitals.

Camels are largely used as carriers in the East; they have twice the carrying-power of an ox, and with an ordinary load of four hundred pounds, can travel twelve or fourteen days without water, going forty miles a day. The Timbuctu or Maharri breed is remarkable for speed, and is used only for couriers, going eight hundred miles in eight days, with a meal of dates or grain at nightfall.

From the earliest times, signals have been used for communicating information in warfare both on land and on sea. The use of fire as a means of signalling has already been mentioned. Elizabeth had instructions drawn up for the admiral and general of the expedition to Cadiz, to be announced to the fleet when they arrived in a certain latitude; this is said to have been the first set of signals given to the commanders of the English fleet. James II., while Duke of York, originated a set of navy signals, which were systematised by Kempenfeldt in 1780; and a Dictionary was compiled by Sir Home Popham. Mr Chappe then invented the telegraph, first used by the French in 1792, and two were erected in that country in 1816. The naval signals by telegraph enabled four hundred previously concerted sentences to be transmitted from ship to ship by varying the combinations of two revolving crosses. Mirrors for flashing messages from one eminence to another by means of the sun are still in use, and flags are employed both in the army and navy and also in the coastguard service. Semaphores for signalling purposes were invented by Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the father of Maria Edgeworth, in 1767. (See an article on the history of 'Early Telegraphs' in *Chambers's Journal* for August 31, 1889.)

Balloons were used in war at the end of the last century; they are useful in the case of besieged towns for conveying news beyond the enemy, and also for observing and reporting upon the enemy's movements in a battle. In 1794, the French, during the war against Germany, established an Aërostatic Institute at Mendon, for the purpose of forming a corps of *aërostatiers*. During the battle of Fleurus, in the same year, M. Guyton de Morveau and Colonel Garlette ascended twice, and gave important information to General Jourdan. The Austrians tried to destroy the balloon with their big guns, but were unable to get within range. Balloons were used during the battle of Solferino, and also by the Federal army near Washington in July 1861. They were extremely useful during the siege of Paris in the Franco-German war. M. Durruf first managed to convey the mail-bags from Paris to Tours on the 23d of September 1870. Up to the end of February

1871, there were sixty-four balloons sent up, containing ninety-one passengers, three hundred and fifty-four pigeons, and three million letters (weighing nine tons). Postal balloons were also used during the siege of Metz in the same war. On the 8th of October 1870, M. Gambetta made his escape from Paris in a balloon, and alighted safely at Rouen.

Pigeons were frequently used as messengers in the olden times. At the siege of Modena by the Romans, pigeons were used as letter-carriers between Brutus and Hirtius. They were also used during the Crusades; at the siege of Acre, Saladin corresponded with the inhabitants by this means. At the Olympian games, competitors frequently used this means of informing their friends of their victory. It is a strange coincidence, that in the last Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, carrier-pigeons were used to send the sketches of the race to the *Daily Graphic*. These birds are largely made use of by the daily papers as bearers of news. Carrier-pigeons are extremely useful in sieges to convey letters beyond the enemy's lines. Pigeons were formerly kept at Tyburn to inform the relatives or friends of a criminal of his execution or of his reprieve. Accounts of the speed and endurance of carrier-pigeons would appear almost incredible were they not authenticated. For instance, the American passenger-pigeon can compass the whole Atlantic Ocean, and is able to fly sixteen hundred miles in twenty-four hours. On June 12, 1891, two carrier-pigeons arrived at Fall River, Massachusetts, U.S.A., having flown a distance of two hundred and three miles in two hours twenty-nine minutes—giving an average speed of over eighty-one miles an hour. The Russians are beginning to realise their importance in war, and are training falcons to catch them.

BESSIE.

By E. RENTOUL ESLEIR, Author of *The Way of Transgressors*.

'You're failin', Geordie; your work is not what it was.' Mrs Carr held up to the light an end of the web the weaver had laid on the table. 'It's thin in places, and there are knots,' she said.

'The knots were in the yarn; I did not make them: it's a good web,' Geordie answered with conviction. He was a little man, with an irregular-featured, dreamy face, and gray hair that curled in small tight knots over his head. He wore a frockcoat of faded brown cloth, and trousers of the same, carefully turned up at the ankles. His appearance suggested an impoverished country schoolmaster rather than a working tradesman.

'I'm sure you do your best,' Mrs Carr conceded generously; 'but your eyesight is not what it was. I'm not findin' fault; an' I'll take nothin' off the price; but it's as well you should know you're beginnin' to go down the hill.'

Geordie did not answer; there was no good in arguing. His eyesight failing! Just as if his being stone-blind would have mattered, after five-and-forty years at the loom.

'There's a power of folk send their wool to the big factories,' the farmer's wife continued, Geordie having seemed to acquiesce; 'but I always

hold by the old neighbours; an' till your work gets still worse, Geordie'—

'It's a good web. I showed it to Bessie, an' she said it was a good web,' the man maintained stoutly.

'It's not to be expected that Bessie would want to hurt your feelin's, an' I respect her for it.—How is Bessie?' Having made her point, Mrs Carr did not wish to be needlessly cruel in driving it home. 'If you'll sit down a minute, I'll put up a bit of butter an' an egg or two for her.'

'Ah'm obliged to you, Mrs Carr.'

'I was very glad to hear the good news of Bessie,' she began, a few minutes later, as she deposited a small covered basket with a slight flourish on the table.

'What good news?'

'Why, about her an' Dan'l Pryce, that she is keepin' company with Dan'l Pryce.'

'Dan'l Pryce drops in of an evenin' now an' then, but there's no keepin' company.'

'Of course not, Geordie.' Mrs Carr burst into a laugh that showed all her white teeth. 'When a young man goes where a young woman is, there's never any keepin' company. It's always the father the young man goes to see, an' to hear about the price o' yarns an' such. To be sure, it is.' Her fat sides shook a little, and the frilled cap border quivered round her rosy face as she spoke.

'There's no keepin' company,' Geordie maintained. His ideas were limited, but they were very definite.

'Well, well; keep your own counsel, my man; folks can't be too careful where a girl's name is in question. It's you Dan'l Pryce goes to see, if you will; an' as he's a steady fellow, an' come of a decent stock, I wish you luck of him.—There; that's the basket; an' here's the money for the web, an' good-day to you.'

Mrs Carr always bewildered Geordie and dazzled such wits as he possessed. She was so fluent and so good-humouredly positive, that the little man lost himself amid her showering sentences.

Geordie Dennet was not a native of Grinpat, but he had settled there nigh on thirty years before, when times were better, work more liberally paid, or his productive power greater. Still, he did not complain; he was able to rub along, and that is as much as most people attain to or expect. He was a widower now, with but one child, the Bessie referred to, a girl of six-and-twenty, with a plain wise face, and a reputation for good sense and clever management that was distinguished even in that practical community.

That Bessie should have a lover had never occurred to Geordie, and that Daniel Pryce stood to her in that relationship was not likely to suggest itself. Daniel was younger than she, his parentage was better, and this advantage has its full value in rustic communities. Then his visits to the weaver's cottage had never seemed specially directed to Bessie—and there was Mrs Pryce!

All the same, when the idea was put before him, it did not seem so utterly unreasonable. The disparity between the young people was not so very great—three years at most, and Bessie

was—Bessie. A sigh rose from the little man's full heart and fell on the bosom of the western breeze. In six-and-twenty years she had never given him a heartache. That another man should see her as she was and desire her was very natural.

Mrs Pryce, Daniel's mother, was highly respected in the parish. As Mrs Carr said, Daniel Pryce came of a good stock, residents in the place for generations, and with an untarnished record on both sides. Mrs Pryce was a widow; that her bereavement dated only two years back was one of the things the neighbours habitually forgot, for James Pryce had, through an accident, been bed-ridden during nearly all their married life. It was worse than if he had died outright, Mrs Pryce said often, when discussing the matter dispassionately, for it added attendance on him to all her other troubles.

James Pryce's bondage lasted two decades, and when he died, he spoke of heaven as green fields among which he would wander, a strong young man again. That Daniel would inherit the farm was a foregone conclusion; he was the eldest, and birthright bulks largely in communities that are somewhat patriarchal. He was a good fellow, entirely free from small vices, but somewhat dull, even in the eyes of neighbours not remarkable for brilliancy. He was moderately tall, moderately good-looking, more than moderately muscular, entirely amiable, a man no way out of the common, or likely to assume heroic proportions in the eyes of a clever girl somewhat older than himself. But the fact was Bessie Dennet was so deeply, silently, unconfessedly in love with Daniel Pryce, that neither she nor I could put it into words.

They had been keeping company three months, but in such a reserved, unobtrusive, brotherly and sisterly way, that even shrewder people than Geordie might have noticed nothing. Daniel would drop in of an evening when Bessie sewed or knitted by the window, or filled the quills with yarn for the loom, the reel gyrating noiselessly under her deft manipulation like a big daddy-longlegs in the middle of the kitchen floor, and the talk would be altogether neighbourly, Geordie taking the chief part often. When Dan was going away, Bessie would sometimes accompany him to the little rustic gate that shut in the house and the flower-patch from the road, and the pair would stand talking there a while, under the moonlight or the stars, while the soft breezes shook the alder bushes, and the landrails called in the standing corn. Occasionally, Dan would execute a small commission for Bessie in the market town when he went with the farm produce, and now and then he would bring her a fairin', a packet of seeds, a story-book in a gay cover, a ribbon for her neck.

The Dennets' cottage was as pretty as a picture. There are people in whose presence flowers seem to thrive. Bessie's garden had once been a piece of waste ground, but now every breath that blew through the open door was laden with a score of delicate odours. Dan could not fancy a greater joy in existence than to sit on the window-sill or lean against the lintel talking to the girl, while the bees revelled in the honeysuckle and the linnets twittered in the elms. He had sown her initials in a mignonette in a bed just beneath

the window; and if, when the seedlings first showed above the surface, both he and she saw that B. D. stood for Bessie and Daniel as well as Bessie Dennet, and if they looked into each other's eyes, as the consciousness struck them simultaneously, what did it matter to any one but themselves, and who cared?

This had all lasted about three months, and not a word of love, not a caress had ever passed between them, when, about the same period, Georgie Dennet and Mrs Pryce heard from different sources that their children were keeping company.

Daniel had dressed to go out for the evening. In his attire there was that special something which signifies that a young man's toilet has a purpose in it. He came down-stairs softly, tiptoeing on the carpetless treads. At the foot of the stairs was the seldom used best room. The door stood open, which was unusual, and through it came Mrs Pryce's voice, which was more unusual still: 'I want you, Daniel.'

The young man stopped on the threshold. His mother was at the far end of the room, with her back to the light, her knitting in her hands, the long end of her worsted stocking caught under her arm. The light that lingered in the west after the setting sun fell on poor Daniel's best coat, his well-blacked boots, and the flower in his button-hole.

Mrs Pryce looked at all this splendour derisively. 'Where are you off to?' she asked with a little disdain.

'I was minded to look in for half an hour at Georgie Dennet's.'

'I thought that. Well, this is just what I wanted to say, Daniel Pryce, that I'm against these goings-on. I want no sweetheartin,' an' no daughter-in-law; leastways, one as old as myself, an' without a penny in her pocket. If folks mind their business, it's enough for them without larkin' o' evenin's. I'm fair surprised at Georgie Dennet, that he would encourage any widow-woman's son to waste his time an' make a fool of himself; an' you can tell him I said so.'

Daniel stood staring at his mother, the ruddy colour in his face gone a kind of gray with the shock. 'There is nothing against Bessie Dennet,' he stammered helplessly.

'No, nothin' at all, in her own place; but her place is not alongside o' my son. You can tell her to-night that I'm not minded to allow any carryin'-on between you.'

Daniel turned and went out without a word; but it seemed as if the very flower in his coat had shrunk and shrivelled. To him his mother's will had always meant destiny, and it never struck him to dispute it. As he passed down the lane between the hawthorn hedges, it seemed as if there was no more golden light in the western sky, no flower-faces in the grass of the wayside, no bird-voices among the whispering leaves.

Things had been too good to last, and Bessie knew the end had come when she saw Daniel's face; but she talked commonplaces, as women can in these dreadful crises, as much to hold certainty aloof as to deceive onlookers. When he was going away she went with him to the gate as usual.

'What has happened?' she asked.

He did not attempt to evade the question or make light of the trouble. 'Mother thinks I come here too often.'

Bessie understood perfectly. 'And won't she let you come again—never?' she asked a little huskily.

'Oh yes, sometimes.'

'But it will be different?'

'Yes, it will be different.'

Bessie drew a small strangled sigh. If their places had been reversed, she thought she would have rebelled a little; but before she spoke, she had accepted the woman's part of acquiescence. 'Well, we can always be good friends,' she said, with an attempt at cheerfulness.

He put out his hand and wrung hers so that it hurt her, and then he turned away without a word.

It is dangerous to interfere with these slow and silent natures. Daniel obeyed his mother, but it was with that obedience that is a growing revolt. What harm did his visits to Bessie Dennet do any one? His heart hardened against his mother. She was a cold woman, caring for no one's happiness, not even her own, valuing a man, even if he were her own son, no more than an ox, thinking nothing mattered but labour. Well, he would labour, but after that he would please himself. If he could not go to the weaver's, he would go to a worse place. Who could spend all his leisure in a dull, overcrowded kitchen, with men too tired, and a woman too ill-tempered, to speak?

Daniel sulked. He obeyed because he was too proud to do furtively anything so blameless as visiting Bessie Dennet, but he was not the less resentful and wrathful. Instead of going to the weaver's, Daniel went to the public-house, and when his mother forbade this indignantly and shrilly, he only scowled at her.

Daniel Pryce was tipsy. To be the worse for liquor on a fair day or a market day or on the occasion of a merrymaking was in the course of nature; but to be tipsy early in the afternoon and with your work all undone was so disgraceful that none of the Pryces could stand it. The mother had her say; then Reuben spoke about drunken wastrels; and Caleb, the youngest, wondered where folks found the money to get drunk on, since for his part he never could feel the price of a smoke in his pocket. The three brothers were working together unstacking corn to remove it to the barn for threshing. Without answering, Daniel threw down the long fork with which he had been working, and left the field.

Things were too bad to tolerate, and his shame of himself was a large factor in them. He felt in a bad way towards the whole world, as he moved aimlessly along the road, his hands in his pockets, his chin fallen on his breast. It was a remote country road, disused, except by the local farmers, since the making of the highway. Tufts of grass grew here and there amid the paving-stones, and briars flung their long arms across the gaping ditches. Daniel threw himself down on one of these tufts, and soon fell asleep. It was late October weather, and though there was a little tardy sunshine in the air, the earth was damp and cold. Daniel sighed in a strangled way now

and then, as the chill struck to his bones, but he did not awake.

Bessie Dennet was on her way to a neighbouring farm for her daily milk supply when she found the man she loved asleep like a tramp by the wayside. She did not cry, the pain she felt was too acute for that; she only said to herself half aloud: 'They have done him more harm than I should.'

When she spoke to Daniel, he sat up. 'It's you, Bessie,' he said dully.

'Yes. You must not sleep here, Daniel; you might take your death from it, or the fever, like your father. Get up and come home.'

He rose obediently, and went with her. 'We never see each other now,' he said fretfully.

'I don't think that's my fault, Daniel,' Bessie's smile was like tears.

'Has anybody told you that I'm—goin' to the bad?'

'You mustn't go, Daniel,' Bessie said firmly. 'You are too good and fine a man'—here her voice went low—'to let any trouble turn you into a sot for the children to point at.'

He started as though a whip had struck him, and opened his lips as if to speak, but no sound came.

'We don't make our troubles less by beginning to live wrong,' she went on. 'We must try and be brave, no matter what happens.'

'It's about you,' he said huskily.

'Do you think that makes a difference? I don't just see what harm we did you, my father and I; but if your mother thinks we did, maybe she knows best; anyway, you must be a man, Daniel.'

A month later, a nine days' wonder had begun in the parish, for Daniel Pryce had sailed for America. He took the price of his passage and a small outfit as his inheritance, and the farm would be Reuben's. It was chiefly Bessie's doing, her conception of what would be best for the man for whom her love had that protective element without which love is not wholly love. To have new surroundings, new interests, to escape keen eyes and harsh judgments, that would be best for Daniel. But oh, the difference to her, when he was gone! He came to say good-bye to Bessie, but he said nothing but good-bye, with lips that twitched a little; and 'Thank you' for her keepsake.

He wrote two or three letters after he landed, the painful, dumb letters of the illiterate, saying he was well, hoping she was the same, adding that he had got work, and that the country was very large and fine; and then silence dropped like a pall between him and home.

Bessie wrote several times after he had ceased to answer—letters but little more eloquent than his own, and then she ceased to write also.

The dull days succeeded each other at Grimpat, and the seasons came and went, the flowers in the garden budded and bloomed and died, and the simple routine of life went on at the cottage below the hill, but no young step stopped at the gate, no brown face smiled over the half-door. Daniel had been disinherited and transported, just for loving her.

Thoughts like this are fatal when one is not very strong. Bessie came of a weakly race; vitality does not grow robust at the loom. In the

second summer she went about her work less vigorously, lost flesh a little, and had now and then long spells of idleness, her hands lying limp in her lap. For a time she put a good face on things, never complained, pretended not to feel; but by-and-by there was no good in pretending when her whole aspect cried out.

Geordie grew anxious; he had lost two other children just like this, failing, never complaining, dying at the last. If Bessie went too, he did not know what he should do. The neighbours began to condole with him, telling him how good Bessie was, just as if he of all the world had not the best right to know that. When it became almost beyond question that Bessie would die, then every one became very kind, called often to cheer her up, sent little presents, and said only what was best of her. Even Mrs Pryce bestirred herself; she had no grudge against Geordie Dennet or his daughter: on the whole, they had behaved very well, and had said no evil of her, or dropped an unkind word when Daniel went away.

Regarding Daniel, Mrs Pryce was not wholly satisfied. He had been a good son, had never thwarted her except in that one matter of going away. Reuben was different, was more masterful, had a will of his own, was not disposed to ask advice, nor always to take it when given. There were times when the mother recalled Daniel's ways with a new tenderness, and missed him strangely.

Meantime, while the longing for him grew and grew at home, Daniel was forgetting. It is inevitable; change is such an enlargement, and the new life was pleasant. He was only a farm-hand where he had gone—but the work was far lighter than he had often done at home; the splendid machines, which he soon learned to manage skilfully, were a constant delight to him, and the weekly wage a great gratification, he having had so little money of his own in his life. Then there was a pretty and buxom girl in the farm kitchen, who saw no reason why she should not make frank overtures to Daniel: farm-hands did just as well married as single when one could manage the dairy, and the other the harvest; a house was easily run up in a week or two, and people were happier married, it gave a permanency to things. And Daniel heard and pondered—and forgot. But that was before he saw in New England a Star of Bethlehem, the flower he remembered growing abundantly round the old sun-dial in Bessie's garden at home. What memories came back to him in a rush as he saw it—the gray blue sky; the long grass swaying with a liquid motion and a sheen of silk as the breeze rustled it; the scented breath of the clover meadows; the tweet of the sparrows on the eaves; but above all a plain good face full of an unutterable affection for him! He gave a husky cry and covered his face with his hands.

Mrs Pryce had called to see Bessie. She had come once or twice before; this time she brought a few flowers, a bachelor's button or two, a cluster of dwarf roses, a bunch of the crucifer, called rockets in country places, a blade or two of ribbon-grass. Mrs Pryce was growing kind and pitiful because she thought the end was very near. To Bessie her little manifestations were

doubly touching because they were so awkward.

'I just said I'd come to-day whatever happened,' the visitor said, seating herself on the edge of the chair and looking at the girl's thin face sharply. 'The busy season is comin' on now, and I might have difficulty in gettin' away again till 'twas too late, maybe.'

'I'm better,' Bessie said deprecatingly. She was used to these frank references to her own end, and was not conscious that they pained her.

'Yes, that's always the way with decline,' Mrs Pryce answered with the kindest intentions—'one day better, another day worse, another day better, and then, poof! out you go.'

Bessie quivered a little, and the hand that held Mrs Pryce's posy shook.

'It'll be dreadful lonely for your father at his age, you know,' Mrs Pryce went on mournfully. 'Me and Mrs Bridges was just talkin' it all over last night, and we did say that somethin' ought to be done to put him in a right way when he's left. He's up in years, to be sure; but there's many a girl in the country that's that too, an' yet would make him comfortable when you're gone, an' be a good wife to him. He's a bit easy-goin', you know, an' not likely to think of what's best for himself; but if you would speak to him, for his good'—

'I'm not so sure that I won't get better, Mrs Pryce,' poor Bessie said.

'My dear, I'm sure we all hope you will,' Mrs Pryce said, with a hearty intonation of doubt; 'but don't set your mind on it. Life is not a thing to be set on, when the Lord has decreed to take it from us. I'm sure if I had died when I was young I would have been saved many a hard day an' many a sad heart, what with my man ill, an' the farm an' beasts to see after, an' the children to bring up. The Lord knows what a time I've had. An' what does it come to in the end? Look at my sons after all I've slaved for them! Daniel at the world's end, an' Reuben minded to think he knows everything better'n I do.'

'Has there been no new letter from Daniel?' Bessie asked, the little tremor in her voice perceptible to herself, in spite of her efforts.

'No. Maybe I'll never see or hear of him again. Why, Bessie, if he'd married you, an' stayed at home, 'twouldn't have been half as bad.'

She had no intention of being either coarse or cruel; she simply spoke out of her own full heart, as is the rural way, without thought of her companion's point of view.

'But he did not marry me, you see, and he'll never want to, now. You've had your troubles, Mrs Pryce, but I can't say I'm sorry for you,' Bessie said. She had been stung intolerably, and she revolted more suddenly because of her weakness. 'You had a good son, who never gave you a sore heart or a shamed face, till you took shame out of what was no shame. He worked like a horse, that's what he did, from he was able to stand, and all the diversion ever he asked was to look in for an hour at our house when his work was over. An' our company was safe company, Mrs Pryce, whether it was grand or not. He never learned to think worse of good-

ness from us; he would have been no worse son to you in your old age for anything ever we said to him. But you did not care for that; to your mind it was better to drive him to drink an' out of the country, than that we should be friends. Well, you've had your will; we're not friends any longer; but don't ask me to feel for you, for I don't, and I can't.'

Mrs Pryce was not angered, scarcely surprised. She listened to Bessie as to a fractious child, said: 'There, there!' at intervals in a soothing way, sighed heavily when Bessie ended, and said then, in a complaining tone, and more to herself than the girl: 'it's hard to know what to do for the best many a time. One speaks a word in haste, and things follow it that one never thought of.'

Bessie did not answer; she was weak and trembling, but the tears only glittered on her lashes, and did not fall. Whatever came of it, she was glad to have spoken her mind once to this hard old woman.

After a time, Mrs Pryce rose, and with a commonplace or two, took her leave; then Bessie gave way to her emotions, and cried as if her heart would break. What a world it was! It was no great grief to leave it, with its mistakes and cruelties and pain. It was these that mattered, not the living or the dying, which happened to all alike. Bessie was very simple, very inexperienced, very illiterate; but she had grasped a truth that often eludes the wise and learned: that life is meant to be very satisfactory and serene, if only we would not complicate it needlessly for each other and ourselves. In the calm that followed that burst of storm, Bessie saw things clearly, saw that she stood at the grave's edge, and did not care very much whether she went down or backwards—saw the ugly things that spoil life—the tyranny, the pride, the spite; and the fair things, love, loyalty, generosity, truth, that make it worth living—saw that it is not always the bad people that crush others, but just as often the good, in a bad mood. Her heart went out suddenly in a rush of tenderness towards that bygone might-have-been. Now that she knew his mother better, she understood all that she, Bessie, must have been to Daniel. In the harsh, hard-working household into which he had been born, what chance had he of loving anything?

And then she sat up suddenly, and the red flushed in her face like flame. She was experienced enough now to be able to minimise the daily shock of Reuben Pryce's footfall passing the gate, but it always thrilled her to the heart, it sounded so like Daniel's. This time it did not pass; it paused, came slowly up the path among the flowers, and entered at the door.

Bessie rose and stood, a frail figure, against the high chair-back, and Daniel came forward and laid his great hand on her thin shoulder and said, with a terrible cry in his voice: 'What have they done to you, oh my dear, my dear—what have they done to you?'

'Hush! Don't be frightened; I'm better.' She sat down and took his hand between hers and held it. 'I was very ill; but I'll live, now you have come back.'

And she did live, grew strong, and even pretty, the neighbours said.

Mrs Pryce behaved generously. She wanted Daniel at home now, and she made promises and overtures, would have conceded a great deal, or thought she would have done so; but Daniel had travelled, his horizon had widened. Grinpat was not in his eyes what it had been, nor the farm a great inheritance. He wanted Bessie, but he wanted to go away then, parting peaceably with every one. Mrs Pryce gave them a grand wedding; and the young couple left for the vessel that was to take them abroad. Geordie sailed with them; and in one of the few letters he wrote home to tell how prosperous they all were: he said Daniel's garden was half full of the Star of Bethlehem.

IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

There are but few sections of the civilised world where a man's memory will be carried back to the days of his grandfather as vividly as in the mountainous districts of the Southern States, where, until recently, the distiller of moonshine whisky has carried on his illegal occupation in defiance of the Government, but where to-day the enterprising Yankee capitalists, assisted by their English colleagues, are busily engaged in building towns and factories. Among the many interesting features which will present themselves to the mind of an inquisitive visitor, the most prominent probably are the peculiarities in speech. Here the white and coloured natives 'tote' a burden instead of carrying such; a man is 'powerful' weak instead of very weak; 'right smart chance' of rain falls instead of a severe rain-storm; the baby is quite 'peart' instead of being in good health and lively; you 'reckon' such will happen instead of expecting or thinking it; you go to a 'burying' instead of a funeral; the miner 'raises' ore instead of mining it, and is called an 'ore-raiser' instead of a miner; the gardener 'grabbles' potatoes instead of digging them; the surveyor uses 'staubs' instead of stakes; the housewife bakes a 'pone' of bread instead of a loaf.

Another feature of interest is the religious sentiment which apparently prevails throughout, especially during that season of the year immediately preceding the gathering or harvesting of the crops. Every settlement, though it may not be provided with a schoolhouse, has its church or meeting-house, where services are held on the Sabbath, and where, during the season I refer to, protracted meetings or revivals are carried on day after day and night after night, as long as the interest manifested by the congregation and the strength of the preacher will warrant. These meetings are regularly attended by every one in the neighbourhood, many travelling to and fro to each service in the ox-wagons used on the farms, into which a merry crowd will seat themselves, including the entire family, with often three generations represented. A stranger meeting the outfit on the road would imagine that a party of picnickers had been encountered, and he would be excusable in such a supposition. For while of course many attend these meetings from purely religious motives, yet many also go because such are the only variety of entertainment known in the neighbourhood. To the young men and maidens an opportunity for

courting is presented on the road to and from the meeting-house; but once arrived there all levity must cease, because it is the custom of the country to separate the sexes, the men occupying one side of the church, the women the opposite side. At such meetings, after singing several hymns and listening to a long sermon or exhortation, in which every argument likely to produce an impression on his congregation is resorted to by the preacher, the opportunity is offered for members to give expression to their feelings, or desire to become identified with the church. Another feature of interest are the 'all-day singings,' held at irregular intervals at the churches, when, by arrangements previously made, a certain Sabbath is set apart for an 'all-day singing.' This will attract a crowd of the younger as well as older residents of not only the immediate neighbourhood but also from distant settlements. After the regular services in the morning are concluded, the entire congregation gather in some grove near by—usually every church has a beautiful grove of shade-trees and spring of pure crystal water in its immediate vicinity—where the baskets of provision brought for the occasion are opened and every one enjoys a regular picnic dinner. After partaking of the refreshments, the people again assemble in the church, and for hours indulge in singing gospel hymns and songs of praise.

Another custom worthy of mention is the care of the neighbourhood graveyards by the inhabitants of the settlement; when, by arrangement, a certain day is set apart for all to assemble at the church, bringing the necessary tools to clean up the graveyard. Baskets of provision are brought on such occasions, and the features of a picnic are added, which rob the manual labour to be performed of much of its appearance of regular work, and make it instead an occasion of pleasant social intercourse as well as an exhibition of reverence for deceased friends.

While in these mountainous sections there is much ignorance because of inadequate educational facilities, yet in no section of country will a visitor find a heartier or more hospitable welcome than at the homes of these people, who so conservatively preserve the social customs and manners of their forefathers.

IN THE DAWNING.

With dimpled hands enfolded on her breast,
And lily lids o'er shading violet eyes
In wondrous sleep, my little baby lies,
Like a wee birdie, in her warm white nest.
Outside, above a hill's dawn-purpled crest,
All radiant gold, the summer sun doth rise,
A glad lark, singing, to the blue heaven flies.
My baby smileth softly in her rest.
Straightway a sunbeam falloth on her face,
As if it were God's answering smile of light,
And lo! two violets are blossoming
All dewily—as violets bloom in spring.
Two lily lids are folded out of sight—
My baby wakes, beneath God's smile of grace.

ALICE FURLONG.

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SOME POINTS OF SELF-DEFENCE.

THE Common Law of England holds him guiltless who has taken another's life in such circumstances as show justifiable homicide, excusable homicide, homicide by misadventure, or homicide by chance-medley; and the statute declares, affirming it, That no punishment shall be incurred by any person who shall kill another by misfortune or in his own defence or in any other manner without felony: in either of the cases given, the so-called Right of Self-defence may arise. That right of self-defence, although recognised by statute, is not absolute; it is a concession which, if used for retaliative or revengeful purposes, or for reprisals, affords no excuse. The cardinal principle should be that he who is unwilling to risk his acts of self-defence being questioned in a court of law should not take the law into his own hands.

Persons are more disposed to commit the fatal act of self-defence in the cases of burglary and attempts at robbery from the person with violence. There exists a very prevalent idea that the malefactors may be done to death, may be shot at like vermin, under those circumstances, without fear of consequences; but when the subject is examined it does not appear at all clear how far firearms or deadly weapons may be used for defensive purposes, inasmuch as the guiding statements of judges and of various experts in criminal law are of very general application; and after those views have been exhausted, reliance can only be placed upon a jury to safeguard him who has, with reasonable grounds, taken the law into his own hands in such circumstances, should serious results ensue therefrom.

In this connection we must remember that the law presumes when human life is taken that the killing was unlawful, with or without malice as the facts may show. We will suppose that a householder, in shooting at a suspicious-looking stranger who has secretly entered his house late at night, and whom he believes to be a burglar, kills him. The householder will say: 'I am

justified. My house is my castle, to defend against the intrusions of burglars and thieves.' But his self-defence raises the important question, had he reasonable grounds for supposing the stranger he shot to be a burglar? He will be tried, and a jury, in all the circumstances of the case, will consider the reasonableness of his belief. If he had reasonable grounds, they will acquit him; if, in their opinion, he had not, the verdict in all probability will be manslaughter. And all this, a querist may say, for defending my house and my property!

It is so, human life being considered as too sacred to be lightly taken, although it may be thought that a burglar found in a criminal act has as nearly as possible surrendered his right to have his life held sacred.

There are curious cases in legal annals demonstrating the danger of using weapons under the fear of burglary being attempted, and attacking a believed-to-be burglar. One of such cases is of comparatively recent date, and arose as follows: 'A woman living in a cottage on Bridgemarsh Island, a lonely spot on the coast of Essex, was disturbed one dark afternoon in the month of December by hearing, as she supposed, persons attempting to break into the house. Becoming greatly alarmed, she sent for some neighbours' help. A man and two sturdy lads came to her. They looked about the premises, but could find no one; and ultimately the man left; but at the persuasion of the frightened cottager, the two lads agreed to stay that night and guard the premises. Before he left, the man advised her to load the gun she had in the cottage, and if any one came, to fire. A short time before midnight, voices were heard outside the cottage. One of the lads went out and placed himself on the sea-wall within a few yards of the cottage; he was followed by the other lad, holding the gun. Without the least warning, a man jumped up from behind the wall, and seizing the first lad by the throat, threw him on to his knees. His cries for help were heard by the lad who held the gun, and he called out several times, "If you don't say who you are,

I'll fire." No response was made; and he finally fired, fatally wounding the man. It was then found, to the horror of the lads, that the wounded man was the son of the proprietor of a neighbouring brickfield, who was watching his father's ducks; and hearing the two lads come out, and for the purpose of frightening them only, had jumped up and seized one of them by the throat. A doctor was procured; but the wounded man died next morning. The lad who fired the gun was put upon his trial for manslaughter, when the jury returned a verdict of not guilty.'

The point to be gleaned from this case is in the statement of the judge, 'that it was a dangerous doctrine to go forth from one of Her Majesty's judges that a person was justified in using a gun under such circumstances.' Ordinary intelligence, however, would see every element of justification therein; but we know that to fire a gun to frighten is not permitted by law.

Well-known writers on criminal law say that in cases of felony committed—which term includes burglary, housebreaking, and robbery from the person—if the offender will not suffer himself to be arrested, but stands upon his defence, or flees, so that he cannot possibly be apprehended alive by those who pursue him, he may be lawfully killed by them. This is justifiable homicide. And so, where an attempt is made to murder or to rob or to commit burglary, if the attack be made by the assailant with violence and surprise, the party attacked may lawfully put him to death.

From this it would seem that before a burglar or robber may be wounded, his arrest must be attempted, if he does not show fight or flee; but this is not so to the full extent, as the following leading, though old, case will show. These are obviously of greater authority than expert opinions. 'A man's servant had secretly procured the help of another servant, a stranger, in her household work, and one night about twelve o'clock, the master being in bed, the former was about to let the latter out of the house. Thinking she heard thieves attempting to break into the house, the former went and told her master so. He took his drawn sword, and the servant, fearing the help should be seen, thrust her into the buttery. The mistress seeing the help there, and not knowing her, conceived her to be the thief, and called to her husband, who entered the buttery in the dark, and lunging with his sword, wounded the help in the chest, causing death. He was tried; but the judges ruled this to be misadventure only.'

A mere trespass without felonious intent, however provoking and irritating, will not justify or excuse the use of deadly weapons in defence of property, as the following case shows: 'A person was greatly annoyed by strangers trespassing upon his farm, and he repeatedly gave full notice that he would shoot any one who did so. He at length discharged a gun at a person who was trespassing, and wounded him in the thigh, which led to erysipelas, and the man died. The shooter was indicted for murder, found guilty, and executed. But if the owner had used a

weapon, such as a stick, and death had ensued, this would still have been manslaughter; for the owner of the property had no lawful right to use any weapon to beat off a mere trespasser; and giving notice of his intention to commit an unlawful act did not cover the consequences of that act.'

We are not, however, without authoritative judicial guidance as to the lengths we are permitted to go in self-defence: we find that Mr Baron Garrow is reported to have said in one case, that any person set by his master to watch a garden or yard is not at all justified in shooting at or injuring in any way persons who may come into these premises even in the night; and if he saw them go into his master's henroost, he would still not be justified in shooting them. He ought, first, said the learned Baron, to see if he could not take measures for their apprehension. But here the life of the prisoner was threatened; and if he considered his life in actual danger, he was justified in shooting the deceased, as he has done. But if, not considering his own life in danger, he rashly shot this man, who was only a trespasser, he will be guilty of manslaughter.

Another very learned judge once summarised the law of self-defence in his address to the jury in the following terms: 'A civil trespass will not excuse the firing of a pistol at a trespasser in sudden resentment or anger. If a person takes forcible possession of another man's premises so as to be guilty of a breach of the peace, it is more than a trespass. It is so also if a man with force enters into the dwelling of another. But a man is not authorised to fire a pistol on every intrusion or invasion of his house. He ought, if he has a reasonable opportunity, to endeavour to remove him without having recourse to the last extremity. But the making an attack upon a dwelling, and especially at night, the law regards as equivalent to an assault on a man's person; for a man's house is his castle; and therefore, in the eye of the law, it is equivalent to an assault.'

On this we would remark, that a simple trespass is a totally different thing from a burglary: the former is not a felony, the latter is.

In a book of old law reports, a supposititious case is put thus by a learned judge as to a mere trespass: 'If B enters a house, and A gently lays his hands upon him to turn him out—which, parenthetically, we may say is the proper act at first—and then B turns upon him and assaults him, and A kills him—not being otherwise able to avoid the assault or retain his lawful possession—it would have been in self-defence.'

The crucial test, it will be seen, of the justifiableness of the act of self-defence is its general reasonableness under the surrounding circumstances, and this is of equal application to self-defence from burglars as to other classes of criminal assailants with violence.

It deserves to be mentioned that some insurance offices now undertake 'burglary and robbery insurances' at premiums varying from two shillings and sixpence to five shillings per cent.; and large numbers of the public are said to be taking advantage of the system. A burglar's visit need not therefore, in such cases, necessarily mean a loss to the householder. This is certainly an improvement on the old order of things, and perhaps it

will do more to lessen the chance of loss of life or violence than any statute; yet, on the other hand, the depredators may gather fresh courage, as their chances of capture are obviously lessened.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL*

CHAPTER XVII.—continued.

THEN Ainsworth looked very conscious indeed; for now he was certain of what he had been for some moments dimly suspicious, that the old friend to whom Suffield alluded must be none other than Isabel's father. Suffield could not but note the change that passed upon him, and said to himself: 'It must be opium with him too! To think of such a thing!' Then the gentle, generous heart of the good man was suffused with pity, and with the desire to save his young friend. There were tears in his voice, if not in his eyes, as he leaned towards Ainsworth and laid his hand on his arm.

'Alan, my lad,' said he, 'you must give it up, cost what it will. If it's living alone that tempts you to it, come and live wth me; there's plenty of room in the house, and you can do your writing in here. Nobody will bother you, unless it be those old chaps of Padiham!'

What could Ainsworth do but look amazed and stammer: 'But what do you mean? What's in your mind, Mr Suffield? There's something the matter with you, or with me! There's a misunderstanding, really and truly, on my side or on yours!'

Suffield leaned back in his chair and considered him. 'Do you mean to tell me, Alan, that you can't guess what I'm driving at?'

'Not in the least,' answered Alan, 'I assure you, Mr Suffield. You appear to think that I have become an opium-smoker, or something of the kind. It's a completely mad notion; and if anybody else but yourself had it, Mr Suffield, I should say he was either insane or spiteful. I can't think you're either the one or the other; you must have some good reason for speaking as you've spoken. Tell me what it is.'

'Well, now, then, I'll be frank with you, my lad,' said Suffield. 'I have it on the very best authority—an authority, mind you, there's no doubt about at all—that my niece, Isabel Raynor, has within the last week or so got entangled wth some man who has the bad habit of taking drink, or some other stimulant—got so entangled that she feels responsible for him.'

Ainsworth rose and laughed aloud—a laugh not of merriment, but partly of bitterness, partly of embarrassment—and paced to and fro as he laughed.

'And so,' he said, 'you thought that this man must be me!'

'Well, you see,' said Suffield, somewhat feebly, 'I knew no man but you that she seemed in the least interested in; and then your coming up to London fitted in with the time of this, and you admit that you've seen her.'

'And my having taken to drink or some stimulant, and my entangling her somehow, seemed matters of course, that needed neither discussion nor inquiry! 'Pon my word!' exclaimed the

young man, 'it is the prettiest chain of evidence I ever heard of! It is worthy of a circumstantial case at the Old Bailey! It is wonderful to consider the crimes one's friends may believe one capable of!'

'Not crimes, my lad,' pleaded Suffield, now put out and humbled. 'But there—I see I'm wrong. I confess it.'

'Mr Suffield,' said Alan, stopping before him and laying his hand on his shoulder, 'I couldn't love you and respect you more if you were my father; you are the best and the most generous-tempered man I know!—'

'No, no, Alan!'

'But you are. And I can't believe you ever would have thought these things of me yourself; they must have been suggested to you by some one else.'

'Still,' said Suffield, 'I'm responsible, my lad, and I beg your pardon.' (Ainsworth grasped his hand.) 'I see you can't be the man. But who the dickens can he be? Her uncle Harry and I are very much worried about it.'

'Oh, Uncle Harry!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'Don't you think, Mr Suffield, it would be best if you and Uncle Harry went and put the question to Miss Raynor herself?'

'Perhaps it would—perhaps it would.'

'Now,' said Ainsworth, looking at his watch, 'my time is up.'

'Well, Alan, my lad,' said Suffield, holding his hand, 'you forgive my blundering idiocy?'

'It's not a question of forgiveness between you and me, Mr Suffield,' said Alan; 'it's a question merely of understanding.'

'Say no more, my lad; say no more. I'm just an ass. I was almost forgetting: I want you to come and dine, to meet some people—political nobs, and that sort of thing. But I'll drop you a line when it's fixed.' So Ainsworth went, and Suffield, as he heard the street door close, said to himself: 'What a nice clever lad he is! Now, I must just find that Harry!'

Of course Suffield went and reported this singular interview to Uncle Harry, and Ainsworth as much as he thought prudent or necessary to Isabel, with results which shall appear.

Ainsworth, in sum, merely led Isabel to suppose that her uncle Harry suspected she had taken her father under her wing, and had communicated his suspicion to her other uncle; and therefore Isabel, somewhat nettled and angry that her uncle could not contain a secret, was careful to keep her father as much secluded as possible at such times as her uncle might call, and when he did call she was more reserved with him than had been her wont.

The two uncles hesitated to make up their minds to inquire directly of Isabel herself, as Ainsworth had suggested, and as was manifestly proper, concerning this matter that vexed them. They both knew her—Mr Suffield especially—to be a young lady of spirit, and they feared she might deeply resent, not so much their interference, as the inferential suspicion that she could be doing ought but right. But it came about within a week, that they felt they could put the question off no longer. Uncle Harry had called twice, and each time he had returned to report to Suffield his serious impression that the mysterious person with whom Isabel was entangled was

living in the house with her! He (Uncle Harry) had been delayed before he had been admitted; the landlady had seemed flustered; and there was lurking by the fender-corner a pair of slippers that were obviously too large for Isabel's own feet! Suffield had pooh-pooled that report the first time it was made, but when it was repeated he resolved to find out the truth of the matter at once. Uncle Harry had called on Isabel about tea-time: after dinner, he and Suffield set out to call on her again, leaving Mrs Suffield to suppose that they were going down to the House of Commons together.

Isabel and her father sat at supper. Isabel was at ease, for she expected no visitor, unless Ainsworth or Doughty should come in before bedtime; and her father was in the serenest of moods, for he had that day written a review of a book which Ainsworth had brought him. They sat thus, talking of books and interested in their talk—for Isabel found her father's remarks acute and skilled, and her father found hers fresh and unconventional—when there came a knock at the street door, and an instant or two after the sitting-room door was opened and in stepped her two uncles. Her father sat facing the door, and her uncles stopped as soon as they had entered, with their eyes fixed on him.

'Oh,' said Uncle Harry, and there was a note of suppressed anger and contempt in his voice, which at once roused Isabel's spirit. 'It's you—is it?'

Her father did not answer, but he glanced at Isabel, as in surprise and reproach, as if he would say: 'Have you done this? Have you brought these terrible men down on me?'

Isabel rose and placed chairs for her uncles. 'Won't you sit down—both of you?' she said.

Uncle George shook his head sadly: his usually ruddy tint had sunk into a purplish gray; Uncle Harry paid no heed to her words: he was pale as death, the pupils of his eyes seemed reduced to glittering pin-points, and his hands trembled. Seeing them all standing, John Raynor rose too—apparently out of the merest instinct of politeness: he stood nearly a head taller than his brother. It was clear there was no lack of recognition on either side.

'It is a very long time since we have met, Harry,' said John, holding out his hand.

'Yes,' said Harry, disregarding the proffered hand; 'it is twenty-five years. And once again it is the cause of a woman that brings us together.'

On hearing that, Isabel started and turned, and met her father's pleading eyes, which seemed to ask, 'What does this mean?'

'What are you doing here?' asked Harry, with his eyes still fixed on his brother. 'What mischief have you done?—or are you contriving? You are my brother! It is wonderful! And—God forgive me!—I hate you more than any living thing!'

'Uncle Harry!—Uncle Harry!' cried Isabel. 'What has come to you that you say such horrible things! Why don't you sit down and talk quietly, and be friendly with us? You are brothers—sons of the same parents: are you not ashamed that a brother should speak so bitterly, and feel so bitterly, to a brother?'

'No; I am not!' answered Uncle Harry. His

glance lighted on her an instant, and then returned to his brother.

'You don't know what used to be between them, my dear,' said Suffield in Isabel's ear. 'It always drives Harry mad when he thinks of it!'

'You took my wife from me!' continued Uncle Harry to his brother.

'Not your wife, Harry,' said Suffield, laying his hand on his shoulder with a kindly grasp: 'your sweetheart only. Come; be just if you can't be reasonable.'

'She had promised to be my wife, and she would have been!' said Harry without turning his head. 'You took my wife,' he continued, 'and now you take your daughter!—her daughter!'

John Raynor had listened to him, standing half-dazed with his hands crossed before him. He now stepped forward again with his hand out. 'Is there never to be an end,' he asked, 'of that subject—that unfortunate subject—between us, Harry?'

'Why are you here?' continued Harry. 'Are you come to ruin and kill her daughter, as you ruined and killed her?'

John Raynor sat down and dully listened, while his hand clutched aimlessly at the table: he was deathly pale, and his lips and his limbs were twitching convulsively.

His daughter came to his relief, and stood behind him, with her hands on his shoulders. 'Uncle,' she said quietly, but with a vibration of anger in her voice, 'you must not talk like that! I have let you go on too long! I am responsible for my father being here! I brought him to live with me, and I know what I am doing!'

'You do not! You do not, foolish girl!' cried her uncle. 'He will insinuate himself into your confidence! He will flatter you into the belief that you are the very cleverest woman in all this world! And all the time he will torture your mind and soul with hopes of great things—hopes which never will be fulfilled! And he will live upon you!—live upon you! What is it that women find in him? *She* was infatuated, as you are! I was preparing to give her all I had, when he came with nothing in his hand, and yet she put her hand in his and went away with him—to poverty and death! I am ready to give you all I have; but no: he comes, not to give, but to take, and you receive him with open arms!'

'It won't do, my dear!' said Isabel's father, starting to his feet suddenly. 'I mustn't do that! I must go away! I must go away at once! I'll go to Alexander! Where are my boots? Will you be so good as ask for my boots, my dear?'

'Uncle Harry, you must go away!' said Isabel, with her hand firmly clasped on her father's wrist. 'Go away, please!—Take him away, Uncle George!'

Before he went, Uncle George came to John Raynor with a peculiar mellowness of both voice and eyes and took him by the hand. 'Well, John,' said he, 'let bygones be bygones; and be a good man. You've got a dear daughter there—as good a girl as ever was. I'll see you again soon.'

He took Uncle Harry's arm, who put his hand

to his head and then to his heart, and walked away with him submissively and in silence.

That night Uncle Harry sent out a telegram to his nephew: 'Send me Daniel at once for a few weeks.'

RECLAIMING THE ZUIDER ZEE.

HOLLAND is about to acquire additional territory, and that neither by conquest nor colonisation. The Zuider Zee, that great expanse of water, half bay, half lake, created six centuries ago by storm and flood at the expense of the mainland, is to be reclaimed and converted into arable land. The idea of this stupendous undertaking has been germinating in the minds of generations of Dutchmen, but only took definite shape about forty years ago, when the successful reclamation of the Haarlem Lake demonstrated the practicability of the enterprise. The Haarlem affair was, of course, a trifle compared with the present project; but as the conditions and methods of operation, although on widely different scales, are practically similar, the results of the smaller operation afford a more or less reliable standard by which to calculate the cost of the present scheme and an approximate estimate as to the value of the reclaimed land.

The Haarlem Lake covered an area of seventy-four square miles, and was converted at a cost of one and a quarter millions sterling, or about twenty-seven pounds per acre. The land was immediately sold at an average price of forty-five pounds per acre, and is now worth not less than one hundred and seventy—a result which spoke eloquently to the keen commercial instincts of the Hollanders in favour of the new scheme. The site of the Haarlem Lake at the present day is intersected by a network of canals, and affords an abundant subsistence to its ten thousand inhabitants.

For the better understanding of the subject, a glance at the physical condition and history of the sea provinces of the Netherlands is necessary, and not uninteresting.

The low-lying coasts of Germany and Holland bordering on the North Sea are protected from the onslaughts of the waves by a double line of defences—one natural, the other artificial. The former consists of a chain of islets extending from the Zuider Zee to the Danish peninsula. These islets are the remains of the former coast-line. Ages ago, before the waters of the Atlantic broke through the neck of land connecting England with France, the German Ocean was a comparatively pacific body, and the adjacent coasts suffered little or no disintegration. The winds and the tides drove the sand along the coast into a number of hills or mounds at more or less regular intervals. Behind this hilly coast-line lay the marsh, swept by every tide, submerged at every flood, and yet not without inhabitants. The elder Pliny (50 A.D.) describes the region as one 'of which it is doubtful whether it be a part of the continent or an arm of the sea.' The Roman historian could not sufficiently express his surprise at finding the place inhabited; and indeed it is doubtful if in

any other part of the globe so desperate a struggle was ever carried on for so bare a subsistence. The dwellers gained their precarious living by such husbandry as could be wrought between the floods, and when these approached, retreated to the hillocks on which their dwellings were erected, and, for the rest, snatched a fickle diet of fishes from the retreating waters. One writer compared the life of these poor people during the floods to that of storm-tossed sailors in unseaworthy vessels, and their condition when the floods subsided to that of shipwrecked mariners.

At a far back geological period, what is now the English Channel was a solid belt of land, connecting France and Britain. And when, by subsidence of the land or otherwise, the Atlantic forced its way through this connecting belt, the North Sea underwent a great change. With the inrush of water through the newly-formed channel the waves of that Sea attained a force and turbulence which soon began to play havoc with the coasts. In a general way, the work of destruction was slow, though persistent; but all too frequently floods and storms of exceptional violence wrought terrible destruction. Large slices of the land were torn away and replaced by water. The Zuider Zee is the result of one of these terrific cataclysms; the Dollart and the Jahde basins similar—silent, but convincing evidences of their power of devastation. The hills and mounds alone offered any effectual resistance. The low ground between them first disappeared through the openings so formed; the seas entered, and found the land immediately behind an easy prey. To-day, all that remains of the ancient coast is the chain of small islands, already referred to, standing out and away from the mainland, like the skirmishers of an army, and providing a breakwater on which the first fury of the waves spends itself before reaching the dike. This dike, the second and artificial defence, is a formidable structure, averaging twenty feet in height, twelve feet in breadth at the top, and from ninety to one hundred feet at the base, and extends along the entire coast of West Friesland, a stretch of some hundreds of miles.

It is uncertain at what date the first dikes were built. Naturally enough, the initial attempts were defective and inefficient. Violent floods repeatedly broke through and over them, laying waste the land, and carrying death, desolation, and ruin to tens of thousands. One of the worst of these visitations occurred in the thirteenth century. A gale prevailing for several days from the same quarter drove the seas with extraordinary violence upon the dike, which at last gave way. Great areas of the country behind the dike were beneath the level of the sea, hence these became an easy prey to the destructive element. With frightful rapidity the storm-driven waves poured in a flood over the land, sweeping away everything in their path. Houses and gardens disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, and the largest trees were uprooted. In a short time an uncountable number of corpses, human and animal, floated hither and thither at the mercy of the flood. The fruitful land had become a sea, a sea with ebb and flow. When the waters subsided, the labour of repairing the defence was commenced; but internecine feud and petty

jealousies hindered and spoiled the work, and the next storm had but a feeble barrier to overthrow.

Some years subsequently the destroyer rushed in with all its fury again. Along the centre coast not fewer than thirty thousand persons perished. The destruction of property was only a degree less appalling. At the mouth of the Ems, a huge wedge of land forty square miles in extent, carrying fifty thriving villages and one prosperous town, was torn away.

Four centuries later, the great Christmas flood of 1717 burst into the devoted land. This inundation surpassed all others by the suddenness and violence of its onslaught. At the darkest hour of a winter's night, while the natives in fancied security were sleeping, a great deluge of water came over and through the dike. 'The flood came over the land,' said an eye-witness, 'not by degrees, as was usually the case, but from the first, shoulder high.' Three days and three nights passed before the flood began to subside. Over ninety per cent. of the buildings in the villages were swept away or destroyed. About eleven thousand persons and some one hundred thousand head of domestic animals perished. Many remarkable incidents are recorded of this flood. Houses were removed from one place to another without suffering any other damage. In one case the dwelling was floated away so tranquilly that the lamp remained lit, and the fowls were undisturbed on their perches. On another occasion two persons, man and wife, sought refuge on a haycock, and after drifting about all night in the greatest peril, reached a place of safety not only without loss of life but with gain. A child had been born during the terrible voyage.

Since the 'Christmas' flood, no calamity of anything approaching the same magnitude has occurred. The work of repairing, strengthening, and improving the dikes was at last taken up in a thorough and practical manner. The lessons of bitter experience have been used, and the dike of to-day is as near perfection as is possible. The whole structure is mapped out into parts, over each of which a searching and unceasing outlook is kept. The first sign of weakness is detected, and the necessary repairs immediately carried out.

It might be thought that the inhabitants of a land held so precariously, who have to offer a constant and unrelaxing resistance to the rapacity of the sea, would be content to do this successfully, satisfied to retain their own. The struggle is, however, vigorously carried into the aggressor's camp. Day by day, and foot by foot, the lost acres are being rewon. Since the thirteenth century in East Friesland alone, about five hundred square miles have at one time or another been torn away by storm and flood. On the other hand, three hundred square miles of cultivable soil have been added to this province, and this new land is, by the nature of its constituent elements, the most fertile in the country.

The composition of this new soil and the processes of its formation and deposit are subjects upon which there are some differences of opinion, but the most generally accepted theory is that embodied below. Twice a day the tide visits the coast, and at each visit leaves behind it a deposit

of solid matter, which settles on the foreshore. This substance is, according to one writer, the product of the meeting and mixing of the fresh water coming from the land through the 'Siele,' or locks which drain the ground, with the salt water of the North Sea. Analysis of the latter shows—owing, it is surmised, to the existence of extensive submarine beds of clay, calcareous earth, &c., in the vicinity of the coast—an abnormal amount of solid constituents. The deposit, however created, is extremely rich. It occurs most plentifully round about the mouths of the rivers and canals, and on those parts of the shore where vegetation is found, being caught and retained by the stems and branches of the plants. The efforts of the inhabitants are directed towards increasing the amount of this deposit, or, rather, towards retaining the greatest possible quantity of it. With this object, parallel rows of stakes are driven into the foreshore, outside, and running out at right angles to the existing dike. These stakes are connected and bound together by willow branches and twigs, the whole forming an enormous silt trap, which catches and keeps the tide's deposits.

Day by day, inch by inch, this material is increased and solidifies until it raises itself to the level of the tide. After a time a straggling vegetation appears; and when the entire surface reaches this condition, and its extent warrants the expenditure, it is enclosed by a new dike, and another piece of recovered land is added to the balance in favour of man. Another method, largely practised, is that of digging long trenches parallel to the shore, into which the deposit falls, to be subsequently shovelled landwards.

The great encouragement to the work is the exceptionally fruitful character of the soil so brought under cultivation. In the year 1559 a farmer who sowed some of the reclaimed land with five tons of barley harvested no fewer than three hundred tons. There are portions of the soil which have been ploughed and used for two hundred years without having been once manured, and still yield excellent results. The 'polders,' as the newly-won districts are called, are far and away the richest parts of the country, and to this fact is to be attributed the great prosperity of the farmers and graziers of these provinces. The present polders form an almost unbroken fringe, varying in depth, round the coast, the outline of which their increase is slowly but continually altering.

The process is of course a very gradual one; but when, as nowadays, the contest is all one-sided, and nothing is lost, while each day something is won, the increase of land is not inconsiderable. The enterprising spirit of the nineteenth century is not, however, to be confined to the methods of past ages, nor to be satisfied with the results which sufficed for earlier generations.

In essaying to enclose and drain the Zuider Zee—a task the magnitude of which can best be appreciated by a glance at the map—the Dutch prove themselves well abreast of the times. Three plans have been put forward, the most daring and comprehensive of which proposed to connect the chain of islands, Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, and Ameland with each other, and with the mainland, by means of short dikes, a plan which on the map looks feasible enough, and,

considering the shortness of the dikes required, comparatively inexpensive. In this view, however, the projectors were greatly mistaken. The waters of the North Sea pour through the narrow openings between the islands with such force and fury that the channel beds have been worn to a great depth. Any attempt to dike these openings would not only be terribly expensive, but would probably end in failure.

The second scheme was much more modest. By it the small island Urk, in the middle of the Zee, was to be connected on the west with Enkhuizen, and on the east with the coast near the mouth of the Yssel. This plan was generally approved of as a preliminary measure; but before any real step could be taken, a fresh project was put forward which seemed to hit the happy medium between the two extremes, and has now been finally decided upon. By this project the island Wieringen is to be connected by a short dike with the west mainland, and on the opposite side by a longer dike with the coast of West Friesland, enclosing an area of some fourteen hundred square miles.

The longer dike will at first be a low one, in order that the ebb and flow of the tide over the enclosed area, while being diminished in speed and force, will not be entirely checked. A low and slowly moving tide facilitates the deposit of solid matter. With this fact in view, it is confidently anticipated that the low dike will initiate a mutual action and reaction, the retardation of the tide increasing the deposit, and gradually raising the bed of the Zee; the latter, in its turn, with every increase in height offering a greater resistance to the inflowing water, and by reducing its force, still further increase the deposit. By this operation the work will be carried on, so to say, automatically, until a certain level has been reached. When this stage is attained, the dike will be raised and solidified, and the work of draining the reclaimed land entered upon. This will be brought about by 'poldering,' a process already described, from which centuries of experience have removed the difficulties, and by means of which all the reclaimed lands on the coasts of East and West Friesland have been won. It is not to be expected that the land will ever reach a higher or even the same level as the neighbouring sea. Indeed, in rainy seasons the assistance of powerful pumping machinery will be indispensable for drainage purposes; and in places where the present bed of the Zuider Zee is very deep, small lakes must remain. Along the top of the dike, a railway will be constructed, establishing a means of speedy transit from one extremity of the country to the other, which will be not the least of the advantages of the project.

Turning to the financial side of the question, we find the estimate for the total outlay slightly exceeds sixteen millions sterling. For this sum a tract of land of about twelve hundred square miles, equal in area to one-tenth part of the entire present kingdom, peculiarly rich and fertile in quality, will be added to the food-producing soil of the country. Should the reclaimed land only realise fifty pounds per acre, a very modest estimate, the result will be a gain of considerably more than cent. per cent. on the outlay.

The future economical and political advantages

of the undertaking can scarcely be over-estimated. The Dutch are approaching the task with their customary phlegm and tranquillity. One hears little about it outside Holland, yet, whatever comes or goes, it must take rank as one of the greatest enterprises of modern days.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER IV.

THE result was that both Mr Godfrey and Mr Purvey came to dinner; and they all talked of this business they were interested in with lively, if sometimes pensive, expectation. The Squire pathetically regretted that coal-mining with its attendant industries 'make such a mess of the country'; but he recalled that not many hundreds of years ago all those regions were littered with charcoal-burning and iron-smelting, when the forests around were cut down, and the seat of the iron manufacture of England was in their midst; and Mr Purvey, with a business-like precision, remarked that the earth was made for man and not man for the earth, and that it is the duty of man to attend to his business.

Mr Godfrey said nothing to either of these views, except that he had always thought, and would maintain, that the industries of civilisation were conducted with far too much waste—reckless waste of both energy and material—and that carefully managed they need make very little 'mess.' And the best was that he and Miss Langland seemed to understand and sympathise with each other. The talk, you see, was more serious than dinner-talk commonly is, but there was a strong flavour of gratitude in it—gratitude of the French cynic's variety, which is inspired by the hope of favours to come. After dinner, however, they were all in lighter vein. Mr Purvey told the Squire engrossing tales of 'business'—in which the Squire took an unusual interest—of difficulties encountered and overcome, and of the supreme glories of twenty and thirty per cent.; and Mr Godfrey talked with the two girls, and played and sang with them in a most engaging manner—so that, when the evening came to an end and the girls were gone to their room, the younger expressed her delight to the elder in this wise: 'Oh, isn't he a nice man, Kitty?—and handsome too?—Oh, I believe I *could* love him!'

Whereupon Kitty hugged her sister close to her bosom.

From that day dated a period of delightful, feverish anticipation. In a day or two all the arrangements and appurtenances for boring were removed from Mr Purvey's ground to the top field of the Fairfield Farm. When the operation had been set going, the Squire climbed the hill to have a look, and came upon that sulky guardian of the door whom he had met once before.

'Well, my friend,' said the genial Squire, 'boring again—eh?'

'Yes, sir—boring,' answered the man.

'Not boring for water this time, though—eh?' said the Squire, with a knowing smile.

'No, sir—only boring;' and he went on his way; but he paused, reflected a moment, and then turned to say: 'Sometimes you bores for one thing, and gets another.' And then he went stubbornly on his way again.

And the boring went on steadily from day to day; and day after day the Squire was there and his daughter, and Mr Godfrey, and sometimes Mr Purvey; and so beset and bothered was the guardian of the door that he was fain to write upon its outward face in great chalk letters, 'No Admittance Except on Business.' But that did not deter his visitors from entering, and from examining with the supremest interest every cylinder of 'core' that was shown. This was such a soil, that was such another; this was chalk, and that was chalk again, and a third was chalk still. These were very nice, Kitty said; but why was there no coal yet? Mr Godfrey explained that coal could not possibly be reached for a certain depth, not until certain strata or layers of other things had been bored through; and Kitty admired his great but unassuming knowledge, and his serene patience and hope.

What made the expectation of the Squire and his daughter more feverish during this time was the impending necessity of making some kind of terms with Mr Purvey. The result of the Squire's visit to town had been an arrangement by which his friend Colonel Swetenham would buy up Purvey's mortgage with a mortgage of his own, provided that the Colonel's agent thought the farm carried value sufficient. The man had come down and looked over the farm, but as yet there had reached the Squire no definite 'Yea' or 'Nay.' And the Squire went to Mr Purvey to ask him to wait for some time longer before settling anything concerning either the mortgage or even its interest. Mr Purvey made no objection to that proposal.

'And of course,' observed the Squire, thinking it a civil and proper thing to say, 'we have not yet made the acquaintance of your son.'

The Squire was astonished at Mr Purvey's behaviour. He broke into an involuntary hiccup of a chuckle, smartly rubbed the knuckles of one hand in the palm of the other, smiled cheerfully to himself, and then smoothed out the smile with his lean fingers.

'But you will soon,' he said, at last looking at the Squire; 'I think I may say you will very soon.'

'What does the man mean by his smiles and chuckles?' thought the Squire, as he gazed upon him; but yet he suspected nothing, for he was occupied with the reiterated unwelcome promise of seeing Purvey's son—a prospect rendered more disagreeable than ever by the suspicion that his daughter had already conceived a liking for Mr Godfrey, who was now very frequently at the Manor House.

Both father and daughter therefore longed for the sight of coal; for that would determine the high value of the land, and in a moment resolve the complicated difficulty in which they were involved.

And at length the coal came—came in the shape of a small cylinder of compressed black powder, granulate and sparkling. The Squire and his daughter had waited more than an hour past luncheon-time to see it produced, and when they saw it they could have wept tears of joy. There was the fulfilment (in little) of all their hopes: the Squire saw himself disencumbered of debt, saw his lands again flourishing and productive, his favourite breed of pigs taking prizes at all the shows, and his dear daughter married to the man of her heart; and Kitty saw the necessity for parsimonious housekeeping gone, her father once more rosy and hearty, every one happy around her, and she herself happy—with whom? She glanced gratefully at Mr Godfrey, and experienced a strong desire to fling her arms about his neck. It was like the charm in the nursery story of the Old Woman and her Pig, the discovery of which set all the wheels of her existence going again smoothly and merrily.

'And we have you to thank for it!' exclaimed Kitty, impulsively giving Mr Godfrey her hand, and then blushing for her forwardness.

Mr Godfrey took her hand, gave it a tender, thrilling pressure, and blushed too.

'Don't think too much of this,' said he, however, in a tone of discreet warning: 'this is but the first show, and we may find that the measure is shallow and not worth the expense of working.'

But they did not heed him. They thought it was only his cautious, scientific way—merely 'his joke;' and they went home to eat their modest luncheon, radiant with content, and with the bloom of hope.

And now hear how the situation was precipitated.

The Squire wrote at once to his friend, Colonel Swetenham, telling of the momentous discovery, and saying that there could now be no doubt of the value of the farm, and that he would be glad if 'that business of the mortgage' could be carried through at once. That done, he felt as if the business *had* been carried through; and he rose in the mood to go at once and cast off Mr Purvey and all his works. But he probably would not have gone then had not some words from his daughter determined him.

'Oh, how I should like, father,' she exclaimed, with a quick flush—she had been in an excited, tremulous condition between red and white ever since the momentous discovery—'how I should like to run straight away to Mr Purvey and tell him that he must not think of me in connection with his son any more! I can't bear that he should have that connection in his mind one minute after I can help it!'

She was quite sure of herself, and sure also of Mr Godfrey; but even if she were not sure of him, she was certain that, having known him, she could never decline to the lower range of Mr Purvey's vulgar son.

'Why not, my dear?—why not?' exclaimed her father, rubbing his hands.

'No, father!' she said, in a sudden but evanescent impulse of shame and shyness. 'But shall we both go?—and—and you can tell him! Yes, let us go, and have done with it!'

So these two simple, unbusiness-like creatures set off incontinently to tell Mr Purvey that they could not entertain his proposal concerning his son on any account.

The nearer they got to the concrete villa the difficulty of delivering himself with perfect civility rose more and more upon the Squire. His steps lagged a little, and birds in the trees and beasts in the fields made him stop and expend an unusual amount of speculation on them: he would have liked to turn back, but he went obstinately on. At length they reached the concrete villa, and inquired for Mr Purvey. He was at home, and they were ushered into the Purveyan drawing-room—on Kitty's account, no doubt.

That drawing-room was Kitty's abhorrence. She had seldom sat in it, yet it always typified for her the abomination of desolation of taste: the contrasts of green rep and yellow satin and other crudities made her shudder. On this occasion, however, she had little time to shudder. Mr Purvey appeared with great promptitude, and a very polite, though somewhat astonished, welcome.

'It is seldom you do an old man this honour, Miss Langland,' said he.

'Well, you see, Mr Purvey,' began the Squire, rather ill at ease, shifting about as if his seat were extremely uncomfortable.

'Try this chair,' said Mr Purvey, offering him another.

'Thank you, thank you,' said the Squire; 'this will do very well: we must not be staying long.' And he finally established himself where he was. 'We have just come, Mr Purvey—we suddenly thought we would like to—on a semi-private, and—and rather delicate matter.'

Mr Purvey all the while was bowing and smiling in gentle assent to all the Squire said, looking in ignorant wonder from him to his daughter. On the hint that there was something to be uttered of a 'semi-private' nature, he rose and asked Miss Langland if she would not like to look at a book of photographs on a table a pace or two off. Kitty took that remoter station, heartily wishing she had never come, and Purvey returned to listen to the Squire.

'Yes?' said he, clasping his hands in patient expectation.

'Well,' began the Squire, with a little constrained laugh, and in a low tone, which gradually rose to its normal level, 'my daughter is troubled by the—er—a proposal of yours, Mr Purvey, which I have communicated to her; it has worried and bothered her very much, especially of late. You—er—did me the honour, Mr Purvey, a little while ago, to suggest that we might accomplish an alliance between your son and my daughter.'

'I did make such a proposal,' said Mr Purvey, now quite alert; 'and you replied, Mr Langland, that you could say nothing to it until Miss Langland and my son should know each other.'

'I made that reply—yes,' said the Squire.

'But—well, perhaps I was foolish in telling my daughter your proposal; and, you know, Mr Purvey, there is nothing the female heart so much resents as having its affections arranged for.'

'Undisciplined!' murmured Mr Purvey gently, 'unchastened!'

'Well,' said the Squire, becoming obstinate, and by that token more at ease, 'perhaps so. But there the fact is; and the more she thinks of it and looks forward to it, the more the prospect displeases and distresses her. And—and now, Mr Purvey, she has asked me to come to you to thank you for the honour you have done her, but also to beg you to think of her in—in that light no longer. Besides,' said the Squire, dropping his voice, and feeling the advantage of a show of confidence, 'I believe—I have reason to think that she has bestowed her—er—affections on another.'

'Very likely,' replied Mr Purvey, also in a low voice.

The next moment the Squire sat surprised at the demeanour of Mr Purvey, and even Miss Langland raised her face from her book of photographs in astonishment. It could scarcely be said that Mr Purvey had laughed; for every muscle of his face was as gently and sweetly disposed in seriousness as usual. But certainly Mr Purvey had uttered a strange sound, something like a snigger, and yet more like the pleasant noise with which a horse welcomes the approach of his feed of corn.

'But in spite of that,' continued Mr Purvey at once, pinching his fingers in rapid succession, as if to make sure they were there, complete in number and condition, 'perhaps my son might have some chance, if he only had the pleasure of making Miss Langland's acquaintance.'

That reply was so unexpected, that the Squire gazed upon Mr Purvey and said not a word.

'I am not the man—God forbid!'—added Mr Purvey—'to come between any man and his affianced—a young lady; but this person at whose existence you hint may be only a casual interloper.—I beg,' said Mr Purvey, suddenly rising, 'that you will permit me to introduce my son to you and Miss Langland.'

'What?' exclaimed the Squire. 'Has he arrived, then?'

'Oh yes,' said Mr Purvey—and again there was that sound between a snigger and what Scots people call a 'nicher'—'he has arrived—arrived quite unexpectedly.'

The latter portion of this talk had been overheard by Miss Langland. She now closed her book of photographs, stood erect, and came towards Mr Purvey, with shame and entreaty striving together on her beautiful ingenuous face. 'Please, Mr Purvey,' she said, 'not now!—another time!—we must not stay!—we must go home!—Pray, excuse me now, Mr Purvey!'

In her eagerness she had laid her hand on Mr Purvey's arm to detain him. 'My dear young lady,' said Mr Purvey very impressively, 'if you do not let me make this introduction now, you—you will regret it!'

'Mr Purvey!' exclaimed the Squire in a temper closely bordering on anger. 'Do you permit yourself to threaten us?'

'Threaten you, my dear sir?' exclaimed Mr

Purvey in amazed innocence. 'Not at all!—not the least in the world!—Permit me.'

And ere either could say another word to detain him he was gone.

'CAXTON'-HUNTING.

THE heart of a violinist may be thrown into rapture by the discovery, in some out-of-the-way corner, of a genuine Stradivarius. But the rapture of the violinist is nothing compared with the ecstasy a bibliophile experiences when he finds an unknown book printed by Caxton and embedded in the dust of a forsaken college library. No wonder, for the value of Caxtons has increased marvellously during recent years. Not long ago, a book which came from the press of England's first printer fetched three thousand pounds. Although there are a considerable number of his prints about, not a single copy of many of his publications can be found. Editions, however, which have been despaired of by the hunter have turned up in the most unexpected manner. The late William Blades used to tell how he spent the time during a service in searching the library at the French Protestant Church, St Martin's-le-Grand. As with dusty face and grimed hands he was departing, a filthy bit of parchment in a pigeon-hole close to the fire attracted his attention by the appearance it presented of an illuminated initial. He turned it aside with his foot; and beneath was an old folio, the first sight of which made his heart beat. It seemed impossible, and yet it was a genuine Caxton, the second edition of Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales,' with numerous woodcuts. But how shorn of its beauty! True, original binding of nearly four centuries ago was there; but out of the three hundred and twelve leaves originally enclosed within the boards, scarcely two hundred were left, and they were torn and dirty. However, said Blades, it was a good hour's work; and the precious relic, each leaf of which was worth a guinea, was saved from lighting any more vestry fires.

It is in this way a large proportion of the known Caxtons have been unearthed. Probably, after years of searching, the long-sought-for book is obtained quite accidentally. Richard Heber, the sale of whose libraries in Paris, Brussels, London, Antwerp, Louvain, Leyden, and at the Hague occupied two hundred and two days, spent a large part of his life looking for a print by Colard Mansion, the first printer in Bruges. His efforts were not fruitful; but his brother, who was Bishop of Calcutta, managed to purchase a fine copy from a native on the banks of the Ganges. Caxton's 'Fifteen Oes,' now in the British Museum, lay for centuries in the dust of an old country-house. Henry Bradshaw of Cambridge, who was one of the most indefatigable of book-hunters, found an Indulgence, printed by Caxton, pasted inside a book in the Bedford town library. There are several

Caxtons in the Baptist Chapel at Bristol; and the famous vellum Caxton was found in a Roman Catholic seminary. Second-hand dealers are nowadays pretty sharp; but it is within the range of possibility to pick up a Caxton at a bookstall. Kind-hearted old Osborne, when he bought the Harleian collection, found he had fifty-six Caxtons at one time in his shop. To get rid of them, without any regard as to their rarity, he sold them at a fixed price—all folios twenty-one shillings; all quartos fifteen shillings. Sir Walter Scott makes Monkbarne tell the story of how 'Snuffy Davie'—who was David Wilson, a once well-known bookseller—bought for two-pence from a stall in Holland 'the Game of Chess' (1474), which was the first book ever printed in England. It was afterwards sold for one hundred and seventy pounds. Some years ago, in a cathedral town, a second-hand bookseller exposed a copy of Caxton's Statutes affixing a card, 'Only 2s. 6d.' For some time it lay unnoticed. One day, however, the attention of a gentleman was attracted, and he, knowing something about early printing, soon became the owner of the book. He valued it more than its weight in bank-notes.

Is it possible to find any more Caxtons? will be the question cropping up in the mind of the reader. Undoubtedly. The difficulty, however, is to distinguish the genuine article when it is seen. This, however, can be easily overcome. Let the Caxton-hunter remember one or two things. He will never find one of Caxton's books with a title-page. Title-pages were unknown till after 1491. There must be no Roman or italic lettering, but all in Gothic or Old English. There must be no commas, but an oblique stroke in their place. Further, there must be no catch-words at the bottom of a page. The use of these, long gone out of fashion, did not come into vogue till years after Caxton's death. There are other tests necessary, such as the measurement of lines, for some of the type used was imitated pretty closely by Caxton's successors. It is clear, however, that during his career Caxton only used six kinds of type. The first, distinctly foreign in its character, was used by him at Bruges in the printing of 'The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye,' and in the first edition of 'The Game and Playe of the Chesse.' This style was never used in England. The second style, such as in 'The Moral Proverbs,' and 'Tulle of Olde Age,' printed in 1477 and 1481 respectively, was beautiful and artistic. It follows a design of manuscript which obtained the name of Gros Batarde, common in use in the fifteenth century. Several books were written in this manner under the order of Edward IV., and are now to be seen in the British Museum. Looking at the dates when Caxton's books were issued and the types he used, it is evident he did not make new type till the old was worn out. A pretentious style came next in 1483, very bold in its character. It is problematical whether there is a book in this type; the only examples we have of it at present are in headlines. With a little

previous study, the Caxton-hunters could at a glance recognise these three styles.

It would not, however, be so easy respecting the type used in 'Polychronicon,' 'Death-bed Prayers,' and 'The Book of Fame.' This is very closely followed by printers of a subsequent date. As far as is known, very few books are in the style of 'The Royal Book,' published in 1485. The pattern is somewhat Dutch; but among other books in which it is used is 'The Book of Good Manners.'

The last style of type Caxton employed was small, and not being imitated so much by other printers, would be fairly easy to recognise. Trade-marks were in use in the early days of printing just as they are now, and Caxton in some of his later prints put a mark. To find this trade-mark in a book is not a guarantee he printed it, for his successors adopted in their publications one rather like it. It is, however, comparatively easy to distinguish the imitation.

Some of the most important of Caxton's works are yet to be found. There is not a known book of his printed in 1486 and 1488. It is not likely he ceased printing during these two years. We know there are missing books because Caxton himself in the preface to 'The Golden Legende' mentions 'XV bookes of Metamorphoseos in whiche ben conteyned the fables of Onyde,' but about which nothing whatever is known. Neither has anything been discovered of his translation of 'The Lyfe of Robert Erle of Oxenford.' There are indications of the mania again coming upon us of collecting old editions, just as in our youth we spend all our pocket-money in foreign and rare stamps. At the commencement of the century there was a great demand for ancient volumes, but the fever gradually died out. There is an historical interest in finding out Caxtons. It is not the 'dead rubbish of a dead generation' we are dealing with when we turn over the leaves of the 'Knight of the Tower' or the 'Confessio Amantis.' In these days of excellence, it is refreshing to turn to the rude letters, the irregular pages, the want of initial letters, and so on. At the end of his translation of 'The History of Troy' we are told Caxton's eyes 'were dimmed with overmuch looking on the white paper; that his courage was not so prone and ready to labour as it had been; and that age was creeping on him daily and enfeebling his body: that he had practised and learnt at his great charge and expense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as we see it; and that it was not written with pen and ink as other books be.' It was quite usual for the early printers to put something of this kind at the end of their books. For instance, Faust and Schoffer of Mentz stated their works 'were not drawn or written by a pen, as all books had been before, but made by a new art and invention of printing, or stamping them by characters or types of metal set in forms.'

However much we may crave after Caxton's books in this latter end of the nineteenth century, some of the dignitaries did not look upon the innovation of printing with kindly eyes four hundred years ago. Bishop Bale suggestively referred to Caxton as a 'man not quite stupid, nor benumbed with sloth.' The rummager amongst old books will be very glad if even after

several years' searching he brings to the light a genuine Caxton. They are not in every garret, but there must be copies in many garrets, being eaten by the worms and slowly destroyed by the damp. May they soon be rescued!

A TALE OF A DARTMOOR FOG.

My grandfather, Jacob Brewer, of Stitchworthy, near Chagford, Devon, had but one remarkable episode in his long life. Such as it was, however, it must have made a very great impression on him. He was a farmer of a class now extinct, or nearly so, in England, owning, as his ancestors had owned for several generations, the estate of Stitchworthy, on Dartmoor. He had at the time I speak of attained the dignity of a Justice of the Peace, and being possessed of a superior education to the general run of 'country justices' in those days, acquitted himself with much credit, and had sent his son to study the law at Exeter.

It fell out that one day, in the beginning of September 1813, he had occasion to visit the fair at Widdicombe, renowned in Devonshire song. My grandfather having concluded a bargain for certain sheep, was invited by the seller, as the one inn was crammed to suffocation, to come to his house near by to clench the bargain in the time-honoured way. They fell to talk of things agricultural, and then of the war, somewhat regardless of time, till at length the tall kitchen clock startled my grandfather by slowly clanging four.

'Hallo!' he exclaimed, starting up; 'I never thought it was so late. I should have been half-way back by now;' and taking a hasty leave of his host, he mounted his famous chestnut mare Jenifer (west-country for Guinevere), rode up a steep stony lane which brought him to the open moor, and ascended the slopes of Hamil Down. Now Hamil Down, or Hamildon, is a gigantic ridge of granite some three miles long, forming one side of the vale of Widdicombe. Its wide level top is seventeen hundred feet above the sea; and the view from the great barrow which marks its centre is as strange and picturesque as one as can be found in England. Almost due west, on the horizon at the foot of a rounded hill, were some whitish patches; these were the great prison barracks of Princetown, where many hundreds of prisoners of war were kept. My grandfather reflected on this with no other feeling than one of deep gratitude to Providence that they were safely bestowed there, instead of working their will on his person and property.

As he proceeded, there lay right below him, in a deep scoop of the down between two tors, what seemed a huge 'fairy ring' on the boggy ground. This was Grimspound, supposed to be an ancient fort, and consisting of a rude embankment of great boulders and earth, overgrown with bracken. My grandfather proceeded to ride through it, and just as he passed the entrance, Jenifer shied, and a man suddenly rose from the ditch, and stood, apparently undecided whether to run or not. He was a well-made, good-looking young fellow of about seven-and-twenty, of very dark complexion, in seaman's attire, dirty and muddy, as from rough travelling, and there was a dark patch or stain on his coat on the left side. He stood for

a minute with a half-alarmed, half-savage expression on his face—which often revisited my grandfather in his dreams—before he spoke.

'Beg your honour's pardon,' he said; 'but I took you for a highwayman, and thought it best to keep out of sight if I could.'

'Highwayman, indeed!' said my grandfather. 'Not a very likely place to meet one, where there are no highways.—But what are you doing here?'

'That's easily told, your honour,' said the sailor, with an air of more confidence. 'I'm a sailor, as you see, mate of the brig *Nereus*, from Jamaica to Plymouth. We came into port last week; and I went to Tavistock first, to see some friends, and then started to tramp across to Teignmouth, where my home is; but trying a short-cut I was told of, I've got clean out of my reckoning. If your honour could put me on the track, it would be a favour.'

'Humph!' said my grandfather. 'If you are for Teignmouth, you have a longish walk yet; and you'll never find your way to Moreton tonight.—Look here, my man; you seem an honest fellow. If you follow me, you can have a supper and a shake-down in the barn, and reach Chagford as early as you like in the morning. Though there are no highwaymen about, there are fellows whose room is better than their company on the Moor at night.'

'Much obliged to your honour,' said the sailor, picking up a stick and bundle, such as men of his calling generally travelled with ashore.

'You seem to have been hurt,' said my grandfather, eyeing the stain on the man's coat.

'Yes, your honour; we had a brush with a Yankee privateer just after leaving Kingston. We beat her off; but I got a poke with a board-ing-pike, and it's not healed yet.'

They had proceeded but a short distance, when a horseman appeared coming towards them, in whom my grandfather recognised his 'hind' or bailiff, Johnny Truscott.

'The mistress hev sent me out to look for 'ee, Squire,' said he as he rode up. 'She do be terrible oneasy about 'ee all day. Some of they pris'ners got away last night; we heard 'm shootin' off signal-guns up to Princetown. You hev'n't surely catched one of 'm?' as he noticed the not very reputable plight of the young sailor.

'No; not this time,' said my grandfather.—'But what do you see, Johnny?' for he was gazing hard towards Grimspound.

'Two men, Squire, lookin' at us over the far side o' the pound. They've dropped down now; but I seen 'm so plain as the nose on your face. Shall us go an' look at 'm, sir?—maight be some o' they pris'ners.'

'No,' said my grandfather, after consideration. 'If they are, I don't quite see how we are going to capture them without arms.—You see'—to the sailor—'the bad company I told you of was nearer than we thought.'

'Drat they pris'ners!' said Truscott; 'I wish they'd take an' smother the lot in Cranmere so fast as they catches 'm.'

Ere long they had reached my grandfather's homestead; and consigning the stranger to the care of Truscott, my grandfather entered the house.

Stitchworthy stood on a rising ground between

two moorland streams. South and east were fields, studded with granite bosses, and enclosed by granite walls thick-grown with fern and fox-glove; but north and west was the primeval Moor, and, overlooking all, Kestor with its grim square fort-like summit. The house itself, a massive stone building with a seventeenth-century date over the door, formed one side of a terribly 'mucky' farmyard, the other sides consisting of cowsheds and farm-buildings.

'Jacob, how came you to be so careless as to leave your pistols behind?' demanded my grandmother.—'And who's that you've brought with you?'

My grandfather related the story in as few words as possible, while struggling out of his boots.

His wife seemed but half satisfied. 'Well, Jacob, of course you couldn't leave the man to get lost; but since he came so far, he might just as well have gone to Chagford.'

'I don't see that, my dear. Four miles of as bad a track as ever called itself a road, to go over in the dark, and perhaps those two fellows on the watch for him.'

'It's no use my talking, I know, Jacob; but you ought to be more careful, now you're a Justice, and not believe every plausible tale that vagabonds tell you.—I'm sure we're getting to be a regular house of call for them, and the people you take on at harvest keep me in a twitter till they're off the place.'

'There's no occasion to twitter about the sailor, my dear. You won't see him again.—Let's have supper, please, for I'm rather sharp set.'

During the progress of the meal, frequent sounds of merriment reached their ears from the direction of the men's quarters, as if the visitor were making himself entertaining; but early hours were then the rule, and by half-past eight every one was, or was supposed to be, asleep.

About ten, my grandfather was awakened by his wife shaking him; and sitting up in bed, he was aware of a great disturbance among the dogs. The big mastiff had set up a thundering baying; old Ranter, the Exmoor staghound, joined in with his deep-mouthed music; and 'the little dogs and all' added a chorus, rousing the geese into frantic screechings. In some annoyance, he hustled on the most necessary garments, and loading a ponderous double flintlock, which would have made a modern sportsman's back ache to look at, made his way down-stairs and into the yard. Truscott, two labourers, and the sailor were already in the yard, and the forces, human and canine, sallied out. Dividing into two parties, they made a circuit of the premises; but when they met, no one had seen anything. The Moor lay black around in the shadow of Longridge and Kestor, save where the stone walls showed ivory white in the moonlight, and no sound could be heard except the brook rattling over its stony bed. Presently the distant hoot of a tawny owl broke the stillness, then another in answer, seemingly close by. The dogs growled and sniffed the air inquiringly. A thick bank of cloud was beginning to draw over the moon. Something was said about 'piskies,' and it was evident that neither Truscott nor the men cared about getting out of sight of the house.

'It's too bad, it is,' said my grandfather, 'to

be dragged out of bed in this way, an' not even get a shot.'

'Shoot thick owl, Squire,' said the younger of the men, grinning.

'What do you mean, Sam?' said my grandfather.

'Gypsies do call to aich other laike owls at night, Squire. Just 'fore you comed back, or it might be a hour, I zee dree on 'em crassin' the Moor to'ards Vitifer.'

'There's been a braave lot of 'm camped over to Belstone, since Okehampton cattle fair, so I heard,' said the other man.

Now, my grandfather, though, as we have seen, not inclined to be hard on masterless men in general, made an exception in the case of gypsies, to whom he had as great an aversion as an Australian squatter to 'myall blacks.' It was with some irritation that he observed to Truscott: 'Those were the men you saw, no doubt. I wonder what they were watching us for? No good, of course.'

'Tis little enough good they have about 'em,' said Truscott.—'Reckon, Jack, he adled, addressing the sailor, 'twas lucky for 'ee Squire and I happened to come up.'

The rest of the night passed without event; and in the morning, my grandfather, having rather overslept himself, found Truscott awaiting orders.

'He's clane gone, Squire. Sam slept in the loft with 'm an' never heard 'm go; but 'tis aisier to wake a hedgyboar [hedgehog] at Christmas than to wake Sam.'

'Aw! but he were a funny chap! Tell 'ee what, Squire, he weren't such a stranger in these parts as what he do make out.'

'What makes you think so?'

'Cause,' replied Truscott, 'we never had to say nothin' over again to 'm, same as we does to a foreigner, or even a Plymouth or a Exeter man.'

At this minute Sam came up, and, touching his hat, held out something. 'Found this in the straw, Squire, where thicky sailor chap laid las' night,' said he, exhibiting a round metal box, such as was then used instead of a tobacco pouch, having scratched on it a rude likeness of an eagle and the letters G. D.

'Right, Sam,' said my grandfather, weighing it in his hand. 'Silver, too. He'll most likely come back for it. If he does, John, tell him to ask the mistress for it;' and having given sundry directions and hastily breakfasted, he mounted and set off for the meet of the otter hounds at Post Bridge. When the sport was over, my grandfather returned to Post Bridge with most of the mounted contingent, amongst whom were several officers of the Princetown guard. As they rode on, scraps of conversation reached his ears which caused him to listen with more attention.

'When the winter sets in, there won't be much chance for escapes.'

'If I were in his place, I should pray for an early one. He'll be superseded if many more get away.'

'I doubt if the fellow will be caught. He must know the country, and there are too many traiping sailors about for him to attract much notice.'

'Is it a prisoner you are talking about, gentlemen?' said my grandfather. 'Perhaps I can give you some information;' and he recounted the events of the previous day.

'That's the man, without doubt,' said the officer addressed. 'A renegade, sir, one of the crew of the Yankee brig *Pocahontas*, who've given us more trouble than all the rest. The night before last, he and a dozen more got out by digging under the wall, bound and gagged a sentry, though he says he got his bayonet into this fellow; and as yet only six have been caught. His name is George Dousland, as we found out by means of an uncle of his who lives at Tavistock, and who recognised him at the market. The old man nearly went into a fit with rage, for this scoundrel had formerly robbed and nearly killed him.'

'Well, gentlemen,' said my grandfather, 'it's my duty as a Justice to assist you; and if you will send a party to my place, I will put you on the track, as far as I can.'

'Very good, Mr Brewer,' said the officer. 'I'm afraid they could hardly get there to-day in time to do any good; but you may expect them early in the morning.'

On arrival at Post Bridge, the military cantered off towards Princetown, and the rest turned into the inn for a parting glass before going their ways. Amongst them was Hannaford, the host of the *Three Crocens* at Chagford, who had heard what had passed.

'Aw dear!' he exclaimed to my grandfather, when they were sitting in the inn parlour, 'to think o' Jarge Dousland comin' to this.'

'You know him, then?'

'Iss, Squire. I knew'd him well to Tavistock eight year ago, an' his uncle ould Hendry too; but what I never knew'd was the man that had a good word to say for him—the uncle, I mean. This boy, this Jarge Dousland, came to live with him when he was about fifteen. Ould Hendry used him cruel bad first along; but latterly he found 'twas no use; he cudn't make him do nothin' he didn't want to do. He wudn't do no work at the mill, nor nowhere, without he had a fancy; an' he was allus roamin' the country an' soshiatin' with poachers an' gypsies an' such like. Last, when he were about twenty year old, one night ould Hendry thought he heard thieves, an' goes down an' finds Jarge along with a gypsy; an' the short of it was ould Hendry got pretty near killed afore help comed. I reckon it didn't come too quick either, for his men weren't fonder of him than other folks. Jarge wasn't to be heard of next day; an' though there was a 'sa'lt-an'-buttery warrant out, 'twas no good, for he'd got to Plymouth, an' was to sea on a king's ship long before his uncle cud see out of his eyes.—That was spring of the year Lord Nelson died; an' till to-day, I never heard word of him.'

My grandfather was very wroth at hearing these particulars. The ships of the American navy, which had inflicted several reverses on us, were very largely, in some cases entirely, manned by British deserters. That he himself should have given aid and assistance to one of them seemed a personal disgrace. 'If it had been a Frenchman, or even a real Yankee,' he soliloquised as he rode home, 'I shouldn't have cared so much.'

But an English renegade! It shan't be my fault if they don't catch him, if I lose another day. The worst of it is, I shall never hear the last of it from the wife.' And indeed he never did.

Next morning, the weather had changed, and a westerly breeze was sending heavy clouds rolling across the Moor, sweeping its surface with ragged curtains of mist and fine rain. My grandfather had come in from superintending a haystack which was getting heated, and was breakfasting in the kitchen, where provision had been made for the expected officer and men from Princetown. Suddenly, Ranter got up and trotted growling to the door; the gate clashed, and a trample of hoofs, with a clink and jingle, was heard approaching.

'Here they are!' he exclaimed. 'Get the flask filled, my dear, and the big cloak; yes, and the pistols, and a blunderbuss, and a cutlass, and all Robinson Crusoe's outfit, if it will make you any easier in your mind. Tell Sam to saddle the gray; I won't risk Jenifer among the mires;' and he issued forth to meet the party. They consisted of an officer, who introduced himself as Lieutenant Macmorris, four dragoons, and a civilian, who, my grandfather instinctively felt, must be no other than Hendry. He felt disgusted with the conduct of a man who could thus come out to hunt his own nephew, however bad he may have been.

'Good-morning, Lieutenant,' said my grandfather. 'Come in and get something to eat, you and your men.'

The person introduced as Mr Hendry was a tall, wiry man of fifty or so, with hard gray eyes under bushy eyebrows, and a very long upper lip. He was attired in the heavy boots and breeches and long-skirted coat of the period—all rather the worse for wear; and his steed, a vicious-looking black mare, seemed not to suffer from overfeeding or grooming. He bowed stiffly to Mrs Brewer, shook hands with my grandfather, and exclaimed with an affected jocularly which sat very ill on him: 'Well, sir, d'ye think we shall run him to earth? Scent's rather cold, hey?'

'Won't you sit down to breakfast?' said my grandfather. 'We may have a long ride before us, and a damp one.'

'To be sure, to be sure,' said Hendry; and seating himself opposite to the Lieutenant, who was making alarming ravages on the fried bacon, commenced eating with a great display of appetite. It was not long, however, before he pushed away his plate and exclaimed: 'Isn't it nearly time to start, Lieutenant?'

On being questioned by the officer, my grandfather gave it as his opinion that the runaway would most likely have made for the gypsy camp at Belstone.

'Iss, Squire,' said Truscott, who had entered. 'Twas they owls fled away with 'n, sure enough. Depend 'pon it, they chaps that we saw to the Pound was along with 'n when you comed on 'n, but he cudn't get away so quick as they.'

'I suppose that was it,' said my grandfather. 'But as to Belstone, I can show you a way there in about seven miles, but you will have to follow me close, for it's a rough track, and the mires are very soft just now.'

As soon as they were mounted—'Now,' said my grandfather, pointing with his whip to the

huge round bulk of Cawsand Beacon, looming through the mist, 'that hill is where we must make for, and—' 'Hullo!' The exclamation was caused by the conduct of Hendry's mare, which no sooner felt her rider in the saddle, than, with a vicious jerk of her head, she got the bit in her teeth, and dashed off in the direction of Chagford, cannoning against my grandfather's old gray and nearly capsizing him. Though old Hendry sat firmly enough, it was only at a high stone wall that he could check her. 'Upon my word,' said my grandfather, rubbing his leg, as the runaway rejoined them, 'you must take care, Mr Hendry, that she doesn't play these tricks where we're going, or we may have the job of fishing you out of a mire.'

Hendry apologised to my grandfather, who replied: 'No harm done, sir; let's push on;' and the interrupted march was resumed.

The wind had died away, and the mist was gathering round with a fine drizzle as they paced over the scrubby heather of the granite-strewn Moor, now passing a circle of upright stones, rising gray and solitary from a hill-side, now an overthrown 'kistvaen,' and now a long double line of rough blocks leading nowhere. By-and-by the fog settled down in earnest; and when they gained the top, and drew rein to let the horses breathe, they could see little beyond one another and the ground they stood on.

It was indeed the thickest fog that my grandfather could remember in all his experience; and though it was near ten o'clock of a September day, and he knew well where he was, he had to proceed as carefully as if it had been midnight. Suddenly, a great pile of rocks appeared to start out of the fog.

'Ha! here's White Hill!' he exclaimed. 'We're only a little way out. To the right, and then straight on again, will get us there in an hour, or less.—Now, Mr Hendry, straight on after me, if you please.—Why, what do you see, man?'

Old Hendry, without heeding the question, had reined up, and was staring fixedly before him, with such an expression of concentrated rage on his hard-lined face, as, considering the absence of any cause for it, amazed the beholders.

Before the question could be repeated, he spoke in a low strained voice, without turning his head: 'There, there he is—running and mocking at us!'

No one spoke, but every one stared at the impenetrable white blank in front. Before another word could be said, the black mare plunged, threw up her heels, and horse and rider vanished like the picture on a lantern screen when the slide is pulled out.

My grandfather, who alone realised the danger, was speechless with dismay for an instant, then, clapping his hands to his mouth, bawled with all his might: 'To the right—to the right, man! Throw yourself off, if you can't stop her!'

The rapidly receding thud of hoofs in a mad gallop down hill was the only answer. To ride after would have been sheer insanity, for nothing could be seen ten yards off, and the ground was strewn with angular lumps of granite, hidden in the heather. How the mare kept her legs for an instant, was, my grandfather used to say, the

greatest mystery in the affair. Suddenly the sound ceased.

'He's stopped her,' said the Lieutenant.—'But hear that!' as a scream, harsh, thrilling, and fearfully prolonged, came ringing up from below. 'Tis the horse. Many's the time I've heard it in Spain.'

'He may have thrown himself off,' said my grandfather, wiping his face, which was damp with more than fog. 'The best way is to leave a man here with the horses, and go down in a line as far apart as we can see each other.'

They did so; and in a few minutes, one of the soldiers picked up Hendry's hat; but no further discovery was made; and presently the peat began to squash under their feet, and my grandfather called a halt.

'No further,' said he, taking up a large stone and pitching it a few yards in front, where it disappeared with a gulping sound and a jelly-like quivering of the surface. 'I daren't try to skirt the pool in this weather. We must search up hill again to find him, if he is above ground! which I doubt.'

But when, after half an hour's searching and shouting, no traces were found, and they arrived at their starting-place, much to the relief of the man left with the horses, they came to the dismal conclusion that Hendry was beyond help, and that nothing remained but to proceed. Just as they moved off, the corporal exclaimed: 'Here he comes, sir!' as a horseman on a black horse broke through the fog; but next instant my grandfather recognised the rider as a man named Prowse, a Moorman, living at Belstone.

'What! is it you, Squire?' said he. 'What be doin' this side long o' they sajers, and what be all the scraichin' about?—Aw! but I were glad to hear it, for I'd got fair 'mazed; I never see the like o' this fog!'

'He be gone, right enough,' he remarked when he heard of the event. 'Same as Phairy in the Red Sea. The pool be that full now, a plover cudn't hardly settle on 'm. Gypsies? Iss, sure. There was a parcel o' them to Higher Tor; but they moved off this mornin'. Seem'th there was a chap with 'm, not one o' theirselves, a sort o' trampin' sailor, an' last night he died.' (My grandfather started.) 'They say as how he was hurted fore he comed to them, an' his wound broke out an' bled 'm to death in his sleep; but three on 'm 's in custody, an' the crowner is comin' from Okehampton for to hold a inquest.'

A breeze sprung up at this moment; the fog lifted considerably, and they were able to proceed more rapidly. Much discussion ensued. My grandfather owned that he had seen and heard nothing, neither had the Lieutenant; and, but for Hendry's strange speech and looks, it would have seemed merely a case of a bolting horse. But the corporal thought he saw 'something'; whereupon one of the men affirmed that he also saw 'summat,' but he thought 'it didn't look like a man,' which enabled another man to recollect hearing something 'like a voice callin'.'

When they reached the hamlet of Belstone, a little crowd of people were clustered about the one public-house, who raised a buzz of astonishment at the sight of the party. The Lieutenant having explained their errand, they were ushered

into a sort of barn at the back, where, on a table extemporised of planks on trestles, lay stiff, shrunken, and white, the remains of the luckless George Dousland. The three gypsies in custody were two men, and a woman, who sat crouched on a bench, her sullen black eyes fixed on the body.

The horses being quite knocked up, my grandfather offered the party his hospitality for the night. In the morning, he bethought him of the silver tobacco box, and being in some doubt whether it might not be considered spoil of war, he handed it to the Lieutenant, who accepted it with many thanks.

No trace of Hendry was ever found; but, years after, when the prison stood empty and deserted, my grandfather was called to Plymouth on legal business. As he walked on the Hoe, he encountered his former acquaintance, Lieutenant, now, thanks to the chances of war, Major Macmorris, who welcomed him with effusion, and insisted on taking him to his quarters in the Citadel. There he produced the box, flattened by a bullet as it lay in his waistcoat pocket at Waterloo, remarking: 'So you see, Mr Brewer, if that little excursion you took us was the death of one man, it was the means of saving the life of another.'

NEST-BUILDING EXTRAORDINARY.

THOSE who go Bird-nesting would scarcely be expected to look in spouts of pumps, hands of statues, interiors of letter-boxes in use, in street lamps, old shoes, hats, or still less in human skulls, to add to their egg-collections. Yet all such curious and fanciful selections have at times been made by feathered architects as sites for the erection of the temporary nurseries which are to guard their young ones. How the tender fledglings are reared, often under extraordinary disadvantageous circumstances, is amazing. A large number of birds, for example, conceived an affection for the newly-erected battle-ship *Victory*, in the Isle of Man Exhibition grounds, and built their nests there. Inside the figure-head, a pair of blackbirds started housekeeping, and four eggs soon lay in their soft nest. More curious still was it to find that a feathered pair had made their nest inside the tiny hull of a model ironclad, and liked the situation so much, that although the hull was overhauled and painted and carted on wheels to the lake-side, the attentive mother never deserted her eggs. What may be mentioned as a peculiar coincidence in connection with this part of our subject was the discovery of a robin's nest in the mizzen-mast of Nelson's ship, the *Victory*, part of which mast is still preserved in the grounds of Bushey House. It was shot right through at Trafalgar, and in the hole thus made a pair of robins built their nest and reared a brood of young ones.

Robins in particular seem fond of odd nesting-places. A nest with three eggs was lately extracted from one of the old George IV. lamps in St James's Park, London. Another of these birds had the audacity to build a nest in a black-

smith's shop close to where horses are shod, and hatched its eggs, undisturbed by the din of hammers or the flying sparks from the forge. Two other robins chose a paper bag which was hung up in a greenhouse in Buxton, built their nest in it, and reared six small robins therein, coming to and fro through a broken pane. Being regarded as a curiosity, the nest was preserved by skilfully propping the bag to support the weight. A veritable nest-tower, built by a pair of these birds, was once found by an egg-collector. As each attempt appeared to turn out unsatisfactory, one new nest after another was built over the last, till five were completed before this fastidious couple were contented to begin housekeeping.

Sparrows are proverbially audacious. Two recently reared their frail habitation in a railway signal-box, unmindful of the various noises resulting from shunting the trains. A train used to make a daily run carrying a blackbird's nest and eggs amongst the woodwork underneath one of the carriages. Upon unloading a railway wagon filled with limestone at St Helens, a nest with five perfect eggs was found which looked like a blackbird's. A similar find was made in a coal-wagon at Banbury. The nest had probably been carried from Cannock Chase pits, and must have bewildered the birds by its sudden disappearance. In a hole in one of the buffers of a railway carriage making daily excursions between Thorpe and Clacton-on-Sea, a tomtit made its nest and hatched the eggs, in spite of the frequent violent concussions when the carriage was shunted. These usually timid creatures appear to get as accustomed to shocks and loud noises as do people to earthquakes and hurricanes. Imagine any one looking for a nest in the ammunition box of a gun-carriage; yet a bird once built one there, nor was it frightened away by the daily firing of that weapon. Two sparrows which built in the slot of a railway signal-post were quite unconcerned at the moving up and down of the arms, which in consequence raised and lowered the nest as though it were on the waving branch of a tree.

Some men sawing through an elm-tree discovered in the middle of it a bird's nest containing five perfect eggs. The tree, fifteen inches in diameter, was quite sound except just round the nest, and is supposed to be more than one hundred years old. Another curiosity in this line was worthy of its place in the local museum, for it was a bird's nest made wholly of long spiral steel shavings, without the least particle of vegetable fibre. It was found in Switzerland at a place which is the centre of a large watch-manufacturing district.

Your egg-collector would scarcely think of climbing to the top of a blast furnace, or of descending a coal-pit, after the many speckled and coloured objects of his search; yet on the top of one of the unused furnaces near Ardrossan, a pigeon's nest with three eggs was discovered; and the bottom of a shaft near Airdrie had taken the fancy of a starling, which returned next day to the strange place of its choice, after being taken to the surface.

The eider-ducks of the Norway coast, birds from

which the soft and warm eider-down is produced, are very hard to suit in the matter of selecting building sites for their broods' homes. It is not unusual for a duck, after examining all likely spots out-of-doors, to march boldly into a house and coolly select what she considers a suitable place for her nest, such as the oven, if it happens to be unused at the time. The human inmates of the house welcome her gladly, supply her with food, and cheerfully submit to any small inconveniences like the temporary loss of their oven, for they know that their guest will pay a good price for her board and lodging. After finishing the nest, made of sticks and grass, the eider-duck plucks the soft down from her breast and makes a wonderful mat, which rises so far above the edge of the nest, that it can be folded over the eggs when the duck goes away in search of food.

LEAVES.

THE leaves came forth in the early Spring;
They heard the call of birds on the wing;
The soft white snow had wrapped them warm
From the biting frost—from the bitter storm,
And they whispered at touch of the sunbeam's kiss:
'What a very beautiful world is this!'

Yes, the gay young leaves had a glorious time
Dancing all day to the south wind's chime;
The dewdrops bathed them through summer night,
Then turned to diamonds with morning light,
And the world looked bright through the radiant gleam,
The beautiful world of a fairy dream.

The leaves grew strong in sunshine and shower,
That curved and rounded them hour by hour;
Their green took many a lovely shade,
As the wind with the sunbeams fluttered and played;
No scars defaced them, no rents were seen,
No tinge of russet among the green.

Bright were the woods while the summer smiled,
But the rains and winds of autumn were wild;
Some leaves at end of the year remained—
Ah! they were broken and bruised and stained;
The green was faded, the fair mould lost;
'Twas the work of the rain, the storm, the frost.

And thus it is at the close of life;
Heart after heart worn out with strife,
Passion and pain have left their trace
On the bowed-down form, on the careworn face;
There will come fresh leaves when winter is o'er,
But the green to the old leaf returns no more.

And dark it would be, our brief youth past,
But for hope of a Spring that will ever last,
When the green comes back to a fadeless leaf,
When the scars are healed, and the rents of grief,
At rest from storms of sorrow and strife,
Are the beautiful leaves of the Tree of Life!

MARY GORGES.

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A COLOSSAL MAP.

THE little but expressive word Map, that now sums up in the compass of three letters such a vast treasure-house of geographical knowledge, has only had abiding-place in our language since the middle ages. The word itself in its literal signification carries us back to the time when maps were painted on linen or cloth. For 'mappa mundi,' from which the abbreviated 'map' is derived, signifies neither more nor less than 'world-napkin'—that is, a cloth on which was painted a representation of some portion of the disc of the earth.

With the Greeks, the map was a picture; among the Romans, a 'tabula'—that is, a table or list. Much as the first-named people did to develop the scientific construction of maps, it is to the ancient Egyptians that the honour of the first maps must be assigned. Very crude were these primeval attempts at cartography, made as they were fourteen centuries before the Christian era. They were maps only by courtesy, being, in fact, pictures of a stretch of landscape in some cases; and in others, pictures hieroglyphically treated of the more salient features of a State or some portion of it. But still the papyrus rolls contain the beginnings from which has developed the science of map-making as practised at the present day.

Anaximander, a pupil of Thales, who flourished about 560 B.C., showed on his maps not only the circular world-disc which marked a circular expanse of country extending in equal distances from the observer to the horizon boundary, but also the 'circumfluent ocean,' of which the poet of his people sang so eloquently. Four centuries later saw the construction of the first sphere; and the allotment of land and water upon it, strange as it may seem, was received as correct right down to the middle ages. From north to south were drawn a pair of parallel lines, which were supposed to enclose a canal-like ocean. A similar pair extended through the equatorial regions, also enclosing water. The four remaining segments

were held to contain land, one section of which was regarded as explored. In the middle ages the science of map-making received a great check. The ban of the Church was upon the belief in the rotundity of the earth, and geographical knowledge had to a certain extent to conform to this pronouncement. The discovery of America and other unexplored areas, the invention of printing, the knowledge of engraving on wood and on copper, all, in their several ways, increased our geographical knowledge and the means of expressing it. Hence, by slow degrees, the evolution of the modern map.

The present century, and especially the last twenty years of it, has seen an enormous addition made to our geographical knowledge. Not only have civilised powers made elaborate surveys of their territories, but much land hitherto unexplored has been accurately laid down in maps. The amount of land-surface of the globe that has been fully surveyed is estimated at fifty-six to sixty per cent. of the whole land-area. Unexplored territories are calculated to cover ten or twelve per cent. of the land-surface. But although the proportion of land that has been surveyed is so large, the maps recording it are not always available. Some of them are the result of private exploration, and the geographical information thus acquired is only circulated among a comparatively few individuals. Others are not put upon the market at all, so that they are practically unobtainable. Neither is there any uniformity as regards scale, projection, or style of execution.

A Frenchman being shown over a London Board School, remarked: 'It is no wonder that you Englishmen have exalted notions of your importance. You teach by your maps that one-half of your tiny island is as big as a whole continent.' And there is certainly some truth in the accusation. Children may not grasp the qualifying fact of scale-difference. They see England and (say) South America similarly sized sheets, and institute comparisons which are certainly not to the prejudice of their patriotism.

The most interesting subject, perhaps, that was brought before the International Geographical Congress, held at Berne in August 1891, was the proposal that the Congress should promote the construction of a Map of the World on the scale of 1: 1,000,000, or about sixteen miles to the inch. After duly considering the project, the Congress decided to initiate the preparation of such a map of the world.

To further this, a Commission of geographers and cartographers of different nationalities was created. It is the business of the Commission to endeavour to obtain the co-operation of the various governments and all societies and individuals interested, so that the scheme may be brought to a successful issue. Their progress will be reported to the next International Congress, to be held in London.

The number of sheets that the map will take up will be three or four thousand, and they will be of such a size that nine of them will cover an area about six feet square. Asia alone would cover an area resembling a square one side of which would measure over thirty feet. The complete map it is estimated will cover an area of about two thousand five hundred square feet. The cost of production is put down at about nine pounds per square foot for an edition of one thousand copies. If this edition is sold at two shillings a sheet, the deficit is estimated at £100,000. Striking as is the idea of such a map, or an atlas containing the different sections of such, the cost of production is enormous. Three or four hundred pounds for an atlas is rather an expensive item, and the most extravagant of those who have the spending of public moneys would no doubt hesitate before making such a purchase. The deficit of £100,000 is not, however, such a large sum, when the amounts that have been spent upon scientific expeditions are considered, so that the continental supporters of the scheme are very sanguine that the great map will become an accomplished fact. In such a map, Great Britain's dominions would of course take up a greater number of sheets than the territories of any other State. Russia comes next, and the United States third, as follows: British Empire, 222; Russia, 192; United States, 65; France, 55; Scandinavia, 54; China, 45; Brazil, 28; Egypt, &c., 27; Netherlands, 24; Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, 22; Germany, 21; Turkey, 18; Spain, 16; &c. It will be seen from this list that if the leading territorial powers of the world care to unite their forces and support the scheme, there will be but little difficulty in the matter.

Your boundaries of States are to be shown in black, perhaps edged with a narrow strip of colour. The boundaries of minor political divisions, such as of his counties, are to be omitted. All railroads, the more important roads, lines of telegraph, the navigable limits of rivers, are to be shown; and it is also proposed to indicate the extent of forest-land. All water is to be shown blue. The depths of the ocean are to be indicated. Lakes, rivers, and swamps will be shown; and tidal

information, along with markings to show the variation in lake levels, will also figure upon the map.

To determine the best method of indicating the relief of the world's surface is a rather difficult matter. But it is proposed to show, as far as is possible, both the relative and actual elevation of the land masses. All known heights will be inserted. Four contour lines are to be used, drawn to indicate elevations of 100, 300, 500, and 1200 metres; or, roughly, 300, 1000, 1600, and 4000 feet. Three colours will be used to show relative heights; and 'hachures,' or lines of shading, will also be requisitioned to mark the steepness of a district. Besides the boundaries of States being in black, the coast-line and lettering will also be similarly indicated.

Such are the more salient features of this proposed colossal map. It speaks much for the state of our present geographical knowledge, and the brotherhood which exists between scientists of different nations, that such a scheme is possible. Whether the possibility of its existence will become an accomplished fact, however, remains to be seen.

Some people assert that the scale of sixteen miles to the inch is too large a scale for a map of the world. They say that the time has not yet arrived for such a map. After all, however, the scale is not such a large one; and it is only in very few cases that data will be inobtainable to fill in the requisite details. Such tracts as these are becoming both fewer and smaller each year. The past thirty years have added much to our knowledge of the interior of Australia, Alaska, the extreme north of North America, Greenland, and more especially of Central Africa. Two decades ago, a map of the Dark Continent on a larger scale than eighty miles to the inch would have been deemed an impossibility. Now we have a map of Africa showing thirty-two miles to the inch; and the author of that map, so long ago as 1885, expressed the opinion that in ten years' time our knowledge of Africa would be such that a scale of sixteen miles to the inch would be the smallest that would suffice to show the main features of African geography.

This is not the only argument in support of the adoption of such a scale. The Indian Government have already produced a map of our Indian possessions and their surroundings on that scale. A similar map is also existent of the Transvaal, the East India Islands, and several Central and South American States. The Russians in their efforts after military aggrandisement have done much to further the cause of map-construction. Their maps are splendid specimens of accurate and condensed geographical information. The scale employed differs but little from that proposed in the scheme under discussion. The Germans have, like our own Royal Geographical Society, already published many maps of newly explored territories on a scale of sixteen miles to the inch or thereabouts. So that there is extant a vast fund of facts that could be pressed into service in the execution of this uniform map of the world. The greater part of Europe and a large portion of India and North America have been surveyed on a much smaller scale than this, and, in fact, it is only the one-eighth of unexplored

lands that the scale is too large for. But such a map as this would take years to execute, even with the co-operative action of the nations; and many areas would in the meantime become more fully known than they are at present.

One result that such a map would give us is, that the Balkan Peninsula will become more accurately known than it is at present. The cartographical science is certainly on a lower level in the territories that owned the domination of the Turk than it is in any other portion of Europe. This is not to be wondered at, when the heterogeneous character of the States that went to make up what used to be called Turkey in Europe is considered. China, too, would be known in more detail than it is at present. In carrying out the work in Central Africa, no assistance could be expected from the natives. The negroes know no maps. Their stay-at-home habits preclude their necessity, and their languages show no equivalent for our word map. But commercial enterprise and missionary effort have already done much to render native assistance unnecessary. The natives of the North Polar Regions, on the other hand, are keenly alive to the value of a map. They know what a map is. They know how to use it, and, what is more, they have over and over again demonstrated their ability to express their knowledge of things geographical in a rough sketch map. Arctic explorers have frequently found intelligent Eskimos who have drawn on the snow a rough representation of a coast-line with the direction of its trend accurately delineated. In fact, the members of one section of an expedition owed their rescue at the hands of their comrades to the cartographical knowledge of a native Greenlander. It is quite possible to conceive that a more thorough information respecting the configuration of the Greenland and adjacent coasts would be obtainable if some means could only be devised of educating the native Eskimo to express in maps and sketches the knowledge of his ice-bound territory which he must possess.

The map, or atlas of the world, as some of its advocates prefer to designate it, would of course recognise the meridian of Greenwich as the numbering point for the meridians of longitude. The sheets to which we have alluded are each to show a length and breadth of five degrees. Now, the length of a degree of longitude at the equator is sixty-nine miles. In the latitude of sixty degrees, it is only the half of that; so, in order to keep the sheets of something like uniform size, the sections of the map north of the sixtieth parallel of latitude will show five degrees in length and ten degrees in breadth. These double-column sheets, as they are called, will fall of course to those territories lying within a thirty degrees' radius from the Poles. The British Empire will have fifty-seven of them. Russia takes no fewer than one hundred, Scandinavia fifty-one, and the United States twelve.

In the spelling of names, the Latin alphabet is to be used, and the actual spelling will follow that officially used throughout the territory shown. For some countries, such as Russia, it is proposed to have an alternate system of lettering—one for general circulation, and the other for the natives of Russia. Some such method

as this is of course necessary where the Latin alphabet is not used.

If we take the distance of the North Pole from the equator as six thousand miles, then this would be shown on the map by a line of some thirty-three feet in length. Maps on this scale showing a whole continent would be much more valuable for geographical instruction than are the detached maps which are so generally used. The difficulty would be of course one of space. Sheets, however, might be so combined as to make maps which would not fill a larger space than the *whole* of a school-room wall from ceiling to floor.

One thing is certain, that if the map or atlas comes into existence, the onward tendency of elementary education will ensure that its valuable aid will be utilised to advance geographical teaching. But as yet the matter is in abeyance. The International Commission is busy on the subject of the pros and cons of so great a scheme. What headway they have made with the subject, and what will be the fate of the suggestion which originated with Professor Penck, will be made known at the next Congress. But it speaks much for the advancement of geographical science that so bold and striking a scheme is quite within the scope of that which is possible.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—UNCLE HARRY STRIKES HIS TEXT.

THAT was the beginning of Isabel's trials. With great difficulty she assuaged her father's disordered emotions, and with Alexander's help—who had come in soon after the uncles had gone—she prevailed on him to go to bed; but for hours after he had retired she heard him pacing to and fro overhead. Next day when she returned from school her father was gone!—and she soon discovered that Doughty was gone too! She was debating with herself what she should do—whether she should not go directly to Alan Ainsworth and solicit his help to bring her father back—when Alan himself walked in. In the fullness of her heart Isabel told him all the story of her trouble, with what she guessed of the old relations between her father and his brother, and the painful scene of the evening before. Ainsworth was deeply interested: the hatred which the one brother bore the other, and had borne for many years, struck him as something ancient, peculiar, and literary.

'It has often been said,' he observed, 'that there is no hatred so bitter, constant, and deadly as the hatred of brethren.'

'Yes,' said Isabel. 'And in literature it may appear a great and romantic passion, but when you see it before your eyes and hear it with your ears—oh!—it strikes you with shame and horror! And yet when I think of poor Uncle Harry's life, and all he has endured, I can feel only pity for him!—Does it not seem dreadful,' she added,

mainly to herself, 'that women with the best intentions should only cause division between men like these!'

'It always has been so,' said Ainsworth philosophically—for he did not feel a victim himself—'and, I suppose, it always will be. Since a woman can be the wife of only one man, the more desirable she is, the more inevitable it is that there should be rival claimants for her, and the more likely there should be divisions, and perhaps hatreds.'

'I suppose it must be so,' said Isabel, considering him an instant; 'but it is none the less pitiful and dreadful.'

The pity and the dread of it she felt so much that, when she had given Alan instructions where to seek her father, and had seen him set off to carry them out, she herself set out for Rutland Gate. She was sorry for her uncle from the bottom of her heart, now that she had had revealed to her the grievance which he had nursed during his long, long years of loneliness and exile. She completely comprehended how it had all come about: her mother in two minds between the two brothers; admiring, respecting, and liking the one who first asked for her love, but yet irresistibly drawn and captivated by the charm of the other, who, as it were, suddenly caught her up and carried her off. Not one of the three could she find it in her to blame: not her mother—whose case she was beginning to suspect might become her own any day—not her father, who, loving a woman and perceiving she loved him, resolved to take all risks and marry her; and certainly not her uncle, who had been faithful to her mother's memory and who had made his disappointment life-long. Her uncle had been so constituted that he had suffered most, and therefore she would carry to him all her pity; but at the same time she would say to him: 'See; there was no one truly to blame. And it is all past; let it be forgiven, and let yourself and my father be friends, as she would have desired whose memory you cherish.'

When the door of the house at Rutland Gate was opened to her, she asked to see Mr Raynor. The responsible gentleman in black who opened the door told her in confidence—all domestics and others of inferior station were inclined to be communicative to Isabel—that her uncle was in his room packing up.

'Packing up! I suppose I may venture to disturb him?'

The domestic answered that if she would wait a moment he would himself inquire. He returned with speed and asked her to 'walk up.' Her uncle received her at the door of his room with a polite constraint.

'You are not going away—are you, uncle?' she asked with deep concern.

'I am, my dear,' he answered, pressing her hand.

'Abroad again?'

'No; not abroad. I think I have explored

foreign countries enough: I am now going to explore my own country. I am going on a riding or driving tour for two or three months.'

'Months!' she exclaimed.

'That's why I must take some luggage. I shall send it on by train from point to point.'

He was turning away to resume his packing, but she retained his hand and kept him before her. 'Going away,' she said, 'because of this little trouble of last night, and without a word of forgiveness and friendliness! Oh, uncle, is that worthy of you?'

'My dear child,' said he, 'for the trouble of last night I ask your pardon. I forgot myself shamefully.'

'You know, uncle,' said she, 'it is not that I mean. The pain I felt is a small matter; the great thing is the pain you gave my father. Have you no word of forgiveness for him?'

'I forgive him, my dear; I forgive him,' said he, and forcibly withdrew his hand. 'But I wish to forget him. I wish to see him no more, and to hear of him no more. He does not need me: he has you.'

'The scene of last night has completely unsettled him again,' said Isabel, 'and driven him away. When I returned from school he was gone.'

'Gone—is he? That should prove a good thing for you.'

'But I will find him again and bring him back. Do you imagine, uncle, I am so easily turned aside from a purpose as that? He is worth saving from his besetting weakness, and I shall devote myself to saving him.'

'Very well,' said he, when he had considered her a moment. 'You do not ask my advice, and I do not give it.'

'But, dear uncle,' said she, 'you are not in a condition of mind to give advice: you are biased. I think of you both with much the same feeling: why will you not let me love you both? Is that a great thing to ask? Why will you not think with me about my father, and be friendly and helpful with him?'

'Because I cannot. You are a good girl, and you mean well; but really, my dear, I must ask you—beg of you—to drop the subject. Your father has, let us say, a habit of conduct of many years' standing, of which he will not for a long time, if ever, be broken; I have a habit of feeling, let us say, of which I will not for a long time, if ever, be broken. Let us say no more about it.'

She considered. Her uncle's words seemed reasonable: it might be well to leave the softening of his heart to the influence of Time; at least to wait for the effect of two or three months' absence and loneliness on him, and of two or three months' love and supervision on her father. Cast down, but not in despair, she said 'Good-bye' to her uncle and wished him health and peace on his journey; and so she left him.

As she descended the stairs, she wondered whether it would not be proper to see her aunt, perhaps, before she left the house. A decision was anticipated by the opening of a door and the appearance of her aunt's maid; for Mrs Suffield now had a maid all to herself, 'and everything grand and becoming about her.'

'Please, Miss Raynor,' said the maid, 'Mrs

Suffield says, will you step in and speak to her a moment?'

Mrs Suffield sat before a cheval glass: she was dressing. As her niece entered she rose to turn herself and to view by the aid of a hand-glass the manner of her hair in the tall mirror, and Isabel was compelled to think that her aunt was a very handsome woman in spite of her fifty years or so.

'I think I can manage by myself now, Wilkins,' said she to her maid. 'Miss Raynor will help me with my dress.'

'Very well, ma'am,' said Wilkins. 'But I hope you will get your *bust* nicely arranged, for not many ladies as I've dressed has such a fine *bust* as you, ma'am.' (The devoted, but incorrect, creature obviously meant 'bust.')

'I'll see to it, Wilkins,' said Mrs Suffield; 'don't be anxious.' And Wilkins withdrew.—'So you've been to see your uncle in private, Bell, before he goes.'

'Yes, aunt,' said Isabel; 'I came to see him specially, though I did not know he was going.'

'Going! Yes; of course, he's going! What else did you expect, after the way you've been going?'

'I, aunt? I suppose you allude to what I've done about my father?'

'I suppose I do, my dear. You don't know your uncle, and you think you know your father. You've thrown your uncle over, and taken up with your father; a very natural thing to do, I daresay: he always had a way with women. But you've spoiled yourself; your uncle meant to set up house and to make you mistress of it, and, I believe, to make you his heir. You were always absurdly quixotic, Bell; but I suppose you never really thought of the chances you were throwing away.'

'Oh yes, aunt,' said Isabel; 'I knew all these things.'

Her aunt turned on her a penetrating, business-like gaze. 'You knew them!' she said.

'I knew them, or guessed them,' said Isabel carelessly.

'And you chose the better part: your father? Well, upon my word! The girl's a constant wonder to me? And where, or how, may I ask, did you find your father?'

'I had rather keep that to myself, if you please, aunt.'

'Oh, very well,' said her aunt. 'Of course, it's no business of mine. You'll go your own way, Bell, as usual.—Lace this thing for me—will you, my dear? It laces at the back.'

Had it been her aunt's face Isabel was close to the next few seconds, and not her back-hair; the conversation might have had a gentler and more generous end. But they were both so much akin in temper, that each rather repelled than attracted the other, for the most part, and neither would sue to the other for a better understanding.

'It seems to me, aunt,' said Isabel, 'exceedingly harsh and unkind of you to speak like this of what concerns your brother.'

'Which brother, my dear?' said her aunt. 'I have two brothers: of whom I prefer the one, and you prefer the other.'

'He needs my preference!' exclaimed Isabel. 'He has no one but me!'

'That's entirely his own fault,' said her aunt. 'But he *has* you, and having you he has a great deal: I will say that for you.'

'But why are you so terribly wanting in consideration and love for him?'

'Am I so wanting?' said her aunt; and an ancient fount of feeling seemed to rise within her. 'It must be then, I suppose, because he was so wanting in consideration and love for me. He never had any love or regard for any one but himself. He would always take, but never give. He was all self; he was self-conceited, self-satisfied, self-willed, self-sufficient, self-indulgent, self-opinioned, and self-ish.'

'And now,' retorted her niece, 'it is self-evident that he is self-reproved, self-abased, self-tormented, self-neglectful, and self-destructive: he is scarcely conscious of himself at all now.'

Her aunt waited a moment before she replied: 'I wish him no harm—only good; but I wish he would not always depend for his good on some one else than himself. I am afraid you are going to spoil your life for him; and he'll let you do it.'

'But if it gives me pleasure to spend my life for him, aunt?' said Isabel.

'Then I've nothing more to say. You are of age, my dear, and responsible for your actions. We shall be pleased to see you just as usual, though I suppose your father won't care to come often. And I daresay his dreadful habit keeps him sometimes from being quite presentable. There are some people, for instance, coming to dinner to-night—Lord Clitheroe and other political friends of your uncle: I would have liked to ask you and your father, but, really, I hesitated.'

'I don't think father would have cared to come,' said Isabel, scarce knowing whether it was anger or tears she felt she must restrain. 'He is not in the least interested in politics, and he laughs at the folly of people who give themselves up to politics. He is chiefly interested in Literature and Art; and he talks well and writes well about both.'

'Oh, indeed!' said her aunt in a tone distinctly final. 'Well, my dear, come when you will. It's about time I went down.—Good-bye.'

Isabel departed not only in disappointment, but in vexation and wrath. She had desired as their talk had progressed to say many bitter and biting things to her aunt; but she had restrained herself, partly out of injured respect for her aunt, and partly out of the hope that it might thus be better for her father; now she thought she had restrained herself in vain. Her aunt seemed all the more contemptuous of her father, because of the measured way she had spoken of him! How cruelly both her uncle and her aunt had spoken of her father!—and how little they seemed to care whether he fared well or ill! What a strange, thing was family love!—liker family hate! Could it be that that kind of indifference affected some families more than others?

Thus her thoughts tossed to and fro like the water of a wind-swept pool; and the end of her cogitations was that she felt more closely identified with her father than ever, and more resolutely determined to strengthen and build him up so that no one would venture to speak of him

save with respect. And thus she found her way back to her lodgings, and sat till the darkness closed round her, waiting for the return of her father—who did not come.

(To be continued.)

HOLLY TEA.

FOUR species of Holly are used in the New World as a beverage—'Ilex paraguayensis' in South America; 'Ilex vomitoria' in North Carolina; and 'Ilex gongonha' and 'Ilex theezans' in Brazil.

'Ilex paraguayensis,' Yerba Maté, or as it is sometimes called, Paraguay Tea, is yielded by a tree twelve to twenty-five feet in height, very leafy, and which at a distance bears some resemblance to an orange tree. It grows wild in large natural plantations in Paraguay, and also in various localities between the rivers Uruguay and Paraná. It is supposed also at one time to have been indigenous to Brazil. Yerba Maté has been in use among the South American Indians from time immemorial. They introduced it to the Jesuits when they established themselves among them; and these latter, appreciating the value of the plant, taught the natives how to cut the plants methodically and without unnecessary waste. Since their expulsion from the country, the plants have in many instances been wantonly destroyed by the Yerbateros or gatherers of Maté. An idea of the enormous extent of these Maté forests may be imagined when we say that in spite of the extravagant waste in cutting, something like forty to fifty million pounds are consumed annually throughout South America.

The collection is conducted somewhat in the following way: The Maté wood having been discovered, the Indians, who are employed by merchants for the purpose, build wigwams, and settle down for about six months to the work. An open space is then prepared, and the surface of the soil beaten hard and smooth with mallets. An arch of hurdles is then erected over it, and the branches of the tree are placed on the arch, and a fire kindled underneath, by which means the branches and leaves are thoroughly dried, without being allowed to become scorched. During this process the aroma is developed. When sufficiently roasted, the branches are placed on the hard soil and beaten with sticks, the dried leaves being by this means knocked off and reduced to a powder. Maté treated in this way is known as Caa-guaza, and it is this mixture of leaf, petioles, and small branches, which finds its way to this and other countries. In Paraguay, two other varieties are met with, the Caa-miri, the leaf torn from its midrib and veins, without roasting; and the Caa-cuys, the half-expanded leaf-buds. This latter, however, does not keep well, and is never exported.

In the Argentine and the adjacent countries, Maté-drinking is quite an institution. We were speaking a few weeks ago with a gentleman who has recently returned from South America, and he said that Maté is far more used there than tea is at home. It is quite the correct thing, if you pay a visit, for Maté to be passed round; and a kettle of water is usually kept at boiling-point, so that the infusion may be made promptly.

The custom permeates all ranks; even magisterial dignity is affected by it. At the police court one of the attendants takes care that there is a good supply of boiling water always on hand for Maté-making, not for the benefit of the prisoners—that goes without saying—but for the refectory of any friends of the magistrate that may chance to call upon him during the day.

Maté is sometimes drunk in the same way as we take tea; but the more usual method is to suck it through a tube, after the fashion of American drinks. Hot water is poured on the powdered leaf; then a lump of burned sugar and sometimes a few drops of lemon-juice, are added. Gourds are often employed as cups, and these may be tastefully mounted; and the tube or bombilla, which is furnished at the lower end with a perforated bulb or strainer to prevent the leaves entering the mouth, is often made of electro silver.

The taste for the infusion is very soon acquired, and once the habit of taking it is formed, it is very difficult to break it. It is extremely refreshing and restorative, especially after great fatigue has been endured, and many travellers have testified to its value under these conditions.

From time to time medical men have endeavoured to introduce Maté into this country, but without much success. Whilst containing the same active principle as tea and coffee, it has a slight but pleasant bitter taste, and so acts as a tonic stimulant. It is also said to exert a beneficial action upon the internal organism, which tea and coffee are incapable of doing.

The North Carolina species ('Ilex vomitoria' or 'Ilex Cassine') is an elegant shrub, ten to fifteen feet high, and sometimes rises into a small tree of twenty to twenty-five feet. It grows in the Southern States of North America along the sea-coast, and has been used for many ages by the Creek Indians. The use of it, however, has now been totally abandoned by the white inhabitants; and the Indians have to a great extent followed their example.

It was a most important plant at one time, as is evidenced by the fact that every traveller of repute that has visited the country has made mention of it. In addition to being used as an ordinary beverage with milk and sugar, it was at times partaken of by men only, with great ceremonial and awful invocations.

The infusion is called Cassine, and when prepared for religious or state occasions is known also as 'black drink.' Mr A. S. Gatschet, of the Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, who a few years back edited the *Migration Legend of the Creek Indians*, tells us in his notes to this work that the ancient Creeks had three modes of preparing it; the three potions resulting from them differing widely in strength according to the uses for which they were intended. Small quantities of the young leaf parched in a pot until it assumed a brown colour produced a liquor acting as an exhilarant, which was drunk by the people at the 'busk,' or Indian feast of first-fruits, and by the 'elders' when assembled in council, or when discussing every-day topics. After the potion has been poured from one pan or cooler into another, it begins to ferment, and to produce a white froth, from which it is styled also 'white drink'—the term 'white' alluding also to its purifying quali-

ties. To make the liquid stronger, a larger infusion of the parched leaves is required; it then assumes a dark hue, nearly as black as molasses, and acts as a powerful intoxicating stimulant. A still larger addition of the Cassine leaf produces a strong narcotic, which was used by conjurers to evoke prophetic ecstasies accompanied by dreams. The 'black drink' of the weaker sort acts as an emetic when drunk in great quantity, and was used as such at the annual bask, and on other occasions extensively. The Creeks esteemed this drink so highly that no one was allowed to drink it in council unless he had proved himself a brave warrior. After drinking the liquor, they could go for twenty-four hours without eating or drinking; and in military expeditions the only supplies they used to carry were gourd bottles or wooden vessels full of this drink.

Why it has fallen into disuse as a beverage it is difficult to surmise. Possibly its odour and taste, which are not so pleasant as in the fragrant tea of China, Ceylon, and India, has something to do with it. It is said to be cheaper than these teas; but we are afraid that this advantage will scarcely compensate for its deficiencies in other respects. Although there are said to be about forty thousand square miles from Virginia to Texas upon which the plant grows, we fear it will never recover its ascendancy in popular estimation.

The other two species of holly mentioned in the opening paragraph ('*Ilex gongonha*' and '*Ilex theezans*') have only a local reputation, and call for no special remarks.

THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

MR LANGLAND and his daughter stood and looked at each other in perplexity and chagrin, smiled wryly to each other, but said nothing. In a few moments they heard voices without. The door opened—and Mr Purvey entered, followed by—whom?—by Mr Godfrey! What did it mean? It could not be that!—No, never! They both came forward.

'Miss Langland,' said Mr Purvey, his long face creased with smiles, 'permit me to introduce to you my son Godfrey.'

'Mr Godfrey?' exclaimed Miss Langland and her father together.

'Father!' cried Mr Godfrey, 'what is this?'

'It is,' said Mr Purvey with a benevolent smile, and a widespread expository palm, 'the unavoidable result, my son, of the way we have been going on.'

'And your name is?'—said Miss Langland, with large, puzzled eyes on Mr Godfrey.

'Godfrey Purvey,' answered that young man with self-respect, with dignity, but without the faintest show of swagger; 'and this,' he continued, placing his hand on his father's shoulder, 'is my father, Miss Langland.'

'But how!—Why!' exclaimed Kitty, and could say no more.

Her eyes wistfully searched him up and down, as if to discover if there were any change in him besides his change of name.

'You may wonder, Mr Langland,' said Godfrey,

turning to the silent and astonished Squire, 'why there has been this mystery about my identity.'

'I do!' said the Squire emphatically.

'It began originally with Miss Langland,' said Godfrey. 'When we first met in London, she failed, I suppose, to catch my name properly; and then when we sat at dinner she began to talk of certain things without knowing who I was. She called me Mr Godfrey, and under the circumstances I let the name be. I hope I am forgiven?'

Miss Langland coloured and dropped her eyes; for well did she remember that conversation and the kind of thing she had said about Mr Purvey. The Squire also was put out by his recollection of the discourse he had held both with Colonel Swetenham and with Mr Godfrey—while Mr Purvey looked innocently on, like a smiling but elderly fairy.

'Ah, yes,' said the Squire hurriedly; 'to be sure—to be sure. And, of course, it was amusing and interesting to keep the mistake up.'

'Father,' said Kitty, apparently recovering her self-possession, 'we had better be going.—Good-bye, Mr—Godfrey.' (Her eyes were veiled when she said it.) 'Good-bye, Mr Purvey.'

'Good-bye, Miss Langland,' said Mr Godfrey Purvey.

They touched each other's hand, but said no word—and that not on account of any lofty sense of dignity disturbed or pride shaken, but only because each thought the other deeply offended. Thus they parted; and thus each—as has been the way of mankind since they practised holding their tongues on occasion—made the other miserable by a foolish misunderstanding.

'Why—why have you done this, father?' exclaimed Godfrey, when the Squire and his daughter were gone.

'Well, Godfrey,' said Mr Purvey, looking wistful and uncertain (for him), 'it had to come—now, had it not?'

'It had to come, of course, father,' said the son, pacing up and down in agitation. 'But not so soon. You spoke too soon—much too soon!—And now all is lost!'

'I can't think what you mean!' exclaimed Mr Purvey testily. 'I don't know what it all means! You suddenly write to me that you are in London, and coming down to me. The next day you write that you have met the Langlands, and that they didn't discover you were your father's son, and you ask that for the present here, in my own house, you should not be my son, but only Mr Godfrey, a stranger! Why? You refused to tell me!'

'Not refused, father!'

'Well, Godfrey, you put me off with reasons that were no reasons. It was an absurd situation, and it very properly has come to an end!—the kind of forced and unnatural thing that is made to occur in lying works of fiction.'

'Why, father,' demanded Godfrey with a smile, 'what do you know of works of fiction?'

'I know a little,' said Mr Purvey, with something like a blush, to hide which he looked down and flicked off a speck of white from the skirt of his black coat. 'I used not to read them. But I am growing old, and I don't have the grasp I used to have of the sermons of Mr Lightowler in *The Christian Banner*; so I have taken lately

to look at bits of the tales that are printed there.—But you have led me aside into a digression, Godfrey.—You can now tell me plainly, I suppose, why you thought this mystery necessary?

'It was for the sake of your reputation and my own, father.'

'My reputation, Godfrey?—My reputation has never been assailed, and I am not aware that it has ever been in any danger!' exclaimed Mr Purvey, gazing on his son in amazement. 'I have never defrauded any man!—I have never despoiled the widow or the orphan!—and I believe my balance at the bank is perfectly satisfactory!'

'My dear father,' said the young man, taking the elder's elbow in a firm but affectionate grip, 'we have all several reputations—or rather, our reputation may be regarded from several points of view, with one or two of which you, father, may be but slightly acquainted.'

'Still a reason that is no reason, my son—or, at least, that I cannot understand.'

'Well, father, if you must have it,' said Godfrey desperately, 'the plain reason was that I am your son and that you are my father. If I had been known to be your son, my chances with Miss Langland would have been ruined—as they are now!'

'Do you mean to say,' demanded the old man in honest surprise, 'that they do not like me?—do not approve of me?'

'Can you ask me, father? Have I not said there are points of view you have no idea of?'

'Dear me!' exclaimed the old man, and sat down to consider.

As for Kitty Langland, she was grievously afflicted. The *éclaircissement*, or 'clearing up,' had come in the middle of the afternoon. It had been Mr Godfrey's wont, when he did not dine with the Langlands—and he frequently did—to call in and talk with the ladies before or after dinner. Kitty looked for his coming that day with a feverish eagerness; but he did not come, and she was chilled and depressed with a sense of loneliness and bereavement. What if he never came again? Could she endure it?

But after that one act of prostration in thought before the image of Mr Godfrey, her native pride reasserted itself. Why should he be so deeply offended? Had he not done wrong in keeping so long from her the fact that he was Mr Purvey's son, and so leading her on, or at least permitting her, to say things uncomplimentary and acrimonious of his father? She was in that mood after dinner, when the Squire, who had been silently and laboriously revolving the whole matter in his mind and rubbing off its rough edges, began to talk about it.

'Mr Purvey,' said he, 'is not such a bad creature, after all.'

'No,' said she; 'he behaved quite decently this afternoon; though at first I couldn't understand those curious little sniggers of his.'

'At times,' continued the Squire, 'he is quite endurable; and he has a wonderful understanding of business.'

'I suppose he has,' said Kitty; 'and I suppose he does not mind—if he knows—the things we have said about him.'

'I wonder,' said the Squire; 'though our

position is a little humiliating. I think we ought to come to an understanding.'

'Perhaps,' said Kitty.

'If it hadn't been for him,' resumed the Squire, after a pause, 'we should never have had this discovery of coal. And he can only be pleased at the way we have received his son, without knowing he was his son.'

'I suppose so,' assented Kitty.

'"Purvey's Patent Food,"' murmured the Squire. 'Purvey is not a nice name to be connected with.'

'No,' said Kitty; 'it is not a very nice name.'

'Though I can't think why,' said the Squire, 'Godfrey has kept up the mystery of his name so long.'

'Nor I,' said Kitty, though she had a strong suspicion that the reason was not unconnected with herself; but not for the world would she have said so.

'But, Kitty,' said the Squire, sitting up, and grasping the arms of his chair in his favourite fashion when he wished to make an important delivery, 'I thought you and Godfrey were very much taken up with each other.'

'Did you, father?' said Kitty, bending closely over the piece of crewel-work her fingers were occupied with.

'But am I right?' insisted the Squire.

There was a considerable pause, during which Kitty seemed engrossed with her work, and pressed out the pattern on her knee to see how it was going. 'I don't know, father,' said she, looking up carelessly.

'Pon my word!' exclaimed the Squire irritably, 'the best and frankest of women is just in these matters like a cat—demure and secret, and slinking in and out of hedges! Why can't a woman give a straightforward, truthful answer, so far as she knows, about a man?'

Then Kitty suddenly put up her hands to her face and sobbed a little—very quietly; for she was a healthy girl, without a touch of the hysterical, and with a considerable power of self-restraint. There was a longish pause, during which the Squire waited, somewhat uncomfortably, for the explanation which, he thought, was now bound to come.

'I think I would like to go to bed, father,' said Kitty, rising. 'Good-night, father.' She kissed him and went; and he said not a word.

Kitty passed a bad night. In the darkness and silence, with the strange and lonely sounds of an old house in her painfully wakeful ear—subdued, mysterious creaks on the stairs, and ghostly taps and scratchings at her window-panes—her pride and reserve fell from her, and she was merely a simple, loving woman, without prepossessions and without prejudices. What mattered Godfrey's name to her?—what mattered his origin?—what mattered anything?—since she loved him, and he loved her! She believed he loved her, and therefore she believed that he must be ready to forgive her everything, even as she was ready to forgive him! Why, then, should they not meet in mutual understanding and love? She, at least, would not proudly keep off a meeting. And so, towards morning, she slept—slept a somewhat disturbed sleep—but still slept.

Soon after breakfast she and her father went as usual to see the progress of the boring. God-

frey was waiting outside, looking a little melancholy; but he brightened upon seeing his visitors. After exchange of greetings, in which nothing was said of the incident of the afternoon before, the Squire strode briskly in, probably from forethought; and the two followed slowly.

'I hope,' said Godfrey hurriedly, 'you are no longer offended with me, Miss Langland?'

'Offended? No!' said Kitty, blushing and turning her head away. 'I thought you were offended with me!'

'That is very odd!' said he, with a joyous little laugh. 'That just shows how misunderstanding works! We are good friends again, then?' he added.

'Oh yes,' said she, and gave him a bright look, which thrilled him to the marrow.

That was all that passed then: they were thereafter occupied with the continued evidences of coal. The Squire asked Godfrey to come to dinner, and also to convey a similar invitation to Mr Purvey. It was after dinner that the full explanation came between the two young people: Kitty was in the gayest spirits, and her sister discreetly sat down by herself at the piano and played soft music.

'Why,' she demanded, 'did you keep yourself "wrop up in a mistry," as Thackeray's Jeames says?'

'Don't you understand?' said he. 'When I heard you did not like, or even approve of my father, I did not wish to be condemned—to be put in the same category as you put him—with-out any evidence.'

'But,' she asked, 'when you saw, when you understood that I—that we did not condemn you, did not put you in that category—why did you still keep up the mystery?'

'I don't think I saw that. But, besides, I wanted you to see, to come to understand, that your opinion of my father was wrong. I knew at first it was wrong, but it was of no use to say so: people never are turned from their prejudices except by evidence they find, or seem to find, for themselves.—My father,' he continued with earnest warmth, 'has disagreeable points about him, I know; he does things and says things that grate, I am quite aware; but they are only the results of bad training, hardship in youth, and strict business habits: they are no more truly parts of himself than the ugly thorns and burs that may stick to a man who has pushed and torn his way through a tangled thicket. He is really a good man, simple, honourable, and unselfish, as I have good reason to know.'

'I daresay you are right,' said Kitty humbly, 'and I am very sorry that I have been such a prejudiced, silly girl. I hope—I do hope—your father knows nothing of the unkind things I said.'

'Do you think I would tell him?' he asked.

'I thought,' she said, 'you might have told him at first. But,' she asked, with the faintest touch of coquetry, 'why were you so anxious about your father's reputation with— with me?'

Then he looked on her, and she blushed and hung her head; and then he blushed till the blood tingled to his finger-tips.

'Don't you understand?' he said again. 'There was a— a chance, which I longed to realise, that he and—and I might become related to you—in

different ways, of course. You were very angry, I know,' he continued, after a pause, 'when my father hoped you would marry his son: are you angry now?'

'No,' she answered, feeling the outline of her chair with the hand next him.

'And,' he continued, 'if— if my father came to you now, and—and asked you to—to marry his son, what would you say?'

'I would say "Yes,"' she answered in a low, an almost inaudible voice.

The next moment her hand was clasped in his, and the next they were startled by the crash of a triumphal march from the piano. When the triumphal music ceased, and while that first fully responsive communication of hands was thrilling through them both, Godfrey stooped and murmured something which may not be repeated; but the repetition is the less necessary, because its import is sufficiently clear from what Kitty said in response or in retort.

'I do not like your name,' said she, giving him a gay, mischievous glance.

'That's a pity,' said he. 'We might contrive to change it. Purvey, I admit, has not an adorable sound. But I believe it is only the vulgarised form of a very fine name.'

'What is that?' she asked.

'Just as Pugh,' said he, 'is short—and vulgar—for Ap Hngh (I believe), and Parry for Ap Harry, so Purvey'—

'Is short,' she interrupted with a light laugh, 'for Ap Hervey, I suppose?'

'Just so,' said he. 'How would you like Ap Hervey? Mrs Ap Hervey might sound well—Mrs Godfrey Ap Hervey.'

'Don't!' she exclaimed.

'I know my father is Welsh,' said he; 'and all Welshmen and Irishmen, I believe, are the descendants of kings—kings who must have had very few subjects. And even a very great novelist, George Meredith, thinks no men are such fine fellows or have such lofty descent as Welshmen.'

'Don't!' she said again, somewhat piteously. 'You are making game of me. I think the name must remain—as it is.'

It may be accepted without saying that it was soon known to all in the drawing-room that there was the prospect of an alliance between the houses of Langland and Purvey; indeed, the fact was sufficiently attested by the genial demeanour of Purvey—of Purvey's Patent Food. He smiled upon every one and rubbed his hands; and he expressly asked Kitty's sister the date of her birthday, and when he was told it, he emphatically declared he would not forget it.

Now my story ought to end at this point; but it doesn't. There is that important question of coal, or no coal, to be settled. The answer finally resolved itself in a day or two into 'No coal!—that is to say, not coal enough to be worked with profit. It was coal, and still coal for a certain depth, the amount of which I forget; but then it was something else, and it continued something else for a considerable depth more—and every one was disappointed. But a strange and joyous thing happened. They were all in the enclosure one day when Godfrey uttered a great shout: he was giving attention to the boring. They all ran to him.

'Look at that!' he cried.

They looked: steaming water was spouting up in the bore.

'Pah!' said he. 'Smell it!'

The smell was as that of bad eggs: he had tapped a spring—a thermal spring like that of Aix-la-Chapelle—impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen! And that was the beginning of the salubrious watering-place called New Bath, which, with its gay villas and hotels, planned by the younger Purvey, and built by the elder, promises to be almost, if not quite, as profitable as a coal mine would have been, and which is far pleasanter to look at.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A REMARKABLE bed of fuller's-earth was some years ago discovered in Keltie Glen, among the Ochil Hills, in the parish of Dunning, Perthshire, on the estate of Lord Rollo. A clear mountain stream runs down the glen, at the bottom of which the seam of fuller's-earth appears close to the surface, and on one side of the stream runs backwards for a considerable way. Very fine preparations of it are being now produced at the works recently erected at Keltie, which preparations are admirably adapted for a variety of uses. Though the true nature and name of the substance was only recently detected, its cleansing properties had been already known, as it was found that several of the old dwellers in the neighbourhood had been in the habit of using it when they cleaned their blankets and woollen stuffs. A well-known London physician was shortly afterwards the guest of Lord Rollo, and he was so much interested in the discovery, that he recommended specimens to be sent to the eminent metallurgist, the late Dr Percy, who had a Report furnished thereon. Beds of fuller's-earth are in Great Britain few and far between, and this one in Strathearn is pronounced, on the highest authority, to be quite unique in its exceptional purity. Hence the interest of the discovery, from which we may look forward to very great benefits arising when we consider the important purposes for which fuller's-earth is used. Amongst its various properties, the oldest and best-known one is its cleansing property. For this purpose, whether with reference to woollen stuffs, felt, or wooden boards, it will be found invaluable. In fact, it has been pronounced to be a 'splendid natural soap.' Fuller's-earth is also largely used by oil refiners, and in the refining of petroleum and wax; while it has long been sold by chemists in powder for medical purposes.

We last month referred to the interesting experiments of Professor Dewar in the liquefaction of gases, including the reduction to the liquid state of that compound gas which is represented by the air which we breathe. Since that notice appeared, Professor Dewar has gone a step farther, and has succeeded in freezing liquid air into a clear, transparent solid. It is not yet quite known whether this jelly-like substance consists of solid nitrogen containing liquid oxygen in its pores, but it may be so, for although Professor Dewar has succeeded in solidifying nitrogen by

itself, oxygen resists all his efforts. This wonderful result has been attained by using the most powerful apparatus, and the great expense attending the work has, as in the case of the former experiments, been met by the generosity of the Goldsmiths' Company.

The P. and O. steamer *Ballarat* recently brought to London the largest consignment of Australian butter which has ever reached this country. Its total weight was six hundred and seventy tons, and its value upwards of sixty-seven thousand pounds. The butter was collected from different factories in Victoria and New South Wales, the smaller of which supplied half a ton or so each, while the largest contributed one hundred tons. It is now believed that a trade in Australian cheese can in like manner be initiated. A question has been naturally raised as to the reason why British dairy farmers have allowed a distant country like Australia to compete with them in this wholesale way. Last year the farmers of Victoria secured a net profit of no less than a quarter of a million sterling by their butter exports to this country, and this year it is expected that that sum will be doubled. Another question arises too: if the butter can be preserved so that it can pass the ordeal of a long voyage through the tropics, could not English farmers learn how to keep their summer butter for the winter market?

For some time past certain tramways in the United States have used a locomotive known as the Connelly Motor, which is driven by the explosive vapour from mineral oil. This same motor is now on its trial at Greenwich (London), and it is reported to be both efficient and economical in its working. The engine, which is fixed on a separate car from that carrying the passengers, has two cylinders and develops twelve horse-power. The oil is stored in a receptacle placed above the engine, and there is an ingenious system of water circulation to keep the cylinders cool and the oil warm. This water, after cooling the cylinders, attains a heat of one hundred and ten degrees Fahrenheit, and is then used for warming the oil, after which it flows through a number of tubes which are exposed to the atmosphere beneath the car, and is again pumped up to resume its alternate duties of cooling the cylinders and warming the oil. The explosive vapour is fired by an electric current generated by a small dynamo-machine, and stored in an accumulator. This source of electricity also serves to illuminate the car at night.

The provisioning of a ship destined for Arctic exploration has always been a matter of some difficulty; but the work is now rendered far easier owing to the perfection to which the art of reducing nourishing food to the smallest bulk has been carried. In London lately, a large party was invited to inspect the preserved meats, &c., which have been specially prepared by the Bovril Company for Dr Nansen's coming expedition to the Arctic Seas. The collection included meat essences, compressed tea, chocolate allied with bovril, dried fruits, vegetables, eggs, and even eels. A palatable and highly nourishing drink is composed of port wine and beef extract; while there were various 'composition' foods into which

enter barley, ham-fat, vegetables, oatmeal, anchovies, and beef, all being perfectly free from water. In the case of the explorers being obliged to abandon their ship, they will carry away with them certain small cakes of compressed food, the constituents of which have been carefully worked out so as to present the greatest amount of nutriment in the smallest bulk. An ounce or two a day of this concentrated food will enable a man to do the hardest work and withstand the greatest cold.

Certain experiments by Captain Ziegler of Mannheim with so-called 'bullet-proof' cloth seem to carry the mind back to the time when chain armour was used for the protection of fighting-men. For the new material consists of a wire-netting covered with a special composition, and it is claimed for it that it will stop a bullet, which is broken up and half fused upon impact. This so-called new invention is believed to be a revival of 'Scarnec's Portable Armour,' which was patented in all countries several years ago, and which, upon trial by the military authorities at Felixorf, was found to be useless. Such a method of defence would certainly be of service in the case of a revolver bullet, and would possibly stop one of larger size from the 'old brown Bess' of Wellington's time; but the modern rifle projectile is a very different thing, and it is doubtful if any kind of armour which a man could lift would be proof against its terrible attack.

A considerable addition to the National Gallery buildings, London, will be possible when the St George's Barracks have been moved to the Millbank Prison site near the river. In his last Report, the Director of the National Gallery points out the urgent necessity for enlarging the premises so as to afford adequate accommodation for recently acquired pictures, and the adjoining barracks and drill-yard will give ample space for the proposed additional buildings. The alterations are estimated to occupy about three years.

A new method of conveying mail-bags between New York and Brooklyn is under consideration. Hitherto pneumatic tubes have been employed in this service, the tubes being laid under the streets, as they are in certain districts of London. But there would be considerable difficulty in carrying such tubes across the East River. The new plan proposed is to lay a pipe over the East River Bridge, and this pipe will contain a miniature electric railway with cylindrical cars for the accommodation of the mail-bags. A speed of one hundred miles an hour would not be difficult of attainment under such conditions.

Experiments have recently been carried out by the German military authorities, having for their object the illumination of large spaces by means of electric arc-lights, supported in the air by captive balloons. The source of electrical energy is said to be placed on the ground, but it is not stated whether this takes the form of a dynamo-machine and steam-engine, or whether it is an accumulator. The lamp used gives a power of five thousand candles, which is said to efficiently illuminate a large area from a height of nearly two thousand feet. This last statement we feel very much inclined to doubt. The necessarily cumbrous nature of an electrical installation, to say nothing of the impossibility of using a balloon in stormy weather, would greatly detract from

the merits of this system. A better means of illuminating a wide area for military purposes was successfully tried in our own country many years ago. The apparatus consisted of a hollow shell carrying a canvas parachute and a brilliantly burning composition. On being fired from a mortar, the shell burst, leaving the light-bearing parachute floating in the air for several minutes.

According to a French paper, the compound used for enamelling the iron vessels which are now so commonly used for culinary purposes consists of borax, 24 parts by weight; soda salts, 6; boric acid, 15; sand, 25; felspar, 12.5; nitre, 3.5; and fluor spar, 3 parts. Colours are obtained by associating with these ingredients different metallic oxides. The metal is dipped into the liquid mixture thus formed, and is afterwards dried and fired.

We had an opportunity recently of watching the new and interesting process of manufacturing flexible celluloid film for photographic purposes at the Eastman Company's 'Kodak' Works at Harrow, Middlesex. The liquid celluloid is run into sheets upon enormous plate-glass tables, by means of a travelling reservoir with an adjustable slit for the emission of the liquid. Powerful fans depending from the roof of the building drive off the solvents in the form of vapour until the celluloid assumes a solid and flexible form. By a somewhat similar travelling device, this celluloid now receives a coating of sensitive gelatine emulsion, and a few hours afterwards the compound film thus formed is stripped from the glass, cut into ribbons, and is wound upon spools ready for use in the 'Kodak' or other form of camera.

A member of the medical profession warns people against cleaning bottles with shot, which he declares to be a fruitful source of lead-poisoning, even if the bottle be afterwards rinsed out with clean water.

The landslip at Sandgate near Folkestone, which resulted in the demolition of more than one hundred houses, was at first attributed by the sufferers to the vibration caused by the blowing up of the wreck of the *Benvenue*, which has for the past two years formed a dangerous obstruction to navigation in Sandgate Bay. It is now proved that the explosion of the small charges employed had nothing whatever to do with the catastrophe. The area has always been liable to landslips, for the soft sandy soil when it becomes saturated with moisture is liable to slide over the impervious clay upon which it rests. A suitable system of surface drainage has now been commenced, and it is believed that the district will thus be protected from a recurrence of the calamity.

Experiments were lately made with the new explosive 'Ammonite' at a quarry at Netherton, near Dudley. The object of attack was a mass of marl slate computed to weigh more than one thousand tons. Three holes seventeen inches deep and three inches in diameter, and twenty-five feet apart, were charged with sixty pounds of ammonite and lightly tamped. On the charges being fired the whole mass was lifted and shattered from end to end. Ammonite is a yellow powder, which is said to be safe in manufacture and manipulation; it is not affected by changes of temperature, and does not deteriorate by keeping.

A wonderful dredger has been built for the

Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, Liverpool, whose experiments in cutting through the Mersey bar have been so successful that they have determined to increase their dredging operations, so that eventually the largest vessels can enter the river at any state of the tide. The new dredger is of gigantic size, and consists of a vessel three hundred and twenty feet long and forty-six feet broad. It is built throughout of steel, and has on each side eight large hoppers with a holding capacity of three thousand tons of sand. In the centre of the big ship is a well fitted with a sand suction tube of three and a half feet diameter, which can be lowered or raised through the bottom of the vessel by hydraulic power. The centrifugal pumps in connection with this tube—which will reach when required to a depth of forty-six feet—are capable of raising four thousand tons of sand per hour. The general plan of operations will be to fill the hoppers, proceed to the depositing grounds, and return for a fresh charge of sand; and it is said that it will under favourable conditions be possible to do this within one hour.

The Magnesium Flash Lamp, now so much used for photography at night, is by no means so 'instantaneous' in its action as some would imagine. Most portraits taken by this method show traces of movements of the eyelids, if the sitter looks towards the light. Professor Boys made the matter very clear in his lecture on Electric Spark Photographs, by revolving a four-foot clock dial very rapidly in darkness, and suddenly illuminating it by the magnesium flash. The figures upon the dial appeared to be so blurred that they could not be deciphered. When, however, the same dial was illuminated by the electric spark it appeared to be at perfect rest, although its periphery was travelling at the rate of forty miles an hour.

For the past half-century a valuable series of agricultural experiments have been carried out at Rothamsted by Sir John Bennet Lawes, and associated with him in this important work has been Dr Gilbert. In this way the application of chemistry to the cultivation of crops and the feeding of stock has been carefully studied, and the importance of the knowledge thus obtained can scarcely be overestimated. All these investigations have been prosecuted at the sole cost of Sir John Lawes; and for the continuance of similar experimental work after he is dead he has left the munificent sum of one hundred thousand pounds, besides his famous laboratory and a large area of land. In order to mark the completion of this fifty years' noble work, it is proposed to erect a granite memorial in the field at Rothamsted where the experiments have taken place, and to present the workers with a commemorative piece of plate. For the purpose of collecting the necessary funds, a Committee has been appointed, with the Duke of Westminster as chairman.

A balloon, called the Aerophile, of small size, was recently sent up from Paris for meteorological purposes. It carried, in lieu of a car, a box containing a self-registering barometer and thermometer. It fell many miles from the capital, and upon examination the instruments showed that the balloon had reached an altitude of between ten and eleven miles—far higher than

any aeronaut had ever succeeded in rising. The thermometer showed that the little balloon had penetrated to a region where the temperature was sixty degrees Fahrenheit below zero.

It is said that several acres of marshy ground on the banks of the Mississippi have been converted to a useful and profitable purpose in the formation of frog farms, the taste for these epicurean delicacies having been of late years developed to such an extent among our American cousins, that there is a daily demand of many thousands. The American breed of frogs has recently been much improved by the introduction from France of a variety of much larger size.

In the *American Naturalist*, Mr Stahl of Illinois extols the virtue of wood-ashes as a medicine for farm animals, and says that used with discretion no other remedy is required to keep animals in full health. For swine he makes a mixture of wood-ashes, charcoal, and salt, and keeps it constantly before them in a large box having holes in the bottom, through which the animals work it out as they require it. He also speaks well of the mixture for horses, and in thirty-seven years of experience of farm-life has lost only one horse, and that through an accident. The ashes may be administered by putting an even teaspoonful on the oats twice a week; but he thinks it preferable to place a mixture of three parts wood-ashes to one of salt constantly before the animals in a little compartment at one corner of the feed-box. Mr Stahl also has great faith in the value of wood-ashes when used as a fertiliser.

The very complete collection of Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum has lately been augmented by an object of great interest as well as value. It is a shrine of gray granite about ten feet in height, and weighing approximately eight tons. It is inscribed with hieroglyphic signs worked in relief, which is unusual, as the stone-writing of the period to which it belongs is generally executed in sunken characters. The colour of the granite points to the fact that the shrine must have been specially made for the temple at Philæ, whence it has come, as, although there is abundance of granite in the Cataract district, it is all red. There is no gray granite within some distance. The temples which adorn the island of Philæ are of the Ptolemaic period, and range between the years 300 and 230 B.C., so that, until the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the shrine be translated, which will probably fix the date, we may conclude it to belong to this period.

In ancient Egypt the shrine usually stood in the innermost and holiest of the innumerable temple chambers, and contained the emblem of the tutelary deity; but in Ptolemaic days the lifeless emblem was wont to be replaced by the living animal representation; and when Strabo, in the first century of our era, visited the great temple at Philæ, he was shown by the priests a large bird on a shrine, which they told him was a hawk; but he observed that it was larger and quite different from the hawks which he had hitherto seen in the country; moreover, it was very ill, and nearly dead. It is not impossible that this may have been the shrine in which dwelt not a hawk, but a vulture, the bird sacred to the Mother Goddess Isis, to whom the temple

was dedicated. The holes in the sides of the aperture may have been for bars or a grating, so as to form a cage for the sacred bird. In 450 A.D., when the Edict of Theodosius proscribed the ancient gods of Egypt, and was the signal for the fanatical destruction of the temples, a Coptic church was erected on the island of Philæ; and the shrine, ruthlessly dragged from its place, was turned on its side, and made into the base of a Christian altar. The church, like the temples, is now in ruins; and the little shrine, once the home of an Egyptian god, and since then connected with the holiest of Christian rites, is now, by the munificence of the Khedive, deposited in the British Museum, a venerable relic of the past, a link between Paganism and Christianity, and, to the archaeologist, of intense interest as being unique.

FROM THE TOWER OF SILENCE.

It happened in my father's time, early in the fifties. I have often heard him tell the story; and in looking through his papers after his death I came across the written account of it. It is my opinion that the dear old man jotted down the story in an idle hour, intending it for publication; but when his task was finished, the whim passed away; the manuscript was laid aside, and probably never saw the light of day again until I unearthed it from the drawer of an old secretaire last summer. I think the facts are sufficiently out of the common to be interesting, and therefore I give the story verbatim in my father's own words. I would merely add that, at the time the events transpired, my father was in the Honourable East India Company's service. The manuscript runs as follows:

In 1850 I was removed from Bombay to Kharabad, a small town at the western foot of the Ghauts between Bombay and Poona; and here I made the acquaintance of Mr Framji Jijibhai, a Parsee gentleman of most agreeable manners. He and I were near neighbours, and being brought much into contact with each other through business matters, quickly became fast friends. Unlike most of his race, Mr Jijibhai exhibited no great love for jewellery, and I never knew him wear any ornamental trinkets save a certain ring, which was never absent from the little finger of his left hand. This ring, which was of gold, was of the most exquisite Eastern workmanship, and contained a large opal of extraordinary beauty. I am no great judge of precious stones; but the gem was certainly one of the finest of its kind that I have ever seen, and the adornment of Mr Jijibhai's little finger must have represented a value of some hundreds of pounds in our money. One evening, while the Parsee and myself were sipping our claret in the veranda of my bungalow, I ventured to remark upon the beauty of this ring; whereupon my companion told me how it had come into his possession. It had been given him, he said, by a native Princess in return for some service of a peculiarly delicate nature which he had rendered her; and so highly did he prize the trinket, that he had given positive orders that when anything happened to him, and he paid the final debt to nature, the ring was not to be removed from his finger, but was

to be conveyed along with his body into the 'dokhma,' or tower of silence, where the vultures in stripping the mortal flesh from his bones might perchance carry the trinket away—none knew whither. Although highly romantic, it struck me at the time that this was a very foolish method of disposing of such valuable property; but it was no concern of mine, and consequently I made no remark upon it.

I do not remember whether Tip, my body-servant, was present in the veranda during our conversation; but subsequent events lead me to suppose that he must have been present, or, at any rate, within earshot. Tip—I don't suppose that was his correct name, but it was the only one I ever knew him by—was the biggest thief unhanged. His petty larcenies were a source of continual trouble to me; and had it not been for the recollection that he had once been instrumental in saving my life a few years previously, during an unfortunate riot at Bombay, he and I would have severed our connection long before we did. As it was, whenever he was detected in any act of dishonesty, he always made such voluble promises to reform, and reminded me so pertinaciously of the debt I owed him, that my resolution invariably fell before his importunities, and he was allowed to continue in my service, always, however, on the distinct understanding that this was his last chance. But I regret to say that Tip did not reform; and after an interval of a few weeks, the same scene, with the same results, would be gone through again.

One morning, early in 1851, I had a business engagement with my friend Mr Framji Jijibhai, which he failed to keep. This occasioned me considerable surprise, as the Parsee was, as a rule, punctuality itself in all business appointments. For fully an hour I had waited for him, when a messenger arrived to say that he was dead. He had died that morning so suddenly that the 'dastur' or 'mobed' (priests) had not even had time to repeat the prayers for the dying. The Zoroastrians only allow a very short time to intervene between death and the funeral ceremony; and just before sunset that same day the body of Mr Jijibhai was conveyed from his house to the tower of silence, his last resting-place, which in this instance was situated upon a lonely, tree-clad eminence, a little distance from Kharabad.

Some very mistaken notions concerning the Parsees' towers of silence exist, I believe, among the English at home. I remember seeing them described in the work of an eminent writer of adventures, who must have been woefully ignorant on the subject, as lofty towers, not unlike the dismantled round towers we find in Ireland, at the top of which were placed open gratings. Upon these huge grids the corpses—so says the writer I refer to—were placed, to be denuded of flesh by those scavengers of the air the vultures, until the clean-picked bones fell through the iron bars into the pit beneath.

Now, all this is very erroneous and misleading. In the first place, the dokhmas are not lofty towers. Proportionately, they are low, squat edifices, the total height rarely exceeding one-third of the diameter. Although they are all

built practically on the same plan, the actual dimensions of the towers differ considerably, the average and most common measurements being—total height from twenty to thirty feet, and diameter from seventy to ninety feet. In the second place, they contain no gratings whatever on which to deposit the bodies. As a matter of fact, the interior consists, with the exception of the 'bhandar' or pit in the centre, of a solid platform, the surface of which is only some seven or eight feet lower than the top of the parapet. The surface of the platform is arranged in three concentric rows of 'pavis'—large slabs of stone, divided from each other by stone ridges a few inches high—and it is on these pavis, in which channels are cut to drain off the rain-water into the bhandar, that the deceased Parsees are laid. When the vultures have plucked away all the flesh, the bones are allowed to remain until the sun has completely dried them, when they are flung into the bhandar to crumble into dust. The dokhma at Kharabad was, for some unknown reason or other, of unusual dimensions. The maximum height was nearly forty feet, while the parapet was not more than four or five feet higher than the platform.

Into this tower the remains of Framji Jijibhai were carried by the 'nascalsars' just as the sun touched the western horizon; and the funeral party wended its way sorrowfully back to Kharabad, leaving the vultures to their ghastly task. An hour later the moon arose, and as I stood in my veranda I could see the dokhma, where all that remained of my dead friend lay, looming black and sombre in the moonlight.

An hour later, too, I missed my servant Tip. He was absent about an hour and a half. During that time an Afghan shepherd who was returning home by a path through the thicket on the side of the lonely hill observed the figure of a Hindu moving stealthily out from the shadow of the trees into the open space surrounding the tower of silence, with a coiled rope over his shoulder. Hurriedly glancing round, to make sure that he was unobserved, the Hindu approached the dokhma and flung one end of the rope, to which was attached a bent piece of iron, intended to act as a grapnel, over the parapet. The first attempt was unsuccessful, for in hauling in the slack of the rope the iron fell back to the ground. A second and a third trial also resulted in failure; but at the fourth essay the improvised grapnel caught firmly. The next minute the man was swarming up the rope, and quickly disappeared over the parapet. Before many seconds had elapsed, he reappeared, and slid down by the same means he had ascended. To shake the grapnel loose from its hold, so as to leave no trace of his sacrilegious act, was a matter of some difficulty, but it was accomplished at last; and having again coiled up his rope, the man left the scene of his exploit, and the vultures which he had disturbed once more swooped down to their ghastly feeding-ground. That man—the violator of the aerial tomb—was Tip.

When he made his reappearance at my bungalow, I asked him to account for his absence. He told me with the utmost *sang-froid* that he had been to see his father, who was lying ill at the other side of the town; and I, in my ignorance of the real facts, believed him. That night, I

sat up late writing, for I had an official report to send away next morning to Bombay. But, somehow, I could not concentrate my thoughts on my work. My mind *would* go rambling away to that sombre tower upon the hill, and it was past midnight when my task was finished. At last, however, the concluding word was written, and with a sigh of relief I gathered together my papers and clapped my hands, a signal which Tip well understood.

Now, the room in which I had been writing was entered by two doors, one from the veranda, and the other exactly opposite it; and it was through the latter that my servant made his appearance in response to my summons. As I was sitting with my back to the veranda, I had a full view of Tip's villainous visage as he entered the room. One step he took beyond the threshold, then stood rooted to the spot, transfixed with terror. His jaw dropped, his eyes dilated, and the tray he was bearing fell with a crash from his useless fingers. The next moment he was shaking like an aspen leaf. Whatever was the cause of his fright was evidently behind me; but before I had time to turn round to ascertain what it was, a figure darted madly past me and clutched the trembling Hindu by the throat. The figure bore the form and features of my dead friend, Mr Framji Jijibhai.

At first I thought—as no doubt Tip did—that this must be an apparition; but I was not naturally superstitious, and instantly dismissed this theory from my mind. This was too substantial for a spirit. It was the Parsee in the flesh. His only clothing was his scanty funeral garb; and from his naked wrists the blood was streaming to the floor from several ugly, lacerated wounds. His face was ghastly pale, in spite of the natural swarthiness of his skin, and his eyes flashed with anger. The painful state of his wrists, however, did not prevent him from grasping my servant with an iron grip until the latter's eyeballs rolled in a frenzy of agonised terror and fairly bulged from his head.

'Where is my ring, you sacrilegious villain— you robber of the dead?' he demanded fiercely.

For reply the Hindu gurgled some inarticulate words in his throat, and fumbling in his turban with trembling fingers, produced the opal ring I had so often seen on Mr Jijibhai's hand. The Parsee released his hold and snatched his stolen property hastily from Tip. The latter no sooner felt himself free, than, making a bolt for the veranda, he fled howling out into the moonlit night; and to this day I have never set eyes on him again.

As soon as my friend's excitement had subsided, he fell helplessly into a chair, and I thought for the moment that he was going to faint from sheer exhaustion. I pressed food and wine upon him, bound up his wounded arms, and assisted him into a less airy garb, after which he recovered himself rapidly, and while I sat smoking my pipe, he related to me the following account of his terrible experience:

This morning (said he) when my friends thought me dead, I was in some strange state of catalepsy, which is all the more inexplicable to me from the fact that I have never before been subject even to the slightest seizure of that nature. Although to all outward appearances dead, I was painfully

conscious of what was going on around me ; and you will readily understand the anguish I experienced when the doctor, having felt for my pulse, pronounced life to be extinct ; and preparations were made for the funeral ceremony. I pictured to myself in ghastly colours all the torturous horrors of being plucked to pieces *alive* by the vultures, and yet I was utterly incapable of making any sign to those around me. The mysterious line of communication between the will and the muscles was cut off, and I felt myself doomed to be the helpless victim of a natural phenomenon. When I was carried into the dokhma and left lying upon the pavi, I mentally gave way to the direst despair, knowing as I did that barely an hour is, as a rule, required to denude the corpse of every vestige of flesh. As my friends retired from the spot, leaving me in my terrible loneliness, the vultures which had been hovering in the vicinity swooped down in a threatening cloud ; and I wondered what part of my person would be the first point of attack. I had long ago given up all hope of escape, and now I only prayed that death would speedily come—that the vultures would begin the feast upon some vital part and relieve me from the tortures of a slow decease.

In this I was, happily, disappointed. Whether the birds of prey knew instinctively that the spark of life still smouldered in my breast, or the all-wise God who made both them and me miraculously restrained them in His merciful providence, I know not ; but this I do know, that though they hovered and fluttered about me, sometimes so closely that they fanned my cheeks with the flapping of their wings, I was not harmed even by so much as a hair of the head all the time I lay there on the pavi, an inert body.

Night came on ; the moon arose, and still I lay there unable to move hand or foot ; the vultures, perched like so many sentinels upon the parapet, occasionally leaving it to circle round me, waiting for the spirit to leave the body. The suspense was as awful as it is indescribable. Suddenly the vultures rose and flew away. The next moment a rope was flung over the parapet and withdrawn. This occurred three times. The fourth time the rope caught somehow ; and shortly afterwards the head and shoulders of that rascally servant of yours appeared above the masonry. Luckily the particular point at which he invaded the dokhma was directly in my line of sight, or I should never have known who the robber was, for, of course, I could move my eyes no more than I could any other part of my body. Springing lightly down on to the platform, Tip made his way to me, snatched the ring from my finger, and decamped the same way he came. No sooner had he gone than the vultures returned, and I was in exactly the same predicament as before. One big repulsive-looking fellow hovered so closely above me that he brushed my breast with his wings, and I thought he was about to pluck out my eyes, but he wheeled away again and perched on the parapet.

For hours I lay thus. Then suddenly I felt my natural power return to me, and I experienced a thrill of exquisite joy as I thought that the hour of my deliverance was at hand. My recovery was rapid ; but I was weak from exhaus-

tion. I jumped up and capered about for very gladness, while the birds fled in alarm at my unexpected resurrection. But my troubles were not yet at an end. The outer wall of the dokhma is, as you know, a great height from the ground, and I knew that if I attempted to leap down I should probably break my neck. The facing of the walls was too smooth to afford me any hold to scramble down by, and I was in a desperate plight, for stay in that dreadful spot I could not. I felt that I must make my escape at all hazards.

In this awful dilemma I was inspired with a lucky thought, which I at once proceeded to put into execution. Resuming my old position, I lay perfectly still, and soon the vultures again returned, and flocked round me. Awaiting a favourable opportunity, I made a grab at one of the largest as he hovered menacingly not more than a foot directly above me, and was successful in catching hold of him by the legs. He struggled terribly, and pecked viciously at my wrists with the result that you have seen ; but I stuck to him with both hands, like grim death, and, mounting the parapet, leaped into the air.

It seemed a terribly long time before I reached the ground ; but my expedient proved successful. The huge bird's struggles to get away broke the full force of my fall, and I landed on *terra firma* unhurt, except for the painful state of my wrists. Leaving go my hold on the vulture, he rose in the air, and soared away ; while I scrambled to my feet and hurried here to confront the rascal who had robbed me before he had time to make away with his booty.—The rest you know.

STREET SUPERSTITIONS.

How far readers in general may be aware of the fact we know not, but there are some superstitions which are largely existent among the bulk of the less educated classes of Londoners which are quite distinct from any cherished among the rural dwellers in remote counties where the antiquary delights to hunt for his favourite game. Long experience of all the varied phases of London life in the most crowded quarters enables us to assure the reader that what perhaps is new to him, and altogether unheard of in the classes which are of a superior type of education, is palpable fact, as a very short inquiry in the East End and similar localities would show. Where or how the London crowds first got these notions we cannot say ; but they exist, and are familiar enough to the wayfarer. Hence we have called them Street Superstitions, as they are of the street, pure and simple in London at any rate, and perhaps in other large towns. They have nothing in common with country roads, lanes, and fields ; yet they are credited by the shrewd, self-sufficient Londoner of the lower classes with as much unquestioning credulity as any ancient superstition, handed down through centuries, in the most benighted village.

Prominent among them is the London wayfarer's belief in the luck which follows seeing a piebald horse. To see one of these is to be the recipient, in imagination and anticipation at any rate, of a piece of good fortune. Not long ago,

in a leading thoroughfare we heard one of two youths, as such a horse was passing, tell his companion 'to take off his hat and spit—there was a lucky horse!' This formula seems indispensable. Whence the idea of these particular horses being lucky comes, it is hard to say. Possibly the notion is akin to that which is so old a one at home and abroad as to the magpies, whose foretellings vary according to the number in which they are seen, and the pied markings of horse and bird are very similar. Most East End Londoners are far more familiar, however, with a pied horse than a pied bird, save in a cage. Whether the superstition includes 'skewbald' horses as well, we do not know. But we know people who unquestionably credit the luck of piebalds.

Another superstition most prevalent among the lower classes, and especially the criminal ones, as the police Reports often show, is in the magic effect of a piece of coal picked up in the street. This is supposed to secure unvarying good fortune to the possessor if turned from time to time in the pocket. Coal, too, which is found in the gutter is far superior to that which is in the middle of the street. We have frequently seen people of both sexes carefully pick up and treasure these small articles, even running over from one side of the street to the other in a shower of rain. It may be here remarked that burglars in especial attach great importance to the possession of such a piece of coal when they are engaged in their professional occupations, which, perhaps, is something to the discredit of the article. It is impossible to fathom the reason which has induced this idea about a bit of coal found in the gutter, though some study of the matter has been made.

So, again, with a piece of wood or stick lying in the road. 'Pass a stick and pass your luck' is a common street phrase, and often you may see the ordinary pedestrian pick up some mud-stained bit of wood on his way. It is possible, by the way, that the old fable of the girl who, going through a wood, rejected stick after stick till she was obliged to put up with a crooked one, may have something to do with the origin of the notion. Be that as it may, the fact remains, that to a great number of Londoners to pass a bit of wood in the street without picking it up is to throw away a chance of good fortune.

Another and perhaps more deeply and generally rooted superstition of the streets is that as to cats—cats of two kinds, as a rule, though, with a smaller and more select circle, there is a strong predilection in the case of a third colour. However, the most general idea is as to the black cats. If one of these runs across the path of the wayfarer, still more if it runs towards him, it is a sign of notable good luck. To injure one is to be most unlucky in every way. If a London street cat, apparently out on its rounds, comes up to the wayfarer and rubs its head against him, he may take it as a most fortunate portent. As to white cats, it is not generally known, and perhaps not admitted openly by the men themselves, that they are supposed to be most unlucky by the class who drive night-cabs. In fact, so powerful is the idea, that in some cases a man who has taken his cab out of the yard for a night's work, will, if a white cat happens to

run across the street before him, return to the yard and abandon his project for the night, convinced that he will not on that occasion have any luck.

To a very small minority of people, the notion of good luck generally attached to black cats is intensified in the case of a tortoiseshell Tom cat, which is supposed to be a most emphatic omen of good fortune. It is curious to see how black cats, which, less than two centuries since, were always held in a certain amount of dislike and terror, as the supposed familiars of witches, and often as the witches themselves in animal form, should nowadays be held so widely as harbingers of good fortune.

Space compels us to be brief; so we will add one more specimen of street superstition as grotesque as any and as widely prevalent. Probably some vague tradition of the ancient influence of the Italian *mal occhio*, or evil-eye, has some connection with it. Should you meet a squinting woman, it is a most evil omen, and no more luck all the day will follow the fact. On the other hand, if you meet a squinting man, great good fortune will result!

'FOR LOVE'S SWEET SAKE.'

BECAUSE you have no golden hoard,
Or broad and fertile lands to show,
Or wealth in glittering caskets stored,
You fear to whisper—what I know.
You think 'twould be a grievous wrong
Me from my smoother paths to take,
Nor understand how brave and strong
My heart could be for Love's sweet sake.

Because you are a man, you seek
To hide the tender pain you feel;
And I, a woman, should not speak
One word your secret wound to heal;
Yet, knowing well that each for each
Life's fullest harmonies could wake,
I fain would place within your reach
The gift of love for Love's sweet sake.

Because the ways you tread are rough,
Shall we two always stand apart?
Nay, let me own 'twould be enough
To share your weal and woe, dear heart!
If you must bear a daily cross,
Why, I will half the burden take;
And what you choose to call my loss,
Count truest gain for Love's sweet sake.

E. MATHESON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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A NEW DEPARTURE IN MEDICAL TREATMENT.

VERY little is to be found in most works on medicine with regard to that structure in the neck called the thyroid gland, except that its enlargement constitutes the familiar disease called goitre, and that the strange condition called cretinism is in some way related to goitre. Till recently, the function of this organ was quite unknown. But within the last few years, certain obscure forms of disease have been shown to be closely related to the thyroid gland, and the work done in connection with them has led to such a remarkable new departure in their treatment, and to so substantial an advance in scientific knowledge with regard to this organ, that a short account of the present position of the subject, and the steps by which it has been attained, may not prove uninteresting.

The thyroid gland in man is situated in the neck, a little below 'Adam's apple,' which marks the top of the windpipe. It is of a deep-red colour, and is so freely supplied with blood, that its arteries are together just about as large as those which pass to the whole of the brain.

The disease called goitre, which is due to an enlargement of this gland, is very frequently found in various mountainous districts, such as the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Himalayas, &c.; and though not common in Britain, it is found in Derbyshire occasionally, and is there known as the 'Derbyshire Neck.' The other disease mentioned—cretinism—is found in the same mountainous districts above mentioned, and the name is derived from 'cretin,' which is applied to a certain dwarfed, thick-skinned class of human beings found in the Alpine valleys. They have broad faces, thickened features, thick coarse hair, and a wrinkled shrivelled skin, which gives them the appearance of old age. Their mental development, like their bodies, is dwarfed and stunted, but not to the same degree in all cases. Similar individuals are occasionally, but very rarely, met

with in this country, and are known as sporadic cretins.

In 1873 Sir W. Gull read a paper on what he called a Cretinoid State supervening in Adult Life in Women. In 1877 Dr Ord more fully described the same disease, and proposed for it the name, now universally adopted, of Myxœdema. This disease is rare, but presents such distinctive features that a well-marked case is quite unmistakable. It generally comes on during middle life, and affects women much more frequently than men. Superficially, it presents but little resemblance to cretinism; the stunted growth and shrivelled skin are conspicuous by their absence; and it is not a little remarkable that Sir W. Gull should so long ago have divined the close relationship of the two diseases. The face is much swollen and broad; the features heavy and expressionless; the hair coarse and scanty; the hands thick and clumsy; the skin everywhere thickened, scaly, and destitute of perspiration; the whole body enlarged, heavy, and awkward. The mental features of the disease are equally characteristic; the perceptions are dulled, speech and movements slow, and there is a great loss of energy and of ability for exertion. The bodily temperature is much reduced, and the patients are very easily influenced by cold, and always worse during cold weather. At the first glance, the disease might be mistaken for a form of dropsy; but the swelling is felt to be firm, and does not retain the impression of the fingers, as in that case it would. In one of Dr Ord's cases, where a post-mortem examination was performed, the swollen skin was found to contain a much larger quantity of *mucin* than is normally present; in consequence of which he gave the name Myxœdema, or mucous swelling. He observed, moreover, that the thyroid gland was in a state of degeneration.

A number of cases were soon reported by other observers, so that no doubt could be entertained that this was a distinct and hitherto unrecognised disease. Some cases were benefited by treatment to a certain extent; but on the whole, till 1891,

Myxœdema, though very slow in its progress, had proved one of the most intractable and hopeless of diseases.

Meantime, however, light had been thrown upon the meaning of the disease from an unexpected quarter. In many of the valleys of Switzerland, visitors cannot have failed to observe that a large proportion of the population have swellings on the front of the neck, some of them of a very large size. This is goitre. In the great majority of cases, these goitres produce no deleterious effect upon the health, and no inconvenience, except from their size. In some districts, indeed, they are regarded as decidedly ornamental. Occasionally, however, they cause pressure upon the windpipe, and threaten to stop the passage of air through it altogether; and it is on this account that their removal has usually been performed.

In Switzerland, therefore, where goitre is common, it was natural that relief from its occasional discomforts and dangers should most often be sought; and it was there, accordingly, that surgeons had most experience of its removal. In 1882-83, Reverdin and Kocher, two Swiss surgeons, described a peculiar train of symptoms which had come on some time after complete removal of the thyroid gland in some of their patients. These symptoms were lassitude, loss of activity, slowness of thought, speech, and movement, thickening of the features, and general swelling of the body. Their descriptions were published in ignorance of the accounts of Myxœdema which had been given in this country. The singular correspondence between the two conditions was not long in being noticed; and when it was first pointed out in this country by Dr Felix Semon, at the Clinical Society of London in 1883, it was regarded as of such importance that a Committee of the Society was appointed to make inquiry into the whole subject. The results of its elaborate investigations were published in a substantial volume in 1888.

In connection with the work of this Committee, Professor Victor Horsley undertook a series of experiments on animals, in which he obtained very remarkable results. He confirmed the observations of others who had found that dogs die very soon after removal of the thyroid gland with muscular tremors and other symptoms, due to disturbance of the nervous system. But in monkeys he showed that the operation is longer survived, and that the symptoms found—lowering of temperature, thickening of features, loss of hair, &c.—closely correspond to those seen in man both after removal of the thyroid gland and in the spontaneous disease called Myxœdema. It was these experiments which first definitely warranted the conclusion that the cause of the symptoms of Myxœdema is loss of function of the thyroid gland.

Experiments had also been made in another

direction which led to still more important results. Continental observers had shown that if thyroid glands be removed from healthy dogs, and implanted in the body of another dog, its own thyroid may afterwards be removed, in some cases without any bad result. In the cases where this happened, it was found that one at least of the transplanted thyroids had, so to speak, taken root, and was growing in its new situation; but the operation may fail in spite of very great care in its performance, and this result is not always attained.

In 1889, a patient suffering from the effects of removal of the thyroid gland had a sheep's thyroid transplanted into her tissues, and was temporarily benefited. In 1890, without having heard of this experiment, Professor Horsley suggested the same treatment for Myxœdema, and it has been adopted in a number of cases. Some relief usually results from the operation, but it is in most cases only transient. No doubt the difficulty of getting the gland to take root is much greater than in the case of the dog, because it cannot be taken from another individual of the same species.

One circumstance, however, was noticed and remarked upon by those who were watching the results of the operation. Improvement of the symptoms began *within twenty-four hours of its performance*. It was clearly impossible that the gland should have taken root and become active so soon: to what could this rapid improvement be attributed? Might it not be that the juice present in the gland at the time of its implantation was absorbed into the blood of the patient, and so produced this surprising effect?

Reasoning upon this observation, Dr G. R. Murray of Newcastle conceived the happy idea of extracting the juice from the thyroid gland of a sheep and injecting it through a fine hollow needle into the tissues of the patient. The first case in which he adopted this treatment proved a signal success; and an account of it, published towards the close of 1891, attracted general attention. Many other cases have since been treated in this way, and almost all with more or less benefit.

But the disadvantages of this method are considerable. The preparation of the extract from the gland requires very great care; the injection of it needs always to be performed by a practised hand; and in spite of every precaution, abscesses sometimes result from the injections. Last year, accordingly, several medical men independently tried the effect of administering the gland or its extract by the mouth; and it was found that this simple method produced just as good results as the more complicated one.

The results obtained have been very surprising. In almost all cases some improvement has resulted. Some have lost four stones in weight, and become active and lively instead of dull and apathetic. Some who were almost bald have grown a new, thick crop of hair. Some who had for years been incapacitated for work have been able to resume their occupations. One patient was so changed in appearance that her own daughter failed to recognise her, when she went into the hospital ward where she was under treatment, to see her after a few weeks' interval.

The treatment has also been applied to some

cases of sporadic cretinism in this country, with, if possible, still more astonishing effects. The children's apathy diminishes, their expression becomes intelligent, and they begin to take an interest in things about them, and to play as they never did before; their bodily growth, which had been almost arrested perhaps for a long period, takes a sudden start, and they may increase in height at the rate of an inch a month, instead of perhaps hardly as much in a year.

The improvement lasts only so long as the patients continue to take the remedy; a few weeks' cessation is generally sufficient to show that the old condition would speedily return. But it is little hardship to have to continue to take a small powder, or a few drops of liquid, or even a little morsel of raw meat, every few days during the rest of their lives. Time only can show whether it is possible by this means fully to maintain the benefit obtained at first; but there is every reason to expect that it will be so.

These results have not been obtained without some failures and mistakes. It was but natural, considering the contempt with which the thyroid gland has generally been regarded, that it should be administered at first by some of those who tried it in what we now know to be far too large doses; and in some cases these produced unpleasant and even alarming effects. Such mistakes should be easily avoided in future; and there seems no doubt that in this method of treating Myxœdema we have one of the safest, most certain, and most satisfactory of our means of dealing with disease.

We have advanced considerably, too, in our knowledge of the function of the thyroid gland. We know not only that it is necessary to the health of the body, but that it acts by elaborating and supplying to the blood some substance or substances without which it cannot properly nourish the tissues. What the nature of these substances is remains to be discovered. They must be identical or very closely analogous in man and the sheep, pig, and ox; for the thyroids of all these animals have been found to supply equally well what is wanting in patients whose thyroids have lost their activity.

We do not yet know, but shall doubtless soon learn, what is the effect of administering thyroid gland in considerable doses to healthy individuals. Some experiments have already been made in its use in other forms of disease than those known to depend on loss of function of the thyroid gland; but it is too soon yet to be able to pronounce on their value, though they are such as to suggest great possibilities of future usefulness.

There can be very little doubt that an organ of such importance as the thyroid is now known to be, must be subject to disturbances of a lesser degree than the almost complete loss of function which leads to the symptoms of Myxœdema, and that these disturbances must lead to disorders of the general health. Such disorders, if they exist, are at present quite unknown; and it must be one of the tasks of the future to unravel their symptoms, and to separate them from other forms of disease; when this is done, it will no doubt be found that here too the thyroid treatment has a large field of usefulness.

But this new treatment has possibilities of expansion in other directions. May it not be that other organs in the body have actions analogous to the thyroid, and that when their activity is deficient, the want may be supplied by the administration of extracts of the corresponding organs from the lower animals? This has already been done to some extent with regard to the digestive juices; how much farther it may be possible to extend the method, if at all, is at present quite uncertain. There is no doubt that the vista opened up by this new departure will not be fully explored for many years to come.

Meantime, the results of the thyroid treatment are sufficiently established to afford much cause for congratulation. More than a hundred individuals suffering from one of the most intractable and hopeless of diseases have been relieved, some after ten, fifteen, or even more years of distress. Some have merely had their condition alleviated; some have been practically cured, and restored to full vigour and activity.

How, then, has this result been brought about? First, undoubtedly, by the patient and pains-taking investigation of obscure and apparently uninteresting forms of disease; but secondly, and no less certainly, by experimental investigations upon animals. Without these, it is doubtful whether we would yet have arrived at the definite conclusion that Myxœdema and sporadic cretinism are due to loss of function of the thyroid gland. Without these, we could never have discovered that the thyroid gland in animals plays a part so closely analogous to its function in man. Till this was known, who would have dared, even had the idea occurred to him, to attempt a transplantation from one of the lower animals to man? And even if this had been known, it is extremely doubtful if the experiment would ever have been tried in the human subject without previous proof of its feasibility and usefulness in the lower animals themselves.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN CORBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XIX.—IN THE OPIUM DEN AGAIN.

ALAN AINSWORTH had not gone far in search of Mr Raynor—no farther, indeed, than two or three turnings beyond Isabel's lodgings—before he reflected that he had no exact information to guide him. Isabel had been able only to tell him that her father had gone, probably, to the opium den, which was in a horrible lane off the Ratcliff Highway; but he might, on the other hand, have gone somewhere with Doughty, since Doughty, too, was missing. Doughty, moreover, knew the way to the opium den; Ainsworth, therefore, concluded it better to seek Doughty first. He thought he knew where he might lay his hand on him; for that ancient and astute Bardolph of journalism had during their short acquaintance given him the privilege of several private and peculiar conversations, in which he had spoken

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of many of his lonely ways and shady haunts. From these conversations Ainsworth had gathered that Doughty, whenever he was depressed or in trouble, low in spirits or in pocket—both of which were conditions frequently recurrent—acted on Dr Johnson's saying: 'Let us take a walk down Fleet Street.' Ainsworth, therefore, took a hansom to Temple Bar, and walked down Fleet Street, looking in at several well-known houses of call by the way. At a certain ancient and mouldy place of refreshment in a turning off the eastern end of the street, where many generations of roysterers and steady drinkers had heard 'the chimnes at midnight' from the steeple close by, he found his man. Doughty sat with a crony in a remote corner of a long, low room, in which were a good many steady toppers. Ainsworth was some little while beside them before they were aware of his presence. Doughty seemed in his most solemn and portentous mood.

'Francis,' he was saying, 'I could find it in me to do a big drink.'

'So could I, Alexander,' said the other; 'but how is it to be achieved?'

'I have it, Francis,' answered Doughty, after a moment's thought: 'by a tremendous pop!'

'Of what, Alexander?' demanded the other.

Ainsworth thought he had overheard enough, and tapped Doughty on the shoulder. Doughty turned, shook him by the hand in a manner most impressive and protracted, and invited him to sit down.

'I cannot stay,' said Ainsworth. 'I am on my way to find your chief, and I want you to help me.'

'I will help you, Mr Ainsworth,' said Doughty, 'when I have had a toothful of refreshment. Will you kindly call for a biscuit and something to help it down?'

'Did you know that your chief was gone off?' asked Ainsworth.

'Know? Does the jackal know when the lion is on the war-path? Most certainly I knew. It was the knowledge that drove me forth to wander like a maniac among the tombs. It was the thought of what his admirable and adorable daughter, Miss Raynor, might think of me that drove me thus far. This is not a fit place, Mr Ainsworth, in which to mention her noble Christian name; but I murmur it with infinite respect.' After a moment's pause, he continued: 'He eluded me. When he is bent on it, he can elude even me; and I have been with him for a countless number of years, and I have studied him, and I know him and his capacities through and through, and I venture to tell you, Mr Ainsworth, that the chief could write the whole *Encyclopædia Britannica* himself if he liked'—

'And if he had the time,' added Ainsworth.

'—and if he had the time,' solemnly repeated Doughty. 'But I do not stand in any awe of him. We have been like brothers for a countless number of years. It is of Miss Raynor I stand in awe; she makes me ashamed; she makes me think of Una and the lion (of course you are aware, Mr Ainsworth, that I am alluding to a

certain passage in Spenser, the poets' poet). How can I ever look her in the face again?'

He took off his hat, looked into it desperately, and sadly put it on again. The refreshment was brought, and Doughty at once made disappear the lighter part of it. The crony—who seemed to be to Doughty much what Souter Johnny was to Tam o' Shanter—then observed aside to Ainsworth that Doughty was wonderful: the more refreshment he took, the soberer and stendier he became! As if to prove that saying true, Doughty rose, breaking his biscuit, and declared to Ainsworth that he was ready; and forth they both marched.

Doughty was of solemn opinion that the chief would be in 'the thick' of his opium sleep, and that it might be as well to wait until he was likely to have had it out; but Ainsworth represented that he had promised Miss Raynor to find and bring home her father with all possible speed, and that she would be anxiously waiting for his return. Upon that Doughty acquiesced, and in his most portentous manner called a four-wheeler; and they rumbled and rattled away eastward through a region that was as yet little known to Ainsworth.

The cab was left, as on a former occasion, near the top of the noisome lane, and they went on on foot, pursued by the curious looks of the policeman on 'fixed-point duty.' Doughty led the way on, and into the den, and Ainsworth followed with his attention at its utmost stretch; for this expedition was the most novel and romantic he had ever engaged on. The singular literary reputation of opium had hold of him, of course, but he was conscious of very little falling off in the realisation of what his fancy had expected: the sickly-sweet fumes of the opium were so peculiar to the sense, and all objects seen through the brown haze—swimming, writhing, and rolling—took such strange, soft, and distant shapes. He was startled by the sudden evolvment from the smoke—as if he were the genie of the place—of the grinning, slant-eyed Chinaman. He manifestly recognised Doughty, and knew his errand. He beckoned them, without a word, down the room, and pointed, with a bow, to a figure spread out on a mattress, with an opium pipe between the fingers: it was the chief. Ainsworth, on recognising him, at once stepped forward and shook him to wake him.

'No, no, no!' cried the Chinaman, frowning and gesticulating. 'Him muchee sleepee! No good!'

But the shake had a certain effect: the chief opened his eyes for an instant, and then took another position. He turned on his side with his knees drawn up and his head thrown back; he smiled and murmured:

'Raynor of gold and jewels,
Raynor of silver and pearls;
Raynor of red,
Raynor of white,
Raynor of coral and ivory!'

And then he slid away again into complete silence and slumber. The words made an impression on Ainsworth. They haunted him ever after: they had such a musical cadence, that one was tempted to find them charged with meaning; and yet they were but nonsense, with the faintest possibility of sense: a bit of poetic dross touched with gold.

'You perceive,' said Doughty, 'that it is of no use attempting to get him away now. We must patiently wait. In the meantime we must see that he gets no more opium from Johnny Chinaman when he wakes; and I think I had better go and send the cab away: it will run into a great deal of money to keep it waiting.'

'I think, however,' said Ainsworth, 'it had better wait.'

'Then,' said Doughty, 'we had better give the cabman a trifle for refreshment. I have no change: can you oblige, Mr Ainsworth?'

Ainsworth quite understood the remote purpose of this suggestion, but he had not the heart or the hardihood to refuse to accede to it. So Doughty went out with a silver coin. At the end of half an hour he had not returned, but the chief still slept on. Johnny Chinaman came and made the proffer of an opium pipe; but Ainsworth declined it: at another time, alone, he thought, he might not be indisposed to try the experiment; but now, when he had undertaken a sacred duty, he could not. So he sat on a stool and waited till he became drowsy, and then he rose and walked up and down.

In one of his walks he paused and listened to the soft, disjointed murmurs of a sleeper. The voice sounded to him like one he had heard before—where, he could not remember. The voice first arrested his attention, but the things uttered gradually held it.

'Observe,' said the voice, 'the time that is proper and the season actually of the thing. . . . He will be a great sinner to look for the ripeness of business and articles in *Panguni*, and to have expectation of the fruit to drop in *Chitturai*. . . . I appear as a gentle cow, but to tell the truth with regards I am a hungry tiger. . . . Wait, wait, Daniel! With regard, be as the hungry beast in the jungle! . . . The young Sahib is like the blind man who has thrown his staff into the air; oh, yes—very; he is playing the part of the foolish person and son. . . . *Venkaiyam! Karuvéppilai!*' . . .

Ainsworth went near, and had his suspicion confirmed: he recognised the words and the person as those of Daniel Trichinopoly. But he gazed and wondered. The sleek and gentle Daniel now looked no better than a truculent lascar or coolie: his turban was off and disclosed a bare shaven head; his clothes were gone—all except a loin-cloth—and revealed a brown figure of incredible thinness and wiriness; but he wore a most ferocious frown. Ainsworth did not understand the foreign words that he used occasionally, but he remembered them, and discovered afterwards that they were Tamil. He did not turn away, but still listened; for he did not doubt that 'the young Sahib' was George Suffield, and that in some crafty, underground, Oriental way Daniel was devising mischief against him, if not against the house of Suffield.

'*Venkaiyam! Karuvéppilai!*' repeated Daniel (that is, Onions! Curry-leaves!)—'No, no; Daniel will make curry not any more, thank you, Sahib. Daniel in soon time will have plenty cash. . . . The young Sahib is the foolish person. . . . He makes with regard plenty too much noise. . . . Daniel! Daniel! All right, Daniel!' (that in imitation of a loud manner; then sinking into his own low, oily tone). . . 'Oh yes; all right,

Daniel! With regard, Daniel knows, Daniel smiles, Daniel laughs in the trouser of his arm, . . . and Daniel waits. . . . Why, O daughter of my people, do you cry there for kanji? . . . Wait, and in soon time I fly to you as the wind, and you have plenty kanji and cash! . . . Yes, indeed and very truly. But even the wizard *Tummattipattan* himself was caught at last—yes, although he turned and escaped here and there! . . . The Black Water! . . . Oh! the Black Water rushes! Oh, the Black Water goes over! . . . Oh! the Red Fire! . . . It burns! It burns up! . . . Oh! he yelled, 'I drown! I roast! I burn!'

With a final yell, he bounded out upon the floor with fiery, rolling eyeballs, and dashed his hand as if to his sash to clutch a weapon. In an instant the Chinaman was between the opium-smitten Daniel and Ainsworth.

'London man stand too muchee near,' said he, putting Ainsworth back with a frown. 'Velly good no kniffee! Johnny alway takee kniffee way!'

Johnny took his panting, trembling patient by the hand, led him back to his place, and helped him into his bunk; and Ainsworth returned to look at Mr Raynor. What he had heard, wandering and disjointed as it was, made a deep impression on him; and the concluding *tableau* gave him a significant lesson in racial characteristics: 'However smooth and civilised,' said he to himself, 'the Asiatic may appear, scratch him and you find the savage!'

The chief still slept on, murmuring at intervals soft musical nothings to himself; his gentle condition under the opium being in marked contrast with that of the truculent Daniel. Ainsworth sat on the stool and wearily waited. No Doughty came; but opium devotees—chiefly swarthy lascars or sallow and bilious-seeming Chinamen—slipped in and out silently like ghosts. With much ado Ainsworth kept awake; for he feared to drop asleep: he knew not what might befall him if he lost consciousness: the Chinaman passed silently now and then and cast an evil, slanting eye on him, and he knew that most of the occupants of the brown Hades must be, when awake, ruffians of the most unscrupulous and desperate character. A strange company, indeed, for the gentle, cultured John Raynor to choose to frequent.

One hour, two hours passed. Still the chief slept on; and still Doughty did not return. Three hours passed, and Ainsworth became very anxious: the time was creeping close to midnight, and Isabel, he knew, was waiting in the extremest uncertainty. He had a mind to attempt again to rouse Mr Raynor. But presently Mr Raynor relieved him by waking and calling softly for 'Johnny' and 'more.'

Ainsworth stepped quickly over to him. 'Mr Raynor,' said he, 'don't you think it is time you came home?'

'Home?' echoed Mr Raynor, and shook himself and looked at Ainsworth.—'Oh,' said he, 'Mr Ainsworth! Here? I hope you don't come here often! Dreadful! dreadful!'

'I have only come here for you, Mr Raynor,' said Ainsworth; 'I have a cab waiting for you. Come, and we can talk by the way.'

At that Johnny Chinaman came up, and Mr

Raynor endeavoured to give orders for further pipes, but Ainsworth kept urging: 'No, no, no!'

'Permit me,' said Mr Raynor. 'I will not—I cannot—be dictated to in this manner. But I have a regard for you, Mr Ainsworth; and when I have had one more pipe to steady my nerves—I need positively one pipe more: I know myself completely—then I'll come with you.'

How the matter might have ended there is no saying, had not Doughty appeared. In his presence the chief collapsed, half-sulkily, and permitted himself to be led away without a word: much to Ainsworth's amazement, till he considered that the persistent subjection at such a time of Mr Raynor to the one man he knew of unconquerable nerves must have become an ingrained habit.

So the erring father was recovered, and borne home in the waiting four-wheeler to his waiting daughter. He hung his head before her, smiled a sickly smile when she tried to rally him into cheerfulness, as if nothing had happened, declined to eat any supper, and went to bed, escorted by the faithful, silent, and penitent Doughty.

Then Ainsworth told Isabel of all his adventures and experiences, by no means omitting that one which had most impressed him: how he had seen and overheard Daniel Trichinopoly. They agreed that though all he had heard might have no more meaning than the wandering of one lunatic or fever-stricken, it had at least that meaning, and it seemed likely that there was sufficient behind it to take note of. They agreed also that Mr Suffield should not be troubled with this matter, since they both had plainly understood that the control of the mills and the Lancashire business in general were now committed entirely to George; but that it should be communicated to 'the young Sahib' himself, who had engaged Daniel, to make what he could of.

Therefore, when Ainsworth returned to his rooms a little later, he sat down and wrote to George Suffield. He said that certain business had taken him to an opium den in the East End, where he discovered Daniel Trichinopoly—the Indian or Cingalese person who, he understood, now enjoyed some position in the house of Suffield. He then related the curious things which he had overheard, and left it to George to judge of their consequence.

IN ICELAND.

HOUR after hour we had jogged along in the pelting rain, seeing nothing from under our lowered sou'-westers but the muddy legs of the pony in front, hearing nothing—all conversation having long died out—but the splash of forty hoofs along the brimming paths, or occasional clatter over a naked lava rock. Now and again we would reach a stretch of turf where the path broke into a maze of narrow channels continually uniting and diverging again. Then the pace would quicken, and with much shouting after those that chose too devious courses, and jostling of saddle-boxes, the whole cavalcade would scurry across to where—seldom far off—the roughness of the ground once more compelled a creeping

line, of which my friend and myself brought up the rear. Occasionally the mist would lift a little, revealing for the most part wastes of black sand around us, and jagged lava cliffs beyond.

It is not to be wondered at that they are a grave and silent people who inhabit such a land. The earth that innumerable seasons have moulded for us into a pleasant and fruitful home is here still a primeval chaos; the original heat, that is a mystery of geology to us, is here an ever present reality. But 'the land has two lords that are deathless,' and the other is even less relenting. Not a decade passes but some winter the great ice-sheet will drift down from the north, and not only round the beleaguered coast, but far inland, the next summer will be but a cruel fiction of the calendar. To these people, Nature must, consciously or not, appear not as the bountiful provider, but as a grim divinity, with whom, for a meagre subsistence, one must unceasingly wrestle, not always prevailing. One wonders not so much that they spent their time in the days of the Sagas trying to kill each other, but rather that they ever left off fighting, seeing how little life must have been worth, and how much any excitement. Surely of all the movements Westwards that make up so much of History, no stranger and bolder has been recorded than the voyage, ten centuries ago, of those Northmen who sailed over a thousand miles of ocean to the black desolate land, where only the ominous raven seems at home.

Now the last hill is surmounted, and across the swollen and turbid river there loom through the mist the little black turret and cross of Stathr Church, and the grassy roofs and many gables of the farm. Forging the river, we notice two children herding cattle, standing indifferently in the ice-cold water, with the rain pelting down on their bare heads, to watch us pass. Then by a turf-walled lane, ankle-deep in mud, we struggle to the pavement of lava blocks that runs round the whole farm buildings, and forms a sort of 'quay,' to which the ponies are brought alongside. We were tired after our ten hours in the saddle, somewhat damp in spite of water-proofs, and very cold, though it was August; for though the sun is often warm in Iceland, the air never is. Therefore, our hearts sank when we saw no cheerful glow from the window, no smoke from the chimney. The yelping of the little sheep-dog brought to the door a pleasant-looking girl of eighteen. She was dressed in the national and absolutely universal costume of the island: a long plain black dress, and a black silk cap with a very long tassel passed through a broad silver ring, and hanging down on to the shoulder. This sombre costume was brightened, however, by a coloured bow, with a beautiful old silver necklace over it.

Entering by the middle gable, we groped our way through a passage encumbered with all manner of implements and clothes, to the kitchen. We had tried to put out of our minds all ideas of the brightness and warmth of a farm kitchen in England, but some little comfort we had expected till now. A room it could scarcely be called, a cellar rather, a hole in the roof serving for window and chimney. On a great stone table that took up about half the floor-space, a fire

of brushwood—there is no other fuel in many districts, and not that even in some parts—was filling the whole place with blinding smoke. Furniture there was none except a plank propped on stones. On a beam above the fire hung an array of stockings, drying in the smoke. Half-warmed at last, and more than half-suffocated, we escaped to the 'guest-room,' which, but for the want of a fire, was fairly comfortable. Soon the savoury smell of ptarmigan frizzling in butter under the skilful hands of our guide, told us that supper was not far off. With fresh black bread, delicate little turnips and potatoes from the garden patch, and a bowl of the national *Skaer* (sour curds) before us, we began to feel better. But the crowning mercy was yet to follow—the fragrant coffee freshly roasted and ground, with unlimited thick cream. Never once did it fail us in Iceland, however little we expected from the outward appearance of our halting-place.

Then arose the question of lodging. The room we were in was small and musty, and the window was not made to open, while the air that got in at the door was worse than nothing. We decided, therefore, to sleep in the church, having been assured that that was quite an ordinary proceeding in Iceland. Of course there was no well-cushioned family pew in which a night's sleep would be only an extension of a Sunday nap. One of us chose the floor; the other, suspicious of rats, tried an ingenious arrangement of benches; but a midnight catastrophe put us on a level, and on either side of the altar, watched over by some faded saints, we slept soundly till daybreak. The outlook then was depressing—everywhere the mist lay thickly. In the drizzling rain, two women were milking the sheep huddled together in a pen. Beyond, on the marshes, now showing sheets of water, a group of men were engaged on the farm-labour of Iceland—mowing, or rather shaving, carefully with sharp little scythes, the innumerable hummocks into which the frost cuts up the land, and which reached far as one could see, like an extension of the graveyard beside us. On the other side was the farmhouse, five long grassy roofs, over which a lamb was peacefully browsing, ending in as many brightly painted gables; the walls of alternate turf and stone, and very thick. The whole seemed more like a great burrow than a building, but looked picturesque and warm. Beyond it was the well-cultivated *tún*, or 'fore-acre,' all above the level of the morass around.

Seeing no prospect of more birds for dinner, we resolved to make an attempt upon the smoked mutton and pickled isinglass of the country, but failed miserably, and had to fall back on our own supplies of tinned provisions. With books and tobacco and frequent coffee, we managed to get through that day; but when next morning broke with not the slightest change, our thoughts turned longingly to the billiard table in the hotel at Reykjavik. We would have pushed on despite the weather; but our next halt was to be under canvas, and though we were prepared to face rain when once established, our hearts sank at the thought of pitching our tent and digging the necessary trench round it in such a downpour. Stay we must, then, and if so, some amusement must be found. Our light literature was at an end; of more solid reading we could stand only

a limited amount. We began by examining the old communion plate locked up under the altar, then we explored the attic above the church. This was a success. First we found an ancient brass side-saddle, elaborately ornamented in *repousse* work, with a crupper bearing a verse from an Icelandic poem. We had seen the same sort of thing in the museum at Reykjavik, and secured this one for the price of a new saddle. For the rest of our journey it was strapped on one of the spare ponies, causing occasional surmises at our halting-places as to what had become of the lady. Next we found some old guns, the parts of a handloom—for weaving is carried on in all farmhouses during winter—and lastly, a box of old books, many of them in beautiful old bindings, but too far gone to bargain for.

Having exhausted the church, we turned our attention to the house. From the window opposite, the girls of the family—Ingebjorg and Guðrún were their quaint names—were looking out at the pouring rain, evidently as weary of it as we were. We reflected that the ordinary civilities of a call meant in themselves pretty nearly nothing, and that it would not, therefore, be much of a drawback that we knew only about a dozen words of Icelandic, and they rather less English. Before we left home it had occurred to us that the Icelanders, being intelligent and well educated, but entirely cut off from intercourse with other people, would probably be much interested in pictures of the distant world, and we had therefore provided ourselves with a supply of photographs of whatever we thought would be most unlike the country we were going to. With these as excuse we crossed, not without difficulty, to the farmhouse, and were shown into the *bathstofa*, a long low room with a line of box-beds on either side. Here in most farmhouses almost the whole household sleeps, though in this one there was a separate small room partitioned off for the girls. Here also the eating goes on, one cannot say the meals, for there are none. Each takes what he wants when he likes, sitting on the edge of his bed.

We found our host reading poetry, of which Icelanders are usually fond. The photographs took immensely. 'Windsor Castle and Park,' 'The Interior of Westminster Abbey,' and most of all an instantaneous view of Hyde Park, excited evident though not demonstrative interest. They lasted most of the afternoon, and were borrowed again in the evening. After these, 'Pigs-in-Clover,' already forgotten in England, but a complete novelty in Iceland, served to pass another hour. Thus we got through the second day tolerably, and went to sleep with the feeling that surely Sunday would bring a change in the luck. Alas! we did not need to look out next morning, for the wind and rain had been loud on the windows all night through, and though the day showed occasional signs of grace, it was little better than the others. There was to be service in the church, only an occasional event in Iceland; so the guns and camera had to be removed from the pulpit betimes, and all made ready. As twelve drew near we could see little groups of riders bearing down upon us from all quarters, across the now almost flooded plain, and the field beside the church soon became lively as a horse-fair. To walk any distance in Iceland is almost

impossible—except sometimes in winter—owing to the want of roads and bridges, so that every member of the congregation within was represented by a pony without. These were tied in pairs, head and tail, so that they could not wander. Then came the dressing. Each woman had come in a voluminous black skirt and jacket, as a protection from the mud, but these were all taken off and laid upon the chair-saddle. On this also the hat was left, every woman in the church appearing in the national head-dress and jewellery. Time is not reckoned with pedantic accuracy in Iceland; long after the service had begun, people came dropping in, while several left before the end. The church, holding about fifty people, was well filled, a remarkable fact, considering the distances that separate the farms, for there are no villages. Some travellers have argued from the apparent absence of religious observances in the farmhouses that the Icelanders are an irreligious people; but we were assured that summer is looked on as a 'close-time' for family worship, as well as for the children's schooling, everything being sacrificed to the hay harvest.

Long after the close of the service, the people hung about the church, chatting and exchanging letters and parcels, for it is thus that the rudimentary postal service of the island is supplemented.

As the day wore on, the curtain of mist slowly lifted, and we saw for the first time the range of hills that bounded the vast morass; and above them, far away to the east, the long ridge of Hecla, with the eternal snow lying on the eternal fire. Shortly after sunset the whole sky cleared, and a faint light in the north-east foretold the first aurora, a sign of the waning of summer. It seemed at first like the reflection in the sky of some vast moving light below the horizon, then as a veil of luminous cloud, but so delicate that the lightest of the real clouds seemed solid when entangled in its meshes. Soon a corresponding light rose from the opposite horizon, and the two meeting above us, gradually moved northwards till they formed an arch over the glow of the sunset. Long after the household of Stathr was sunk in sleep, we stood watching the sky, till the frosty night air drove us indoors.

Next morning we were awakened by the blessed sun streaming in at the windows, and found a cloudless sky, such as we had not yet seen in Iceland. Our stage was to be a short one, so we gave up the morning to taking photographs about the farm. Gúthrún had promised us she would dress herself in the beautiful gala costume of the country, only worn on grand occasions, such as a wedding; and thus we successfully photographed her. Then the girls nailed blankets over the window of their room, and the developing was watched with much interest. As we finished, the ponies were being driven in, and the laborious tying and strapping began again. After settling our very moderate bill, and purchasing some of the cloth that is spun, woven, and dyed on the farm, we said good-bye, surprised to find that it was not, after all, such a relief to get off. As we rode away slowly across the swamp, there gathered on the roof of the barn a sombre group of girls, the dogs crouching beside them, and the lamb nestling above in the

lee of a chimney. Silent and motionless they stood looking wistfully after us; and when long after we turned round, there was still the spot of black upon the green, till we reached the lava desert, and in the swirling clouds of dust, the farm, hills, and all disappeared from sight. J. C. O.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

By H. F. ABELL.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

OCCASIONALLY, the monotony of every-day life in the Far East is broken by a veritable thunder-clap of news, some startling announcement, which by its interest makes ample amends for the almost absolute dearth of topics for conversation and discussion characteristic of ordinary times. Such was the case in the month of July 188—, in the far-distant port of Yokohama, Japan. The Comprador of the Pacific Bank obtained leave to take a short holiday of a few days, and did not return. In the meanwhile it was discovered that he, taking advantage of the tremendous power he could exercise by virtue of his position as trusted controller of the native business, had been systematically robbing the bank for some months past, and that his defalcations amounted to the very pretty sum of fifty thousand dollars, or ten thousand pounds sterling.

Ambrose Burdon, the bank Manager, who had been up country, was of course immediately sent for, and came to Yokohama with all haste. Burdon was a strange man, of reserved manner and retiring habits, who was classed by all who were acquainted with him as incomprehensible. He was a fine, tall, fair-haired Englishman of forty, with a face which instantly impressed strangers favourably, but which—so said men who knew him—was capable of being transformed with an expression of absolute malignity when its owner was annoyed and disappointed. Of his personal habits and predilections, little or nothing was known, even in a small place where the actions of the most unimportant individuals were always liable to microscopic examination, except that he loved money. For money, it was whispered, he would do anything. The only amusement he shared with his fellow-countrymen was play, and this in the face of the fact that he was generally unlucky. How he spent his leisure time, nobody knew; but strange stories were afloat about him, amongst which was one to the effect that he had been met at a remote inland village far off the beaten track alone with Ah Why, the Comprador, whose disappearance was now agitating the community.

Of course the meeting with the Chinaman *might* have been accidental, or the Manager and his Comprador *might* have been up country upon some delicate and important business which demanded secret negotiation; but the public is generally ready to judge an unpopular man harshly, and so, when the news of the robbery became known, over more than one tiffin table it was whispered that if anybody could throw light upon the affair it was Ambrose Burdon. Nobody, however, could have been more dumfounded and amazed at the news, and nobody could have taken more prompt, decisive measures for the apprehension of the fugitive, than the Manager. 'Just my

luck!' he bitterly exclaimed. 'I find the branch almost insolvent; I set to work, and I make it the most paying branch east of Singapore, and then this happens!'

All efforts to trace the whereabouts of Ah Why were fruitless. Men noticed in the meanwhile that Burdon grew more haggard in appearance, and more restless and unsettled in manner; and he became the object of general sympathy, for it was known that he would be severely dealt with by the bank authorities.

During the week which followed, Burdon learned his fate. The Hong-kong letter informed him that the Inspector of Branches would arrive in Yokohama by the next mail for the purpose of making a searching inquiry into the affair, and that he was to hold himself in readiness to leave for England at any moment, in order to explain matters to the Board of Directors. Burdon took it very quietly, and made an excellent meal after it. Then he lit a cigar, told his boy to place the long cane chair in the veranda, and proceeded to digest other letters brought by the mail. The first he opened bore the Chancery Lane, London, post-mark, and was as follows:

'DEAR SIR—In our last communication we informed you that in accordance with instructions from your late uncle, Mr Hercules Tunstall, we should open the letter he indited some time before his death, which said letter was not to be opened until six calendar months before your cousin, Miss Ruth Tunstall's coming of age. Acting on your behalf as co-trustee for the deceased gentleman's estate, we have carried out this instruction, with the following result'—

(Here he was interrupted by the appearance of his boy with a note. Burdon always disliked interruption. At this moment it was particularly ill-timed, and his face assumed the bad expression which men knew it could assume under pressure.

'Confound you'—he began. The boy handed him the note. Burdon examined it, and his face brightened. 'Who brought this?' he asked.

'That piecey China steward on board English mail,' replied the servant.

'All right! Can do!' said Burdon; and the boy disappeared. Burdon put the note unopened in his pocket, and proceeded with his London letter.)

'With the following result. With the exception of a few legacies, amongst which is one of a hundred pounds per annum to you, the whole of the deceased gentleman's estate will pass to his daughter, Ruth Tunstall, upon her attaining the age of twenty-one years. Should she die before attaining the age of twenty-one years, you, as the next of kin, will inherit the property. We have of course not yet informed Miss Tunstall of this, and shall await your instructions.—Yours faithfully,
TAPER & SEALE.'

'Lucky girl!' was Burdon's comment; 'and I, when I get the sack from the bank, shall have a hundred a year to live on.—Well, what's next? One from her, by Jove!' He opened a letter addressed to him in the delicate feminine hand which young ladies so thoroughly despise nowadays, and read:

'MY DEAR COUSIN AMBROSE—I think I ought to write and tell you of my own great news before all others, although you may think me selfish for so doing. John Felling, the head of the open Bill Department in your head office, asked me to be his wife last night, and I accepted him.'

('Great heavens!' muttered Burdon. 'There's a young fool she's made herself, and with thirty thousand pounds coming to her! There's one thing: he doesn't know it, and she doesn't!')

'And I accepted him, and am the happiest girl in the world. I tell you before anybody else, even before my aunts, because I know how great an interest you take in me; and I don't think you will be so angry with me, a poor girl, for marrying a poor man, as they are sure to be. But John is getting on so well that he tells me not to fear, and that all will turn out for the best. So don't be angry, my dear cousin. You know I always have my father's allowance of a hundred a year; John has two hundred and fifty; and when I come of age I suppose there must be a little something for me, although I know it cannot be much, as you remember how poor father was always lamenting his poverty.'

('Stingy old dog!' growled Burdon; 'never gave a cent away in his life; dressed like a junior clerk, and all the while was making dollars hand over fist!')

'So, you see, we shall be able to live quietly and decently.

'When are you coming to see us? It seems so long since you were in England. Jack is such a good fellow, and I think he grows more like what I remember you to have been, every day; and when I put the two photographs together, the likeness is absolutely ridiculous, the more so because you are utterly unconnected with him, and must be quite ten years older than he is. He is very worried and anxious just now; but he doesn't tell me what it is about; so I hope it is nothing serious. My aunts desire to be most kindly remembered to you, and would dearly like one of your chatty, amusing letters. Good-bye, my dear Cousin Ambrose.—Yours very affectionately,
RUTH TUNSTALL.'

Ambrose Burdon refolded the letter slowly, and sat for some moments looking ahead of him with eyes which saw nothing for the raging waves of thought which tossed through his brain. Then he suddenly remembered the note brought by his boy, and took it from his pocket; rose, tore open the envelope, withdrew a thin paper, which he submerged in his washing-basin, and held up to the light.

'That's all right!' he muttered, after studying the paper for some moments. 'My part of the bargain is completed; and now for his. I have made him a free man. Let us see if he will make me a rich man.'

Ambrose Burdon dined at the Club that night. He said nothing about the news brought by the mail; but he soon perceived that it was known, and was astonished to find that there were so many who sympathised with him. He was never a jovial companion; but it was remarked that upon this occasion he was much more nearly

jovial than usual, and that he seemed to regard very lightly what was generally understood as a very critical period in the career of a man who, by the business measurement of years, might still be accounted young. He drank freely; and when he left the Club at eleven o'clock, he was in an elated condition very unusual with him.

At half-past eleven a 'jinrickisha,' conveying a closely muffled-up figure, dashed through the European settlement, passed down Curio Street, down the Basha Michi, and, just before reaching the railway station, pulled up. From it alighted Ambrose Burdon. He paid the coolie, turned down a narrow street of poor shanties, and after some examination of the signs and emblems with which they were hung, knocked at the shutters of a better sort of house, which, by the sign of the three great white balls suspended over the door, he knew was a druggist's. After a considerable delay, during which Burdon fidgeted uneasily and muttered what were probably not beatitudes, the shutter was opened a few inches, and a voice demanded who was there. Burdon replied in Japanese; the entrance was opened a foot or two wider, and he was admitted. He walked through the outer shop to a back room, where, over a brasier of charcoal, a Chinaman sat huddled, with an opium pipe at his side. He was a very old man, more like a mummy than a being of flesh and blood, and a large pair of horn spectacles on his nose added to his uncanny appearance.

'I am the gentleman referred to by our friend Ah Why,' said Burdon. 'Here is my letter of introduction.' So saying, he handed the thin-paper note he had received that afternoon to the old man, who examined it with minute attention, every now and then darting a glance at Burdon, as if comparing him with a written description. The old man then rose with more alertness than his appearance gave him credit for possessing, went to a cabinet, touched a spring which opened a secret drawer, and from the drawer took a packet, which he examined by the light of the oil lamp.

'Did you ever see a man starved to death?' he asked suddenly, and speaking excellent English.

'Once—yes,' replied Burdon, 'in the street at Wu-chang on the Yang-tse.'

'Very well; I shall be starved to death if this is traced to me,' said the old man.

'I'll take care of that,' said Burdon impatiently, for the Chinaman was fondling the packet, as if unwilling to part with it. 'Come—it's getting late!'

The old man handed him the packet. Burdon saw that it was marked with a single broad, arrow-headed line in red, with characters beneath, and asked the signification thereof.

'That means Red-hot Needle,' replied the Chinaman.

'Red-hot Needle!' exclaimed his visitor. 'What does that mean?'

'Have you never read the classics?' asked the old man.

'You mean your classics?—Mencius and all those fellows? Why, my good man, I don't know a sign of your lingo,' said Burdon. 'But what do they say about the Red-hot Needle?'

'Nothing,' replied the old man gravely. 'But they tell you what became of Hai Wang, the

Mandarin of Soochow, who put the fresh tax on copper; what became of Ah Qui, the faithless wife of General Ming; what became of the Hai Ling brothers, seven of them, who— But never mind! You give me receipt?'

'Why?' asked Burdon.

'For my protection,' replied the Chinaman.

'You don't need it,' said Burdon, and without another word left the shop.

CURLEW LORE.

It is not only 'upon the moorland' that 'lonely curlew pipe.' As the inland shooter in such wild districts comes across these melancholy birds, so the seashore wanderer with a gun, which is the exactly appropriate phrase, finds the curlew even more familiar to him—familiar, that is, by sound and sight at a distance, rarely by the actual possession of a shot bird. And on the whole the curlew is far more familiar to most by sound. That eerie, melancholy whistle, which when heard in the gloaming amid the ripple of the waves, as they betoken the ebbing tide, seems so much in unison with the scene on a winter evening, is a sound which one never forgets, though all one's after experiences may be of inland shooting. No wonder that in some parts of the old world west of England that wild thrilling note is held to have something mysterious about it. In one locality the notes of curlews at night are called the sounds of 'Gabriel's Hounds;' in another, those of the 'Seven Whistlers.' In most, so far as the locality of which we speak is concerned, these birds are looked upon in a different light from others. Without going so far as to say that the same opinion exists about them as that held by the Irish west-coast peasants of the wild swans—namely, that those who shoot them will probably find some fatal or serious misfortune follow—there is yet in some of the localities to which we allude an idea that in all respects the curlews are ill-omened birds—an idea which in connection with gunpowder is no doubt a satisfactory one for the birds.

This local idea, however, is by no means widely spread; for over many a marshy and moorland district, and along many a coast-line, there is every disposition to expend gunpowder on the curlew, if only there be a chance of getting within range. This, however, is a matter of comparatively rare occurrence. Few birds, except perhaps the wood-pigeon, are as shy as the curlew, and each has as keen a perception of the proximity of a gun as have the rook and crow, both of which know it as well as the keenest hand in Birmingham. The curlew in winter, however, is among the valued trophies of the shore or moorland shooter; and not without reason. The bird is, as has been said, one of the wariest; hence, a successful shot necessarily implies much perseverance, and as we all know, 'the labour we delight in physics pain.' And the curlew when skilfully cooked—and there are various ways of eliminating the fishy taste, which in some birds is not more than that in a wild duck—is to many palates a dainty dish. That it is far more familiar than it was is evidenced by its now frequent

appearance in the game-dealers' shops in London and the great towns.

The curlew is an interesting and, in its way, a handsome bird. To many inhabitants of inland parts of the country it is utterly unfamiliar; but its grayish-black plumage and long curved bill, delicate in its sense of what Dugald Dalgetty calls 'provaunt,' as are those of the snipe and woodcock, are as well known as they are prized by the shooter whose beat extends over the sea-shore, the marsh, or the moor. The curlew, like some other birds, is paradoxical in its breeding-time; for while it is ordinarily one of the most persistent birds in keeping its distance from all human intruders at the time of nidification, in the months of March and April—when of course nobody who is fit to carry a gun shoots at anything but rabbits, and perhaps the birds may know this—the curlew assumes an audacity which is quite different from its ordinary conduct. If you happen to be walking in any of its breeding-places on the higher grounds, which slope away from the coast, or inland by some marsh or mere, the bird flies near you, whistling continually. Its eggs are big ones, and pale in colour, often laid under a furze or whin bush. At nesting time the Welsh farmer calls the shrill note 'the curlew's swearing,' and thinks it prognosticates rain. Like the landrail, the youngsters at first are quite unlike the old birds. As in the case of the landrail with regard to their colour, so in the case of the curlew that characteristic length of bill which distinguishes the family is for some time absent.

Though essentially a shore-going bird—our own personal experience, and we have followed many, gun in hand, is far more derived from this class than from the moorland birds—the shy, wary, circling curlew, which seems like the gull to be most in touch with sand and wind and waves, will sometimes be found, as much to the shooter's as to the bird's astonishment, in fields of pasture or root-crops. It loves a succulent diet, even as do the snipe and woodcock, but with the distinction that its food is more saline than fresh. However, those birds found in the fields are as eager as are rooks and gulls—frequently found there also in stormy weather—for grubs, snails, worms, and such 'small deer.' The main food of the majority of curlews is, however, found on the sands and at the ebb tide. Then it is that curlews, ducks, plovers, and various smaller shore birds industriously explore the increasing expanse of gleaming wet sands as the ripple of the receding waves goes lower and lower. Little hollows are left full of salt water; tufts of seaweed, brown, green, and crimson, here and there variegate the yellow sands; and various forms of food are exposed to the eager beaks of the winged crowd on the shore; while the big black-backed gulls, usually hunting in couples, plod with deliberate powerful wings—and always flying against the wind—along the margin of the tide, with keen restless eyes that note the smallest edible object. Among all this crowd, however, those that keep most successfully and continuously out of the reach of the gun are the curlews. They use those long curved beaks in corkscrew fashion, and thus obtain various small shell-fish; but unlike the oyster-catchers, who sometimes will crack the shells, the curlews are not particular, and having

an ostrich-like digestion, swallow such dainties whole.

This dainty diet makes the curlew in its turn a dainty, to such as do not object to something of a fishy flavour. Our ancestors had a fine expansive taste in the way of table-birds, as a study of ancient chronicles, bills of fare, and 'house-books' proves. They held the curlew in much higher estimation than we do; and it may be that our modern self-sufficiency in this as in some other matters underrates our ancestors' wisdom. At any rate, when we consider the relative value of money past and present, and recollect the old rhyme—

A curlew, be she white or be she black,
She carries twelvence on her back—

it is clear that the bird was reckoned not only as one of the most edible, but also of the most valuably marketable kind.

We have said that the curlew is about the most difficult bird of all to get a shot at with any reasonable chance of success, unless, indeed, by one of those exceptional incidents which come within the experience of every shooter. But there is a way of getting such a shot, and that is by calling in the aid of the incitement of curiosity, which, indeed, has proved perilous to many other creatures than curlews. If haply on a winter's afternoon—that is the best time—you pause on your long-shore wanderings, and not unwillingly 'rest and be thankful' behind some coign of vantage, such as an ancient piece of wreckage, or a crag, or anything of a similar nature, and raise your cap in the manner known to skirmishers in action behind trenches when they want to 'draw the enemy's fire,' the usually wary birds—provided nothing else of you be visible—will gradually circle round nearer and nearer to investigate this unknown object, until at last they come within range. Then it is your own fault or your gun's—which, by the way, usually gets the blame in the case of non-success—if you do not succeed in dropping one or a brace, though the latter is a much rarer eventuality.

Various ancient and curious superstitions—some of them ancient indeed—cluster round the curlew. In some places the old inhabitants would not shoot at them 'for love or money.' These ideas differ in different localities. Some hold, as in the case of the robin, that the curlew's shooter finds his hand shake for ever after. Others, that sleepless nights, haunted by the bird's melancholy whistle, will be the result. Others, that no luck will attend the house in which the shooter lives until the next hatching-time. To recapitulate all these beliefs would make too great a demand upon space. In spite of them all, the average 'rough-shooter' in winter considers the curlew as a valuable addition to his day's gains.

Hitherto, we have spoken of the ordinary curlew. There is another individual of the race far less known. The stone curlew loves the downs and fallows. As its name shows, it prefers such localities as these where there are many flints and similar stones, which, indeed, by the wonderful adaptability of Nature, help to conceal the young, the similarity of the plumage and the hue of the surrounding stones being so great as to

deceive the ordinary eye. This is the case with other shore-birds, of which perhaps one of the best instances that can be mentioned is found in the ring dotterels, which in spring are to be seen continually running about on the higher part of the beach, and always where pebbles predominate over sand. Stone curlews thrive well among the stones, and enjoy the succulent diet in the shape of grubs and worms which are to be found in the fields; while the young birds run like land-rails, and the plumage so exquisitely matching the surroundings, renders them, when crouching, most unlikely to be seen.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.

By CHARLES EDWARDEN.

I.

THERE was trouble in the minds of the three inmates of Bethel Cottage. The three were Mrs Griffiths and her daughter Nancy, and their lodger John Chester, who worked in the Penlyn slate quarries of Nantle, whose pits were famous far and wide for their fearful depth. Mrs Griffiths was a widow. Her husband's death had endowed her with a small annuity, which, with the money she received from young Chester, sufficed for the simple needs of the household. Nancy was nineteen, and John Chester was five-and-twenty. As the girl was exceedingly pretty, and as amiable as she was pretty, and as John Chester was as susceptible to feminine charms as most men of his age, that which might have been foreseen duly happened. Though young Chester had only been in Nantle six months, he was fast in love with Nancy. He believed the girl returned his love—though hitherto he had not dared to ask her, for he was a proud, sensitive fellow, and he dreaded an unwelcome reply, which would have compelled him to leave Bethel Cottage for ever.

This was the trouble. A letter had come that morning from Reuben Tallack, saying that the writer would be in Nantle late in the evening, and that he hoped he might venture to come bag and baggage to Bethel Cottage, as in the 'dear old times.' Those were his words, and he underlined them with two thick strokes. Further, as it appeared that Reuben had written from some foreign port to Mr Penlyn, asking for employment in the quarry, and had found a favourable reply awaiting him at Southampton, it seemed likely that he would remain in Nantle for a considerable time.

At the first reading of this letter, Mrs Griffiths had expressed the utmost pleasure at its contents. So too had Nancy. The girl's eyes became suddenly so bright and beautiful, and there was such a sweet flush on her cheek, that John Chester felt like a man who had received a stab in the heart.

'I don't know,' Mrs Griffiths had exclaimed, 'when I had better news. I shall be very, very happy to have him here again.'

Nancy seemed to take the same view of the matter.

But Mrs Griffiths chanced to look towards her lodger, who had ceased eating his breakfast, and she changed all in a moment. Nancy also turned her eyes upon John Chester, and she grew pale because of the thunder-cloud on the young man's face. Then, with the briefest of excuses, John Chester had risen and taken his work-coat and set off for the quarry, cursing his luck, and wishing with all his heart he had never set eyes on Nancy Griffiths's sweet beguiling little face.

When they were alone, the two women appeared to dismiss their lodger and his eccentricity wholly from their minds.

'We must,' said Mrs Griffiths cheerily, 'give him your own little room, Nancy dear. It is what he will like best. Oh, my dear, if only he could be with us always, as when your poor father was alive!'

To this the girl made no reply, for she was thinking of John Chester, though she seemed to be more particularly engrossed with the geraniums in the parlour window.

'There is,' continued the widow, with her chin in her hand and a reflective look in her eyes, 'no young man, in my opinion, to be compared to our Reuben.—Don't you think so, Nan?' she asked, with momentary animation.

'Yes, mother,' replied the girl, still with her eyes on the plants.

'What other young man in all Wales, I should like to know, would have stayed with us as he did just because your father on his deathbed asked it of him? And that wasn't the half of what he did for us, Nan, though I never thought it was wise to tell you about it. I'll tell you now, though, my dear, because you've grown from a girl into a woman.'

'I don't think I have, mother,' murmured Nancy, this time glancing at Mrs Griffiths, and with that fair rose-bloom suffusing her cheeks afresh.

'Oh, but you have, my dear,' insisted the widow. 'I was married at twenty myself.'

'What has that got to do with it, mother dear?' whispered Miss Nancy. She had risen at these words and put her arms round her mother's neck. Her cheeks were burning. The consciousness that this was so alone restrained her from pressing them against her mother's cheeks. She did not wish to be asked for an explanation of their torrid state; nor did she wish for the medicine with which Mrs Griffiths was sure to dose her if she could not tender a satisfactory reason for their unusual warmth.

'It has much to do with it, Nan,' replied Mrs Griffiths. 'Reuben Tallack worked for me and you, my dear, just as if he was the very best of sons to me and of brothers to you. But for him, I don't know, I'm sure, if the debts we owed would ever have been paid; and I am quite sure I should never have got the insurance money—they bothered me so with their letters and disagreeable suspicions.'

'Yes, mother; I know Reuben was very, very kind,' said Nancy.

'"Kind" is a poor word to express it, my dear Nan.'

'Why, mother,' exclaimed the girl, abruptly drawing apart from the widow, and looking as if

she were going to ask an unanswerable question—why did he leave Nantle as he did—without saying "good-bye" even to us? I have hardly forgiven him for that yet.

'I will tell you, Nancy,' replied Mrs Griffiths. 'Sit down, my dear little girl.'

'Do you mind very much if I keep standing? I don't feel tired enough to care to sit, and I'll pay just as much attention to what you say, mother.' With these words, Nancy seemed rather to belie herself, for she straightway went to the canary in his cage and offered the bird her dainty little finger to peck at.

'Very well, my dear; I won't make a long tale of it, either. It was just this. Poor Reuben lost his heart to you from the very first, Nancy, and there's no denying it. You were only sixteen then, and he didn't like to speak about it to me or any one. And you grew more and more dear to him—those are his own words, Nan—as the months passed. Even when you were eighteen last year, he thought you were too young to be spoken to on the subject.'

'Indeed, yes,' murmured Nancy, so softly, however, that Mrs Griffiths did not hear her.

'And,' continued the widow, 'it was just for your sake, and nothing else in the wide, wide world, that he went away and took that sea-trip. He was a quick-acting sort of young man, was Reuben, for all his noble, steady determinations; and that was why he went off as he did, leaving a letter, and asking us to keep his things for him. But I know as well as I know yourself, my dear little Nan, that he's coming home now to settle it all. He's had that sea-voyage with his uncle, and he's been thinking of you all the while he has been among the wild waves of the stormy ocean; and now he wants you to make him happy.'

'Mother,' cried the girl, 'you ought not to talk like that; you can't *really* know that he means that!'

'Gently, gently, my dear. I feel that I know Reuben as if he were my own boy. His letter doesn't say anything about it, of course; but that's natural. It's only proper, though, that you should be prepared; and that, my dear, is why I tell you all this.'

The girl's face had, while her mother was speaking, shown much emotion; to the canary. Latterly, her lips had begun to quiver in rather an ominous way. Now she could contain herself no longer. 'Mother, mother,' she cried, like one acutely hurt, 'I don't want to have Reuben ask me to be his wife. Why can't he stay away?' Then she put her pretty crimsoned face into her hands, and, dropping upon the sofa, sobbed bitterly.

Mrs Griffiths, good woman, was first amazed, and afterwards extremely distressed. She did all she could to soothe her little Nancy, and reproached herself strongly for the want of tact with which she fancied she had exposed Reuben Tallack's secret.

'Come, come, my poor lamb,' she crooned, as she clasped the girl in her arms. 'I'm a silly, good-for-nothing old woman, and was wrong to tell it you like that. Don't fret so, Nan dear. Look at your poor old mother and say you forgive her, and she won't grieve you again in the same way.'

Mrs Griffiths said much more to the same effect. She was not a very wise woman, though good and true-natured to the core. The upshot was that Nancy at length took heart, wiped her eyes, smiled like the sun through an April shower, and shortly afterwards fell to caressing her mother in her turn. The widow was easily persuaded to promise not to think anything more about Reuben's supposed designs upon her daughter's heart. After all, it might be as Nancy assured her: that she had taken young Tallack's communications too seriously; and besides, so long an absence was quite enough to drive the love out of his heart, if ever it had really been in it.

But though Mrs Griffiths yielded to persuasion, as the day advanced she became less and less convinced. The womanliness in her sympathised with Reuben in his hopes, even as the maternal instinct in her made her yearn to conciliate Nancy at all cost.

Nancy, too, as the hour approached when Reuben would be with them, felt more and more uncomfortable. How could she face Reuben, believing as she did in her heart that he loved her as only the noblest and strongest natures can love, and that he meant to do all he could to win her, and knowing that she did not love him as a girl ought to love her heart's true and only lord?

As for John Chester, when he came in to dinner he looked blacker than ever. He was a handsome dark fellow, with eyes such as women admire. He said little during the meal, which he ate with a shockingly poor appetite. The only words he uttered with any show of interest were these: 'I suppose there's no doubt Mr Tallack'll be here to-night?' and being assured that there was no reasonable doubt in the matter, the old shadow on his face darkened yet deeper. He misread Nancy's anxious expression altogether. And so he returned to the quarry with thoughts and aspirations even darker than his countenance.

II.

Reuben Tallack came by the evening train from the south. The happiness in his eyes was a sight to see. Even Nancy for the moment seemed to forget the awkwardness of her situation in her gladness at shaking hands with him.

'I've a secret to tell you,' he said, very soon after his arrival; and he looked at Nancy, who did not meet his glance.

'Time enough for that, Reuben, my dear lad, by-and-by,' interposed Mrs Griffiths quickly.—'And here comes John Chester,' she added, with relief, as she nodded towards the window. The click of the latch had warned her of her lodger's approach.

'John Chester!' exclaimed Reuben—'who may he be?'

As that person himself entered the room even while he was speaking, the introduction was made formally. He did not attempt to recommend himself to Reuben by his manner.

'I hear you're coming on at the works,' he said with a sour look, as he held out his hand.

'That's so, lad,' replied Reuben, shaking the hand heartily. 'I'm main pleased to come back to the old place. There's special reasons for it.'

—Yes, you may well colour up, little Nan. I'm much mistaken if you won't know more about them same special reasons soon yourself.—She's grown *almost* pretty since I left, mother' (he was wont to call Mrs Griffiths 'mother'); 'but I knew she would.'

In her heart the girl was quite angry with Reuben for these words. Yet they were what she might have expected, supposing that her own and her mother's anticipations were to be realised.

As for John Chester, he just bit his lip and turned away.

'There's not much amiss with her, Reuben,' said Mrs Griffiths. 'And she's a good girl, which is better than being a pretty one.—Surely, you're not going, John?'

'I guess I am,' was that young man's reply. 'And I shan't be in till late. I'm going to the club. You'll like to talk over old times, you three.' So saying, with a nod, John Chester went away. But he did not go to the club; he merely returned to the quarries. For two or three hours he stayed there brooding, on the edge of the most fearsome of the holes that had been dug in the earth for the removal of the slate from the rocks. The excavation was fully three hundred yards deep, with sides nearly perpendicular, and hung with ladders in two or three places, connecting the different small perches whereon the men did their quarrying.

As the light fell, the noise of the evening shift of workers in the quarry died away. Only in one section of the mine did it continue. This was where the rocks yielded a greenish slate, for which there was at that time a particular demand. Lanterns were slung at this end of the pit, and the sound of the blows soon echoed eerily in the darkness.

John Chester was an impulsive, impressionable man, with the average faults of the Celt as well as his average good qualities. It seemed to him that he had been made a fool of. Mrs Griffiths had that afternoon hinted pretty plainly why this fellow Tallack had come back to Nantle. He could not understand it altogether. Until twenty-four hours ago, he could have sworn that Nancy's heart was his, and no other man's. He clenched his fists as he sat thus musing, and peering unconsciously into the bottom of the pit, where the water lay so green and still. In the starlight it was merely a pool of ink; but by day it was green as an olive.

There were tales told among the miners of the dead men who lay in the bottom of the pool. Few believed these legendary stories. Yet they were possible enough; for the water was deep, and though Nantle was ordinarily a well-behaved little place, occasionally quarrels broke out among the miners, and men were missing now and again, without apparent rhyme or reason.

John's thoughts now took a wicked turn. The sweat stood in drops upon his face, though the night was cool rather than sultry. He fidgeted as he sat, but still the sweat oozed from his pores, and by the placid light of the stars you might have seen the intensity of his troubled reflection marked by the wrinkles on his forehead. At length he stood up, nodded his head like one resolved, peered once again into the pit, and then turned away with a shudder. 'He shall not have her,' he muttered.

He walked along the quarry edge until he came to a little chamber excavated laterally in the rock. A lamp was burning inside. Having knocked at the door and received an answer, he entered. A man was there at a desk, with his hat on, and smoking a pipe. He seemed surprised to see Chester. But the other did not give him time to speak.

'I've called, sir, to ask that Tallack and me may work together, if you've no objection. He's the new hand that comes on to-morrow, and he's lodging with Mrs Griffiths. I'd like to have the teaching of him, sir.'

The foreman laughed. 'All right, Chester. You needn't have come down here this time o' night for that.'

'Thank you, sir,' answered John Chester. 'I'd a bit of a headache, and I thought I'd step out, and so I came along here.—Good-night, sir.'

'Good-night to you.'

This settled, John Chester left the quarry yard. But he did not return to Bethel Cottage. He passed the door, stopped for an instant, and listened to the eager talking that was in progress behind the lighted window—with the canary and the geraniums sketched in shadow upon the blind—and then went on up the valley. If he had walked for two or three brisk hours, he would have come out by Lake Cwellyn at the foot of old Snowdon. But he did not do that; he crossed some meadows to the right until he reached the still gleaming waters of the Nantle Lake. Here he sat down again and resumed his brooding. The breeze from the east, whispering up the valley from Snowdon's top, did not seem to cool him much, for he loosed his necktie and acted more than once as if he were oppressed for breath.

He did not return home until past ten o'clock: Reuben and Nancy had gone to bed by then. Mrs Griffiths was very kind to John; but he rebuffed all her efforts to induce him to eat something, late though it was.

The next morning, however, John Chester came down to breakfast in quite a different mood. There was a certain unnatural levity in his conduct. 'I was a bit off colour, yesterday,' he said to Reuben apologetically. 'I'm a surly brute sometimes—ain't I, Nan?'

'You're not always *just* the same, John,' replied the girl, with a sweet but rather constrained smile.

'Oh, never mind,' exclaimed Reuben cheerily. 'We're all like that at times. I expect I'll be a bit down to-night after a day's work. Coming straight from the sea, you know, a fellow feels being tied down to ground-work.'

'And that reminds me,' observed John, as if he had but just thought of it, 'that you're to work in my section. I'll put you up to it, if you like.'

'Thank'ee; nothing will please me better.'

Ere they left the house, Nancy managed to catch John apart from the others. She looked at him so that he longed to clasp her to his heart; his eyes showed the fervour of his passion.

'John,' she whispered, 'it was kind of you to be like that with Reuben to-day. You are a dear good old fellow, John.'

At these words he started aside in a frenzy, and the veins on his brow swelled and became purple

as a damson. There was an oath on his lips, and he could hardly keep it from breaking loose, though he had never yet used strong language before Nancy Griffiths. The girl was horror-stricken. She watched him swing out of doors and bang the garden wicket behind him, and her heart grew heavy as iron in her.

A minute or two later, Reuben Tallack was ready to follow John Chester. He seemed surprised that the other had not waited for him. 'What made him go off like that? He's a queer chap, this Chester. I don't know what to make of him.'

'Reuben,' said Nancy, 'I want you to do something, and as soon as ever you can—this very morning, please.'

'Well, little Nan, I'll do it for sure, if I can.'

'It's easy enough: just tell John all you told us last night.'

'About me and us; do you mean that?'

'Yes, please.'

'Bless your little heart! I understand.'

Reuben stooped over the girl and kissed her on the cheek. It was a calm sort of kiss, nor did it bring the colour to Nancy's cheeks.

When Reuben reached the quarries and reported himself at the office, he was at once shown to a part of the pit where three men were working. One of the three was John Chester, and he was working like a fiend. The ladders here were hung in some very ticklish places. For about twenty yards a parallel pair of them overhung the water, there some five hundred feet below.

John Chester looked up when he heard Reuben's voice. He called to one of his mates to act the part of mentor. 'I'll come up to you directly,' he cried, and went on splitting the rock like a madman.

He worked on and on for two hours without ceasing.

'Whatever's the matter with Chester?' asked one of the others: 'I never saw such a fellow as he is this morning.'

'Isn't he always like this?' John heard Reuben demand; and then he heard the laugh that greeted the reply which he did not hear.

Shortly afterwards, he threw down his pick. 'I'm going down the Duke's Nose,' he said to his mate.

They called this precipitous outward and then inward dip of the rock the Duke's Nose because of its resemblance to the Duke of Wellington's well-known proboscis.

He took a strong pair of pinchers with him, and, having reached a place where he fancied himself unobserved, deftly loosened the fasteners which held one of the ladders to the rock. Then he reascended, and for the first time joined Reuben. 'Aren't you tired?' he asked.

'Well,' said Reuben, 'I must say I am—there's no denying it.'

'Knock off for a bit. I want to show you what a fine place the Penlyn pit is. There ain't another like it anywhere.'

Willingly enough, Reuben put down his pick and pulled on his coat. They descended together, John Chester leading, until they came to the perpendicular part where the ladder bifurcated. Here Reuben Tallack hesitated, while the other stepped on to the second ladder of the two.

'I say, Chester, this is a bad-looking spot and no mistake,' observed Reuben.

'Are you afraid?'

'Afraid? Well, I don't know that. But I'm going to marry a dear little girl in a week or two, and—'

'Any one can see you're a coward,' said Chester with dreadful hardness.

The other looked down at his companion curiously. 'You've no right to say that to me.'

'I say it all the same. I don't believe you dare come on where I'm going.'

Reuben was just about to set his feet on the unsafe ladder, when he restrained himself. 'Look here, Chester,' he said. 'I don't know what to make of you. Still, I've a notion you're not such a bad fellow as you've been trying to make yourself out. I'm not a coward; but it's always possible a fellow may miss his footing and go to the next world in a moment. If that happens to me, will you promise to break it gently to my little Cornish girl? She'll be in Nantle next week? Will you promise?'

John Chester stared for reply.

'Well, you won't? Then I'm coming and chance it.'

Reuben was already lowering his feet, when John Chester cried in a voice of thunder: 'Keep off it—for the love of God. Get back.'

Almost simultaneously he sprang from his ladder to the lowest rungs of the ladder above the injured one. Then grasping the bars beneath Reuben's body, and with his feet lightly resting on the ladder that was to have hurled his fancied rival to the bottom of the pit, he effectually blocked the way.

'I want to speak to you,' he cried. 'Will you climb up a bit?'

Reuben did so. They came to a level space, where they both left the ladder.

'Now, then, tell me,' said John Chester, 'did I understand you to say you're not going to marry Nancy Griffiths?'

'Certainly you did.'

John Chester went pale as snow. 'My God!' he muttered.

'I don't suppose it's news to you,' observed Reuben, 'that little Nan's lost her heart to you.'

'Lost her heart to me?'

'As true as I stand here, that's so.—You're a queer fellow, Chester.'

'A queer fellow! I'm a villain—that's what I am. Come down the ladder again—please.'

Then John Chester showed the pitfall he had prepared for the other, confessed the reason of it, and said he would take the consequences of his crime, whatever they might be.

But Reuben merely laid his hand upon Chester's shoulder. 'I don't blame you,' he said quietly. 'We'll forget it, Chester, you and me, in time. There's no one else on earth whom it concerns.'

'Yes, there's Nancy. She'd never marry such a villain as me.—Oh, what a fearful thing this jealousy is!'

'You think she would not? Well, ask her, Chester.'

Nancy did not desert John Chester, though nothing of his tragic intention was withheld from her. It was, at any rate, a dreadful proof of his

love for her ; and when she looked into her heart after the confession, she found that she loved him no less than before, and pity was added to her love.

PRONOUNCING NAMES.

ENGLISHMEN are wont to demur at the inveterate habit of their Welsh neighbours of filling up Proper Names with legions of unnecessary consonants, thereby rendering the pronunciation of the same practically a feat of impossibility to any but a native of Cambria. However, after all that is said and done, Welshmen might retort with a certain degree of reason and justice by denouncing the way in which Englishmen of all classes deliberately sound many of their own names quite differently from the way in which they spell them ; and this perversion of ordinary rules applies equally to the pronunciation of both places and persons. This custom has in the majority of cases arisen either through the medium of local dialects, or else through a not unnatural desire for abbreviation. Of course, in the names of county families, several cases are well known, such as Levison being sounded as if spelt 'Luson ;' Wymondham, 'Wyndham ;' Cholmondeley, 'Chumley ;' Pennycomequick, 'Pennychnuke ;' Dumaresq, 'Dunerrick ;' and Majoribanks, 'Marchbanks.'

However, it is not so much in family names, such as the foregoing, in which we delight to confuse foreigners, as in the names of towns and villages ; besides, these family names indulging in conjuring tricks are comparatively few in number, and everybody is supposed to be acquainted with their little weaknesses. Yet we who laugh at these apparent affectations in others, are nothing loth to commit the same crimes ourselves and to boldly pronounce names of familiar places in a way that is totally at variance with the spelling. To say 'libel' instead of label, or 'stroick' instead of strike, would be to acknowledge ourselves to be of Cockney origin ; nevertheless, all the world over, Thames becomes 'Tems.' We sound Greenwich as if it were spelt 'Grinige ;' whilst Woolwich correspondingly becomes 'Woolige ;' and then we pride ourselves upon speaking the Queen's English correctly ; although, perhaps, we really do speak grammatically, even in the face of these apparent blunders, for what is grammar but the official recognition of custom with regard to speech ? Yet in all this we give strong grounds for disciples of phonography to base their arguments upon.

There are numerous examples of this habit of mispronunciation to be encountered throughout the country, it being by no means indigenous to the metropolitan area. It is doubtless to save time and trouble that Cirencester is abbreviated into 'Cicester,' Willerden into 'Willaden,' Sydenham into 'Sydnam,' and Woolfardisworthy into 'Woolsery.' Brightelmstone is a thing of the past, for when that little Sussex village expanded itself into the dimensions and dignity of a town, it equalised matters by contracting its name into 'Brighton.' But even when we meet with a short and seemingly simple name like Derby we must needs sound the 'e' as if it were an 'a,' and say

'Darby ;' nor is the reason apparent why the county of Shropshire should be sometimes converted into 'Salop,' nor Barnstaple into 'Barum.' For brevity's sake we write 'Wilts,' 'Yorks,' and 'Berks' instead of Wiltshire, Yorkshire, and Berkshire—which last named, by the way, following the before-mentioned lead of Derby, metamorphoses itself into 'Barkshire,' a fact which *Punch* wittily makes use of by referring to it as being the Parliamentary constituency of Toby, M.P. In a similar manner 'Harford' or 'Hartford' represents Hertford. Salisbury is pronounced 'Saulsberry ;' and that favourite termination for the name of a town, Burgh, is sounded as if written 'Burror,' thus expanding the word by a more inexplicable process than that by which Jack Tar calls a helm a 'hellum.'

Badgeworthy Water, a Devonshire stream figuring somewhat prominently in Mr Blackmore's romance *Lorna Doone*, is locally called 'Badgery Water ;' whilst in the neighbouring county of Somerset, an obscure little village with the rather ambiguous title of Bathealton is invariably known as 'Battleton ;' and Newport (Isle of Wight) becomes 'Nipput' in the language of Wessex.

Such changes are not altogether surprising in localities where traditional names are entrusted to the keeping of a semi-educated or ignorant peasantry ; but surely we are entitled to expect more care and consideration in the great centres of learning ? However, as a matter of fact we are disappointed in this respect, even in our Universities—at least as regards the names of colleges—for at Oxford we have Magdalen pronounced 'Maudlin ;' whilst at Cambridge, Caius becomes 'Keys.'

SONG OF AN OLD MAID.

WHAT can I offer you, oh my love,
After these lonely years—
Lips that have lost their sweetness,
Eyes that are heavy with tears ?
A heart that is bitter and cold,
And overshadowed with fears ? —
I have nought to offer you, oh my love,
After these lonely years.

Oh Lips so white ! be red for my love,
And smile as in olden days !
Oh Heart of ice ! melt for him now,
In the light of the sunshine rays !
My lips shall sing and my heart shall ring
With the joy of my tender lays—
And you, oh my love, will kiss and caress,
As you did in the olden days.

No ; it is over : it is too late
To dream the old dream again.
I am weary of life with its fretful cares—
I am tired of the heart-breaking pain.
Is there no remedy ? Is there no rest,
No fleeing from ills that remain ?
No ! It is late—It is years too late
To dream the old dream again.

MAUD PHILP.

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THE LAND OF THE CHAIN-MAKERS.

IN the old days, Cradley, in Worcestershire, must have been a pretty place. The country round it is a confusing mixture of abrupt hills with humpy summits and deep dells, connected with each other by brooks that are not pellucid. But for the most part the hills are now quite shorn of the woods which clad them, and cramped villages—or rather little towns—of stunted red-brick houses are set about them: at their bases in the valleys, on their slopes, and even on their breezy tops. The landscape is such as you will hardly match anywhere in England.

Broad and generally very miry roads join the different villages, and the traffic on these roads is astonishing. Big drays laden with chain-gear, and little homely carts of the coster type, drawn by meagre panting horses, and also freighted with chains, at once indicate the local industry. It is a land of chains. The continuous hammering on all sides tells of their making; and the grimy faces and set expressions of the men and women, old and young, tell further of the hardships attendant upon their making. It is not an ideal kind of work, by any means. The phrase 'the poor chain-makers' has become quite stereotyped. If these poor chain-makers are half as wretched as the newspaper reviewers periodically prove them to be, it is a marvel that they continue in these valleys of their nativity. The bolder and more thrifty of them no doubt vanish to America and other countries of promise. But the majority exist as best they may. Early in life they give considerable hostage to fortune in the shape of large families, so that it is not easy for them to shake off their inherited fetters or turn to 'new pastures.' Yet even for them existence is not wholly painful. They have an infinite number of low-browed public-houses; they fly pigeons; indulge in social intercourse on the high-road on Sundays and Mondays; and make periodical raids into the neighbouring rural districts, attended by discreet mongrels—a cross between a greyhound and a fox-terrier—

who are said to be 'death on rabbits.' The gamekeepers for miles round know these liver and white lurchers, and would like them and their owners to be exterminated.

Nothing is easier than to get a glimpse of the chain-makers of the district. You may see them in the large manufactories, where they are simply paid employees addicted to strikes, or you may see them in their own domestic workshops. There is more picturesqueness about the latter; and you may therefore be advised to peer through the windows of the first little red-brick outhouse—some fifteen feet by ten—the hammering in which excites your curiosity as you pass it. Five or six individuals are within, each with a little pocket forge to himself or herself; and there is no doubt about their zeal. The litter of bright new links on the floor tells of their labours; and while you watch them, they finish new links and add these to the rest. It is a warm place, as you may imagine, for each forge has its bellows, and the glow is constant. The hand-hammers are two or three pounds in weight; but the driver-hammer, which is also used—by pedal action—weighs five to ten times as much. All things considered, and assuming that women must do this kind of work in default of other employment, one cannot wonder that they are so bare about the shoulders and breast. They do not earn more than four to six shillings a week on the average, and there is much immorality in the district.

Often, however, in justice to the chain-maker, it must be said that the five or six operatives in the shed are the sons and daughters of the master. Happy is the chain-maker who has his quiverful of healthy and unambitious children! He may put by much money (comparatively) during the years which intervene between the time when they first take up the hammer and their marriage, with subsequent larger aspirations which sadly unfit them for the paternal workshop. But as a rule it is a hand-to-mouth business. The poor chain-maker rises early, and the sound of his hammer may be heard for about twelve hours out of the twenty-four. He does not grumble

inordinately about his fate. From time immemorial he has been a steadfast believer in the comforts of religion, and he gets much solace for his week-day toils in the ugly red-brick Bethel or local New Connection or Sion which he frequents on the Sunday. Hardly anywhere in England is the Old Testament more esteemed than here, by the more respectable workers. It is the source whence the chain-maker gets names for his sons and daughters. A man is Noah, or Cain, Abel, Adam, Seth, Job, Jabez, Ezra, Jacob, Judah, Eli, Hezekiah, or Nehemiah. For females the choice is less extensive; but you will find Deliahs and Zillahs here, as well as Eves, Hannahs, and innumerable Mary Janes. It is also the source of his immortal hopes. He is not a very shrewd theologian or logician; but once he takes an opinion or a notion into his mind, he cherishes it hard into a prejudice or a superstition. There are men here with a surprising gift of rude eloquence, and when excited to reprove an erring fellow-creature, their denunciations, after the manner of the Biblical prophets, are not to be listened to unmoved. I talked the other day with one such man as he rested his hammer on the forge. He soon turned the conversation into a Scriptural channel. 'I wur thinking,' he said, 'only this morning as I lay in my bed about them words o' the Bible which says Our Lord He sweated drops o' blood. That's an awful thing, master, to think on. How he must ha' suffered!' He glanced carelessly at his muscular arms, moist with perspiration from his own work, and I marked the beads of perspiration on his brow.

The younger chain-makers do not seem to be of this type. They have been born in a different season. They do not show the difference so much when they are at their forges, except in their evil habit of swearing. But on off-days and the Sabbath there is no mistaking them. At such times they crush into the public-houses or sit on the walls of slag by the roadside, discussing either the winner of the Derby, the relative merits of two or three pigeons, or the eccentric appearance of the passer-by. In good sooth, they themselves are eccentric enough in their slovenly black, with their caps drawn to their eyes, and short clay pipes in their mouths; and the faithful dogs at their feet are as odd to see as they are.

I wish it were possible to say that the women of the district have some strong distinctive attraction for the stranger. But how should they have? Their freshness passes long ere they have passed their teens. Association in such work as theirs with such men as these, soon wears off their bloom. They marry, and have children, before they ought; and at forty look as if they bore or had borne the cares of a universe. As one sees them in the streets or at their house-doors, they are a slatternly, hard-featured race; and their children are quite as slatternly, and even more dirty than they are. Their speech, too, savours of the impolite, not to say the blasphemous. It is an affair of association. If they lived in a village of bishops, doubtless they would use episcopal adjectives. As it is, they live among overworked and discontented chain-makers, who do not pick and choose their words from the dictionary. The novelist with an itch to create a winsome heroine in this locality must have a good store of fancy, and deal mercifully with her inevitable surroundings; or else

he must hedge her round closely with old-fashioned relatives of the kind I have already hinted at.

Yet there is a lingering suggestion of romance in this much-despoiled manufacturing district. You come to a forlorn little triangular space of ground studded with clothes-lines and refuse-heaps, and hedged on two sides by wretched tenements of the usual kind, and perceive that the spot is called 'Sweet Turf.' No name could befit it less; yet there it is. 'Sweet Mouse' is the designation of another spot somewhat like this. Again, there is 'Primrose Hill,' a thoroughfare echoing with the riot of hammers, and the houses in the vicinity of which stand as far from the perpendicular as they can.

It is really quite pathetic to see the state of some of these dwellings in the hollows. They have been propped, but all in vain. A sudden 'crowning in,' as it is called, has jeopardised the lives of the inmates, and at length made the houses uninhabitable. They are at all angles up to half a right angle. If you enter them, you feel as you feel in ascending the Leaning Tower of Pisa. With some the ruin is complete. A wall has fallen outwards and the roof inwards. This dilapidation and the inebriate attitudes of the other houses remind one of a place wrecked by earthquake. Casamicciola, in Ischia, is, on a larger scale, much like some of these suburbs of the chain-makers' metropolis. One house of a specially mournful appearance may be seen. Anciently, it was an attractive villa, white, with five windows in front, an assuming portal, and with fruit-trees and a lawn. Now it leans heavily forwards, and has three great beams supporting it. Nor is this all. The property is surrounded by a wall, which on its part has ten or twelve props to keep it from yielding to its inclination to fall inwardly towards the house. This house is to let.

Another common red-brick tenement deserves to be mentioned. It illustrates the sense of religiosity which strives with fair success against the loose tendencies of the younger generation of chain-makers. It is in the heart of Cradley, and no way noticeable except for its name—'Provide against your enemies.' The date 1875 is quite against an assumption that it hails from the time of Cromwell.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XX.—LOVE AFFAIRS, AND STARTLING NEWS.

DAYS and weeks passed while Isabel was enduring her probation of trial with her father. She had thought it well to ignore his first escape. She conversed with him and discussed with him, she cheered and sustained him, as if the painful evening with Uncle Harry and the day following had never been. And her father (for a time) showed his gratitude in his own way: he was soothed and encouraged, and he set himself with alacrity to plan assiduous occupation for his pen. And he really did accomplish some

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work which Ainsworth brought him to do from the office of *The Evening Banner*. But the slightest additional touch of excitement would send him off to the opium den, whence he would be brought back by Doughty or Ainsworth, or both, in shame and despair. Isabel bore patiently with these sudden declensions, recognising that it was not to be expected that her father could recover a firm footing in life except gradually. She forbore to reproach him; she still surrounded him with all her love; and he was passionately grateful, and became more and more cheerful and settled. When his craving was absent, the days passed pleasantly, with some amount of performance and a great deal of promise, and with much delightful talk, in which Ainsworth joined—and sometimes Doughty—about books and authors, plays and players, and the interests of the world at large. One special flash of delight Isabel had at that time which affected her happily for many days: she received a gentle, kindly letter from Uncle Harry, admitting he had behaved ill, and hoping that pleasant relations would be resumed on his return.

The days were become hot and long, and in the cool of the evening they frequently walked into Regent's Park. The vacation-taking world was beginning to think with longing of the plangent margin of the cool sea-shore, of the green of fields and forests, and of the breeze and bloom of mountain and moor—even Isabel was looking forward to a holiday with her father when the month was run out—but Ainsworth had no change of that kind in prospect. He was just beginning to 'find his feet' in London, and to 'know his way about'—two excellent and expressive phrases—and he must continue without present hope of intermission to beat the hot pavements of the Strand and Fleet Street; for it would be a thing unheard of that a journalist so new to his task should so much as desire a vacation for two or three years. Ainsworth, therefore, when once he had been in the park, affected to make much of its fresh air, the shade of its trees, and the coolness and sparkle of its ornamental waters. When he looked in of an evening, he became increasingly urgent that they should seek these delights, and as often as possible solicitous that Doughty should be of the company.

The deep design of these expeditions of three or, by preference, four, if dimly perceived, might never have been openly expressed had it not been for Euphemia Suffield. That young lady, finding that she saw less than she had been wont of her dear cousin Isabel, and hearing that her cousin was now much engrossed with her newly-found father, came more than once to the Marylebone lodgings, encouraged thereto by the kindly Suffield himself. She had also another reason for calling on her cousin—a particularly family and feminine reason: she had never heard any but the most discreetly veiled allusions to Isabel's father; she had always believed he must be a very wicked man, and now she was exceedingly curious to see with her own bright eyes and to hear with her own shrewd ears what manner of man he really was.

Mrs Suffield had well said to Isabel that her

father had 'a way with women.' His manner was to all gentle and suave; but when he addressed a woman his voice unconsciously slipped into a softer, deeper tone than usual, as if he were anxious for her sympathy; and in whatever company he was, the entrance of a woman would always provoke an evident gush of emotion. So bright and pretty a girl as Euphemia—and his own relation too—was not the least likely to call forth these characteristics in him. He let his eyes dwell on her with the tenderest interest and approval; he praised her dresses; he listened with delight to her prattle; he recited soft, musical verses to her; and he talked to her very wisely, but not to weariness, of serious matters of Life and Love. The inevitable result was that Euphemia considered him charming beyond any charm she had ever believed possible in man.

'Oh, Bell!' she exclaimed to her cousin, 'why haven't we known Uncle John before?'

'Do you like him?' asked Isabel, with simple pleasure.

'Like him!' exclaimed Euphemia. 'I should think I do! He is a dear! Why can't all men be like him? Oh, wouldn't it be delightful to have him make love to you! And so clever as he is too! If he were a little younger, I am sure I should fall in love with him! Indeed, I think I am in love with him as it is!'

Isabel smiled: it pleased her immensely to hear her father praised even by so irresponsible a rhapsodist as her cousin. And, since Uncle John was her uncle, and since it was beyond the wildest dreams of possibility that he should ever be anything else, Euphemia did not scruple to praise him openly, and to confide to him in secret two things which the most gushing and rhapsodical of girls would instinctively shrink from doing with most men, however charming and however elderly; for the most charming and elderly man may suddenly assume the guise of a lover. Isabel was surprised on one or two occasions when she returned from school to hear that Euphemia had called and had had a long talk with her father, the purport of which he was close about, saying that she had 'gossiped a little.'

'But not even a girl,' laughed Isabel, 'would take two hours to "gossip a little," father: she must have gossiped a good deal.'

'Yes,' said Mr Raynor; 'she gossiped a good deal.'

'But I must tell her,' said Isabel, slyly, 'she must not come and occupy two of your best hours with frivolous gossip—hours which you wish to devote to hard work. Of course, Phemy has no idea that anybody should want to be busier than she is herself.'

'Oh no, my dear!' exclaimed Mr Raynor, in alarm. 'I beg you will not do that. I find her gossip very charming and improving. Women, my dear, are, and always have been, to me a never-falling well-spring of joy. They appear so complex, and they are so simple, and so good—so good!' and a moistness came upon his eye, and a softness into his voice. 'Men are seldom so good as they seem; women are always better. They are wonderful creatures! You remember Coleridge's pleasant way of putting it: "Man seems to have been designed for the superior being of the two; but, as things are, I think

women are generally better creatures than men."—By the way, have you ever met Lord Clitheroe at your uncle's?"

"Once," answered Isabel; "yes, twice." And she said within herself: "So he was the subject of the long gossip!"

"What do you think of him?" asked her father simply.

"His person, or his mind, father?"

"Both, my dear. They are properly inseparable."

"He is a tall young man, with a big red beard and a bald head, which makes his forehead look roomier than it probably is; and he always wears gloves, because, I believe, his hands are amazingly hairy."

"If he's ashamed of his hair," said her father, "why doesn't he shave?"

"What? His hands?"

"No, no, my dear; his beard."

"I have not talked much with him, father, and I can't say. But I should guess that, though he has what is called a "carelessly aristocratic" air, he is very sensitive about his personal appearance."

"Does he give himself any airs of superiority?"

"No," she answered; "I don't think he does. He looks rather solemn and heavy; but I believe he is more interested in Phemy than he understands, and that she is more attracted to him than she thinks."

"Oh, you think so, do you?" said her father with a smile. "Well, he appears on the whole to be a very good fellow."

When Isabel next saw Euphemia, she sprang the question upon her: "Why haven't you told me anything about Lord Clitheroe?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Euphemia with a charming blush. "That means your father has told you! I shall never trust Uncle John with a secret again."

"No, my dear," said Isabel; "it means nothing of the sort. It only means that a woman can pick a secret out of a man, as you can pick a feather-out of a feather-bed."

"Well, I might say to you," retorted Euphemia, "why haven't you told me anything about Alan Ainsworth?"

"About Alan Ainsworth!" exclaimed Isabel, now blushing in her turn—but a deeper red than her cousin.—"I have nothing to tell! We are very good friends, as you know, and he comes often and has talks with my father."

"Well!" exclaimed the triumphant Euphemia, "he is here every evening."

"Oh no. Not nearly every evening," protested Isabel.

"As many evenings as he can spare," maintained Euphemia. "What does that mean, my dear? And he takes you for evening walks in the park!—to enjoy a talk with Uncle John? Not he! He does his very best always to get that funny, solemn Mr Doughty out, so that he may have you all to himself; while my uncle and that poor Mr Doughty—who adores you—are interested in the silly little quack-quacks!"

"Yes," said Isabel meditatively, "I suppose he does. But did my father tell you all that?"

"No, my dear," answered Euphemia, with a mischievous wriggle; "that was not necessary:

a woman can pick a secret out of a man, as you can pick a feather out of a feather-bed."

At that, of course, they both laughed.

"Really, Phemy," said Isabel, "I did not think you were such a very clever child. But tell me all about Lord Clitheroe."

"Tell me all about Mr Ainsworth," retorted Euphemia.

"Truly, my dear," said Isabel, "I have nothing to tell."

Euphemia wagged her head in disbelief. "Well," said she, "I have little to tell about Lord Clitheroe; but I'll tell you the little I have. I'll be honest than you, Bell: you always could be close if you wanted to. Oh, he is a dear droll man! And I believe he is very fond of me."

"But are you fond of him?" asked Isabel.

"Oh, I like him very well—though I think it's a pity he's so hairy. I tell him we are Beauty and the Beast, and he doesn't seem to mind; so that makes it all right."

"Oh," exclaimed Isabel, "you have become so familiar as that, have you?"

"I don't know what you mean by familiar—but certainly we are like that. There was quite a family Parliament about it the other day, I believe. His mother, Lady Padiham, called one day in a great yellow chariot, that has double steps to let down for you to get in and out; and really, Bell, my mother looked the greater lady of the two: she looked grander and she behaved grander, till, you know, if we had played our school-game with them—"nievey-nievey, nick-nack"—you'd have chosen my mother for the Countess, and the Countess for the cotton-spinner's wife. She's an ugly, raw-boned Scotch-woman—and I don't care who hears me—a daughter of the old Earl of Pitsligo."

"You don't seem, Phemy," said Isabel with a smile, "to love and honour your future mother-in-law."

"I have told you, Bell, my dear," said Euphemia, "that there is nothing settled. Parliament is considering it—I mean the family Parliament. Clitheroe will bring in a Bill proposing to make me his wife—I believe that's what they do—isn't it?—it will be read a First, Second, and Third time; and I suppose Clitheroe will come again, or will not come, according to the final decision of Parliament."

"You seem fairly indifferent," said Isabel.

"Yes; I am and I'm not. Clitheroe is a dear, kind man, as I've told you, and I believe he's very fond of me, though I wish he were cleverer and I liked him more; but I should dearly love to be Lady Clitheroe and then Countess of Padiham."

"But, Phemy dear," said Isabel seriously, "surely it is a dreadful, monstrous thing to think of marrying a man when you are not very much in love with him—when you are not sure he is the one man you could spend your life with!"

"Are you sure of that, Bell dear?"

"I'm not thinking of marrying, Phemy," replied Isabel.

"Well," said Phemy, "please don't talk like that to me—not now, at least. Your father has given me wagon-loads of good advice of that sort, which I do not see my way to make any use of. But

Uncle John is the dearest, cleverest, best-spoken man in the world, and I love him very much.'

Later, Isabel was talking with her father of this conversation, and discussing what seemed to her the strange fact that Euphemia insisted more on Lord Clitheroe's fondness for her than on any fondness she had for him, when her father answered her in words that sank into her mind.

'Surely,' said he, 'it is not strange; it is the commonest way women have of regarding men. You remember the words of a wise man: "The man's desire is for the woman; but the woman's desire is seldom other than for the desire of the man."'

Isabel revolted against that wise saying, and, if so be she had intended to speak of Ainsworth to her father, she now did not. But from that day she modified the walks in Regent's Park—she was studious that her father should not be left so much to himself or to Mr Doughty, and that she herself should not be so much engrossed with Mr Ainsworth and his conversation—not because she did not like the former mode, nor because she thought it wrong, but merely for a sidelong reason—a touch of contrariness, which as a clever woman she was open to—because she did not like a flighty little thing like Euphemia to have perceived what she had not been fully aware of. Moreover, she thought with an inward blush: 'It is possible that Mr Ainsworth has been quite conscious, and has thought that I also was conscious, that we kept apart from the others;' and she thought again, with a deeper blush: 'Can I have done anything to cause that impression?—and can I appear to have been forward?'

It was unavoidable that, with these feelings and doubts jangling in her, Isabel should seem more self-conscious in Ainsworth's presence than she had been wont, and that Ainsworth, perceiving that, should become more self-conscious too. The thermometer of his feeling then began to rise and fall, and rise again at a mad rate: 'She loves me! She loves me not! She loves me!' At one time he was on the heights of joy; at another, in the depths of despair. And Isabel did not help to steady him; for she herself was as uncertain as he. Which may seem somewhat odd. For a man, being commonly a dull, thick-witted creature compared with a woman, seldom recognises when a woman is in love with him; but a woman seldom misses to recognise when a man is in love with her: she fails to recognise it only when she herself is in love with the man, for then her feeling rises and clouds her clear perceptions. Now that was Isabel's condition. She was in love with Ainsworth, though she hardly knew it; and therefore she remained very much in darkness and doubt concerning the kind of regard that Ainsworth had for her. All which refinements are riddles to those who have never been in love.

Uncertainty of that kind was fast becoming unendurable to Ainsworth. Once and again he was on the point of putting his fate 'to the touch, to win or lose it all,' but he was debarred by one or two considerations. He was a notably impulsive person, but yet he had a considerable leaven of reserve and forethought in his composition. 'I love her! Let everything yield to that!'

prompted impulse. 'But,' suggested forethought, 'is it fair to ask a beautiful, noble girl like her to share your lot until it is better established? And is it quite fair and honourable to try to snatch a victory over young George Suffield, while she may be still in doubt whether she loves him or no?' In spite of all that, it is extremely probable that impulse would have won the day—with a man like Ainsworth it usually does, when it comes to protracted debate—had it not been that something happened very soon to turn aside for a time the current of emotion.

It was towards the end of July—so near the end that the holidays were within hail, and Isabel had already arranged where she was to spend them with her father. It had been an unbearably hot week throughout the country, so hot that many cases of sunstroke were reported in the newspapers; labourers in the field and soldiers who had felt the sun of India had been struck down; and all the world of London was panting in the lightest of raiment, and with doors and windows flung wide open. On a certain afternoon, just when Isabel had returned from school, a cab rattled up to the gate, and Euphemia ran in with a scared face.

'Father,' said she, 'has sent me on with that. He couldn't come himself. He is going off by the first train he can catch.' And, after an instant's doubt between Isabel and her father, she handed to Isabel a telegram.

The telegram, which Isabel opened with trembling fingers and the wildest, vaguest fears, was dated from 'Llanberis, North Wales,' and ran thus: 'To SUFFIELD, M.P., Rutland Gate, London.—Mr Raynor sunstroke Snowdon. Lying now at the Gwydyr, Llanberis. Doctor says no hope. Come at once.—DANIEL.'

THE NEW CUNARDERS.

FORTY-TWO years ago the Eastern Steam Navigation Company having failed to obtain the contract to carry the mails from Plymouth to India and Australia—in vessels of from twelve hundred to two thousand tons, with engines of from four to six hundred horse-power, which were never built—began to consider a new enterprise, suggested by the late Isambard K. Brunel. This was to build the largest steamer ever yet constructed, to trade with India round the Cape of Good Hope. The general commercial idea was, that this leviathan vessel was to carry leviathan cargoes at large freights and great speed, to Ceylon, where the goods and passengers would be rapidly transhipped to smaller swift steamers for conveyance to various destinations in India, China, and Australia. The general mechanical idea was, that in order to obtain great velocity in steamers it was only necessary to make them large—that, in fact, there need be no limit to the size of a vessel beyond what might be imposed by the tenacity of material. On what was called the tubular principle, Brunel argued—and proved to the satisfaction of numerous experts and capitalists—that it was possible to construct a vessel of six times the capacity of the largest vessel then afloat that would steam at a speed unattainable by smaller vessels, while carrying,

besides cargo, all the coal she would require for the longest voyage.

Thus originated the 'Great Eastern,' which never went to India, which ruined two or three companies in succession, which cost £120,000 to launch, which probably earned more as a show than ever she did as an ocean-carrier—except in the matter of telegraph cables—and which ignobly ended a disastrous career only a year or so ago.

We are now entering upon a new era of big ships, in which such a monster as the 'Great Eastern' would be no longer a wonder. The two latest additions to the Cunard fleet, the 'Campania' and 'Lucania,' are within a trifle as large as she, but with infinitely more powerful engines and incomparably greater speed.

Do not let us suppose, however, that the idea of big ocean-steamers has been the monopoly of this country. So long ago as 1850 or thereabouts, Mr Randall, a famous American ship-builder, designed, drafted, and constructed the model of a steamer for transatlantic service, 500 feet long by 58 feet beam, to measure 8000 tons. A company was formed in Philadelphia in 1860 to carry out the project; but the Civil War broke out soon after, and she was never built.

The 'Great Eastern' was launched in January 1858, and her principal dimensions were these: length between perpendiculars, 680 feet; breadth of beam, 83 feet; length of principal saloons, 400 feet; tonnage capacity for cargo and coals, 15,000 tons; weight of ship as launched, 12,000 tons; accommodation for passengers (1) 800, (2) 2000, (3) 1200=4000; total horse-power, 7650. She had both screw and paddles for propulsion, and her displacement was 32,160 tons.

By this time the Cunard Company had been eighteen years in existence. They started in 1840 with the 'Britannia'—quickly followed by the 'Acadia,' 'Columbia,' and 'Caledonia,' all more or less alike—which was a paddle-steamer of wood, 207 feet long, 34 feet broad, 22 feet deep, and of 1156 tons, with side-lever engines developing 740 indicated horse-power, which propelled the vessel at the average speed of nine knots an hour. There was accommodation for 225 tons of cargo, and 115 cabin passengers—no steerage in those days—who paid thirty-four guineas to Halifax and thirty-eight guineas to Boston, for passage, including provisions and wine.

At the time of the 'Great Eastern' the latest type of Cunarder was the 'Persia,' and it is interesting to note the development in the interim. This vessel was 380 feet long, 45 feet broad, 31 feet deep, of 3870 tons, with engines developing 4000 indicated horse-power, propelling at the rate of thirteen and a half knots an hour. The 'Persia' and the 'Scotia,' sister-ships, were the last of the Atlantic side-wheelers. In 1862 the first screw-steamer was added to the Cunard fleet. This was the 'China,' built by the Napiers of Glasgow, 326 feet long by 40½ feet broad, and 27½ feet deep, of 2600 tons, and with an average speed of about twelve knots.

Such was the type of Cunarder in the early days of the 'Great Eastern,' whose dimensions have now been nearly reached. The 'Campania,' however, has not been built with a view to out-

shine that huge failure, but is the outcome of a wholly different competition. The 'Campania' and the 'Lucania' represent the highest development of marine architecture and engineering skill at the present time, and are the product of long years of rivalry for the possession of the 'blue-ribbon' of the transatlantic race.

The competition is of ancient date, if we go back to the days when the American 'Collins' Company tried to run the Cunard Company off the waters; and during the half-century since the inauguration of steam-service the Cunard Company have sometimes held and sometimes lost the highest place for speed. The period of steam-racing—the age of 'Atlantic greyhounds'—may be said to have begun in the year 1879, when the Cunard 'Callia,' the Guion 'Arizona,' and the White Star 'Britannic' and 'Germanic' had all entered upon their famous careers. It is matter of history now how the 'Arizona'—called the 'Fairfield Flyer,' because she was built by Messrs John Elder & Company of Fairfield, Glasgow—beat the record in an eastward run of seven days twelve and a half hours, and a westward run of seven days ten and three-quarters hours. To beat the 'Arizona,' the Cunard Company built the 'Servia,' of 8500 tons and 10,300 horse-power; but she in turn was beaten by another Fairfield Flyer, the 'Alaska,' under the Guion flag. The race continued year by year, as vessels of increasing size and power were entered by the competing companies. While all the lines compete in swiftness, luxury, and efficiency, the keenest rivalry is now between the Cunard and the White Star Companies. And just as the 'Campania' and 'Lucania' have been built to eclipse the renowned 'Tentonic' and 'Majestic,' so the owners of these boats are preparing—it is said—to surpass even the two latest Cunarders which are to make the present year of grace memorable in the history of merchant shipping.

Let us now see something of these marvels of marine architecture. They are sister-ships, both built on the Clyde by the Fairfield Ship-building and Engineering Company, and both laid down almost simultaneously. They are almost identical in dimensions and appointments, and therefore we may confine our description to the 'Campania,' which is the first of the twins to be ready for sea.

This largest vessel afloat does not mark any new departure in general type, as the 'Great Eastern' did in differing from all types of construction then familiar. In outward appearance, the 'Campania' as she lies upon the water, and as seen at a sufficient distance, is just like numbers of other vessels we have all seen. Nor does her immense size at first impress the observer, because of the beautiful proportions on which she is planned. Her lines are eminently what the nautical enthusiast calls 'sweet'; and in her own class of naval art she is as perfect a specimen of architectural beauty as the finest of the grand old clippers which used to 'walk the waters as a thing of life.' The colossal size of St Peter's at Rome does not strike you as you enter, because of the exquisite proportions. And so with the 'Campania'—you need to see an ordinary 'tramp,' or even a full-blown liner, alongside before you can realise how vast she is.

Yet she is only 60 feet shorter than the

mammoth 'Great Eastern,' and measures 620 feet in length, 65 feet 3 inches in breadth, and 43 feet in depth from the upper deck. Her tonnage is 12,000, while that of the 'Great Eastern' was 18,000; but then her horse-power is 30,000 as against the 'Great Eastern's' 7650!

This enormous development of engine-power is perhaps the most remarkable feature about these two new vessels. Each of them is fitted with two sets of the most powerful triple-expansion engines ever put together. A visit to the engine-room is a liberal education in the mechanical arts, and even to the eye of the uninitiated there is the predominant impression of perfect order in the bewildering arrangement of pipes, rods, cranks, levers, wheels, and cylinders. The two sets of engines are placed in two separate rooms on each side of a centre-line bulkhead fitted with water-tight doors for intercommunication. Each set has five inverted cylinders which have exactly the same stroke, and work on three cranks. Two of the cylinders are high-pressure, one is intermediate, and two are low-pressure. Besides the main engines, there are engines for reversing, for driving the centrifugal pumps for the condensers, for the electric light, for the refrigerating chambers, and for a number of other purposes—all perfect in appointment and finish. In fact, in these vast engine-rooms one is best able to realise not only the immense size and power of the vessel, but also the perfection to which human ingenuity has attained after generations of ceaseless toil—and yet it is only half a century since the 'Britannia' began the transatlantic race.

Each of the various engines has its own steam-supplier. The main engines are fed by twelve double-ended boilers, arranged in rows of six on each side of a water-tight bulkhead. The boilers are heated by ninety-six furnaces, and each set of six boilers has a funnel with the diameter of an ordinary railway tunnel. In the construction of these boilers some eight hundred tons of steel were required, the plates weighing four tons each, with a thickness of an inch and a half. From these mighty machines will be developed a power equal to that of 30,000 horses! Compare this with the 'Great Eastern's' 7650 horse-power, or even with the later 'greyhounds.' The greatest power developed by the two previous additions to the Cunard fleet, the 'Etruria' and 'Umbria,' is about that of 14,000 horses, which is the utmost recorded by any single-screw engines. The 'City of Paris' has a power of 18,500, and the 'Teutonic' a power of 18,000 by twin-screw engines. The 'Campania,' therefore, is upwards of half as much again more powerful than the largest, swiftest, and most powerful of her predecessors. The extent by which her engine-power exceeds that of the White Star and Inman 'cracks' is greater than the entire horse-power of the once marvellous 'Great Eastern.'

These engines of the 'Campania' work two long propeller-shafts, each carried through an aperture in the stern close to the centre-line, and fitted to a screw. Unlike other twin-screw vessels, the propellers and shafts are, as it were, carried within the hull, and not in separate structures. Aft of the screws, the rudder is completely submerged, and is a great mass of steel-plate weighing about twenty-four tons.

With a straight stem, an elliptic stern, two

huge funnels, and a couple of pole-masts—intended more for signalling purposes than for canvas—the 'Campania' looks thoroughly business-like, and has none of the over-elaborated get-up of the 'Great Eastern,' with her double system of propulsion and small forest of masts. The bulwarks are close fore and aft; and from the upper deck rise two tiers of houses, the roofs of which form the promenade deck and the shade deck. In the structure of the hull and decks enormous strength has been given, with special protection at vital parts, as the vessel is built in compliance with the Admiralty requirements for armed cruisers. Below the line of vision are four other complete tiers of beams, plated with steel sheathed in wood, on which rest upper, main, lower, and orlop decks. The last is for cargo, refrigerating-chambers, stores, &c.—all the others are devoted to the accommodation of passengers.

The 'Campania' is fitted to carry 460 first-class passengers, 280 second-class, and 700 steerage passengers—in all, 1440, besides a crew of 400. She has cargo-space for 1600 tons, which seems a trifle in comparison with her size, but then it is to be remembered that the fuel consumption of those 96 furnaces is enormous, and requires the carrying of a very heavy cargo of coals for internal consumption.

The accommodation for passengers is probably the most perfect that has yet been provided on an ocean steamer, for here the experience of all previous developments has been utilised. The dining-room is an apartment 100 feet long and 64 feet broad, furnished in handsome dark old mahogany, to seat 430 persons. The upholstery is tastefully designed, and the fittings generally are elegant; but the peculiar feature is a splendid dome rising to a height of thirty-three feet from the floor to the upper deck, and designed to light both the dining-room and the drawing-room on the deck above it. The grand staircase which conducts to these apartments is of teakwood; the drawing-room is in satin-wood relieved with cedar and painted frieze panels. The smoking-room on the promenade deck is as unlike a ship's cabin as can be imagined; it is, in fact, a reproduction of an old baronial hall of the Elizabethan age, with oaken furniture and carvings. The other public apartments, library, boudoir, &c., are all more remarkable for quiet taste and artistic effect than for the gorgeousness of gilded saloons affected on some lines, but the prevailing feeling is one of luxurious comfort. The staterooms for first-class passengers occupy the main, upper, and promenade decks, and they are as much like real bedrooms as the old type of 'berths' are not. Besides the single bedrooms, there are suites of rooms for families or parties, finely appointed with ornamental woods, rich carpets, and with brass bedsteads instead of the old wooden bunks. All the sleeping-rooms are as light, lofty, and well ventilated as the sleeping-rooms on the old liners were the reverse.

The first-class passengers are placed amidships; the second-class are placed aft; and the steerage, forward. The steerage accommodation is superior to anything yet provided in that class; while the second-class accommodation is quite up to the usual first-class, with spacious, beautifully furnished staterooms, a handsome dining-room in

oak, an elegant drawing-room in satin-wood, and a cosy smoking-room. Indeed, some of the second-class apartments look as if they were intended to be utilised for first-class passengers in times of extra pressure.

These are details of interest to possible passengers and to those who have already experienced the comforts and discomforts of the Atlantic voyage. But the great interest of the ship, of course, is in her immense size and enormous power. The navigating-bridge from which the officer in charge will direct operations, is no less than sixty feet above the water-level, and from there one obtains a survey unique of its kind. The towering height, the vast expanse of deck, the huge circumference of the funnels, the forest of ventilators indicative of the hives of industry below, the great lighthouse structures which take the place of the old angle-bedded side-lights—everything beneath you speaks of power and speed, of strength and security.

The following table shows at a glance how the 'Campania' compares with her largest predecessors in point of size and power :

	Tonnage.	Length in feet.	Breadth in feet.	Horse- power.
Great Eastern.....	18,900	682	82	7,650
Britannic.....	5,000	455	46	5,500
Arizona.....	5,150	450	45	6,300
Servia.....	8,500	515	52	10,300
Alaska.....	6,400	500	50	10,500
City of Rome... ..	8,000	545	52	11,890
Aurania.....	7,270	470	57	8,500
Oregon.....	7,375	500	54	7,375
America.....	5,528	432	51	7,354
Umbria.....	7,700	501	57	14,320
Etruria.....	7,800	520	57	14,500
City of Paris.....	10,500	560	63	18,500
Teutonic.....	9,860	582	57½	18,000
Normannia.....	—	520	57½	16,350
Campania.....	12,950	620	65	30,000
Lucania.....				

As to speed, the record of course is to be broken. In 1850 the average passage of a Cunarder westward was thirteen days, and eastward twelve days sixteen hours; in 1890, the average was reduced to seven days fifteen hours twenty-three minutes, and seven days four hours and fifty-two minutes, respectively. The fastest individual passages down to 1891 were made by the 'Etruria,' westwards in six days one hour and forty-seven minutes; and by the 'Umbria,' eastwards in six days three hours and seventeen minutes. But these were beaten by the 'Teutonic,' which reduced the homeward record to five days and twenty-one hours; and by the 'City of Paris,' which reduced the outward passage to five days and sixteen hours. Now the 'Campania' is expected to maintain at sea an average speed of twenty-two knots; while the 'City of Paris' speed on this record voyage averaged 20·48 knots. On this basis the new Cunarders should make the passage between Queenstown and New York in five and a quarter days; and if, as is predicted, they can maintain, when the engines get into thorough working-order, a speed of twenty-three knots—that is, about twenty-five and a half miles—an hour, they will come very near making the ideal five-day passage which has been the dream of naval experts for the last ten years. Roughly speaking, these new Cunarders are about ten times the size and forty times the power of the pioneers of the fleet, and the 'Cam-

pania' will run every twenty minutes almost as many miles as the 'Britannia' could laboriously make in an hour.

Is it possible that within the next fifty years we shall be able to make the voyage to New York in three days? The old 'Britannia' took fourteen days to Boston, and it was not until 1852 that the ten days' record to New York was broken by the Collins Company. If, then, in forty years we reduced the record from ten to five, who can say that the limit of speed has yet been reached?

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT a month after Ambrose Burdon's interview with the old Chinaman—that is to say, towards the end of the month of August, at about eight o'clock in the evening, John Felling, head of the open Bill Department in the head office of the Pacific Bank, turned out of Cannon Street by one of those odd little lanes which the majority of people pass without noticing, passed under the projecting clock of an ancient church, ascended a flight of steps, and was in what had of old been the burial-ground attached to the ancient church, but which was now a pleasant little oasis of turf and green leaves amidst the gaunt, bare, prosaic surroundings. At first sight he might very well have been mistaken by a not very careful scrutiniser for Ambrose Burdon, for he was of the same height and build, and had the same fair hair and blue eyes, and the same regular, unremarkable features. It was only when you saw the two men together that the differences between them became at once palpable, and that you wondered how you could ever have thought them alike.

Upon this particular evening Jack Felling walked with very little of his usual athletic swing, although he was going to meet his lady-love. His face was grave; and as he threw himself on to a garden seat by the side of a very small nurse struggling with a very big baby, and pulled out his pipe, he sighed heavily. Then he lit his comforter, and puffed away so vigorously that the small nurse, in order to save the big baby from suffocation, dragged it away, which was just what the amiable Mr Felling wanted.

He pulled away for a quarter of an hour. Then he suddenly jumped up, knocked his pipe out, and hurried forward with something of a smile on his face to meet a girl who was ascending the steps. She was a tall, shapely girl, with a pleasing rather than a pretty face; with eyes which beamed with kindness rather than with vivacity, or wit, or keen intelligence, brown eyes, matching in hue the wavy brown hair which would trespass over her forehead. She was well but quietly dressed; and her presence in this dim old London City churchyard caused no little whispering and wondering amongst such of the caretaker's and housekeeper's children as had not seen her there night after night. For, be it understood, these interviews were stolen; and the two prim aunts with whom she boarded and lodged somewhere in the Euston Road, had no more idea that the object of their niece's nightly expeditions was to meet a young man, than they had of the fortune to which she was heiress. However, here Ruth Tunstall was, radiant with

joy and happiness until she beheld her lover's face.

'What is the matter, dear?' she said after the greeting. 'Are you still depressed about our position? Never mind! We are together, Jack; and we ought to be so awfully, unspeakably happy.—But tell me, Jack. Remember, sir, we are betrothed now, and there should be no secrets between us.'

'Well, dear,' replied Jack, 'if you will know. First of all, there's bad news about your cousin, Ambrose Burdon.'

'Indeed! I hope he's not ill?' said the girl.

'No. But there's been a big robbery at the Yokohama branch, and the Directors have ordered him home to explain. In fact, he should be here soon. He started three weeks ago.'

'And that means?'—

'Well, I'm afraid it means that he'll get the sack.'

'Get the?— Oh, I know! Oh Jack, do you think so? What a terrible thing!'

'Yes; it would be a serious thing for him; for he can't be very well off, and it's awkward to have to begin life again at forty.'

'But, Jack, Cousin Ambrose hasn't done wrong, has he?'

'No, dear,' replied Jack, smiling. 'He hasn't done actual wrong; but he hasn't prevented wrong being done by others, and, in the eyes of a Board of Directors, that's almost as bad. Depend upon it, they have full information, or they wouldn't get rid of so valuable a servant as your cousin.'

'Well, I'm very, very sorry,' said Ruth.

'So am I,' said her lover; 'although I can't say I was particularly smitten with him when he was last at home.'

'No; I know you weren't,' said the girl. 'But my recollection of him is very pleasant.'

'I'm glad of it, dear. Perhaps I've formed a hasty estimate of him. I think we men are apt to judge those harshly who don't look you in the face when you're talking to them.'

'Well, well, we'll see,' said Ruth. 'Perhaps things, after all, won't turn out so badly.—But you're disheartened about something, dear; what is it?'

'Yes, I am,' replied Jack.

'What is it? Remember, there should be no secrets between us now.'

'Well, I'm not sure that I'm treating you straightforwardly, Ruth.'

'Jack!' exclaimed the girl, all the light fading from her face as she threw into her utterance of the monosyllable that amazed, startling, fearful emphasis with which a woman can arm the smallest word with the vigour of an entire sentence.

'Yes; I mean it, Ruth,' said the young man.

'Look here. I'm a clerk on two hundred and fifty a year, which with your hundred a year represents the entire capital with which we are going to start life. You've been accustomed to all the comforts, and many of the luxuries of life; but although I'll do my best to give you most of the comforts, I shall be asking you to give up many things which, although luxuries, are, to those accustomed to them, almost necessities.'

'Oh dear, dear, dear!' cried Ruth, 'what aggra-

vating creatures men are! You begin your speech in such a way as to make me prepare myself for a terrible revelation; and the whole thing dwindles into a fear on your part that my tender frame should sink under the weight of a small income. Well, now look here, my dear, timid Jack. When I marry you, I hope that we shall have all the comforts and as many of the luxuries of life as we shall need.'

'But, my dear girl'—

'Wait, sir! I'm talking. It's rude to interrupt. I don't think I shall care about your being in the City all day.'

'My good Ruth'—

'Sir!—No, I want to have more of you. Besides, we must see a little of the world. I should suppose that I'm the only girl of my education and bringing up in the parish who has never been to Paris, or Brussels, or Rome.'

John Felling groaned, and there was a comical look of despair on his face. 'Ruth! I must speak; I really must'—

'Sir, if I have to warn you again, I shall say good-night and be off.'

'But Ruth, it's utterly'—

'In short, you must give up the bank.'

The proposition was so intensely absurd, that Felling could contain himself no longer, and although in his heart he was not in much mood for mirth, sent peal after peal of laughter ringing into the air, until the children looked up from their play, and a passing policeman paused at so unusual a sound in the heart of the stern City.

'Well,' said Ruth, whose lips were twitching with laughter, although she was not actually laughing, 'and what is there comic in that, sir?'

'Why, the idea—the very idea of my giving up the bank, so that you and I can go to—where is it? Paris, and Brussels, and Rome'—

'Yes, and perhaps Egypt or the Riviera for the winter,' put in Ruth.

'Yes—all on your hundred a year! Ha, ha, ha! Ruth, you are so jolly green. I believe you must think the purchasing power of one hundred pounds sterling to be unlimited.'

'A hundred a year! Oh dear, no. I don't expect to do all that on a hundred a year. But perhaps we might on nine hundred a year.'

John Felling looked at his sweetheart. She was perfectly serious. So he became serious too.

'Come, Ruth, we've had a good laugh; but now let us talk like the serious couple we intend to be,' he said.

'I'm quite serious. Indeed, I've never been otherwise,' replied Ruth. 'What is the most astonishing piece of news I could give you?'

'Why, that some dear old lady, whom I may have assisted over a crossing or otherwise been attentive to, should have left me enough money to justify me in chucking up the bank, and enable us to go to Paris and all the rest of it.'

Ruth handed him a letter. It bore the Yokohama post-mark, and was addressed in Ambrose Burdon's writing. He opened it and read:

'MY DEAR COUSIN RUTH—Many thanks for your kind and pleasant letter—so kind and pleasant, that I cannot make you a better return than by giving you a piece of very good and, as I think it, very wonderful news. Well, you

remember that your father always gave himself out to be, and always believed himself to be, a very poor man. This was waggish of him, although he probably intended you to receive the impression as a wholesome deterrent against foolish behaviour, for it turns out that he was a rich man, and that when you come of age you will inherit all his wealth. His instructions to the trustees for his estate were that his will was only to be opened within six months of your coming of age, unless, of course, you should die before that event. This has now been done; so that on December the 24th next you will be absolute mistress of over twenty thousand pounds—say about nine hundred pounds per annum.'

('Why!—my dear Ruth!' was all the young man could say.)

Ruth continued reading: 'My dear cousin, I am sure I most heartily wish you all health and happiness to enjoy this unexpected good fortune. You tell me of your engagement to young Felling, and I congratulate you upon it, for I know him to be a good, steady fellow; and I feel sure he will make you the husband you, from all accounts, and from what I remember, deserve. I may possibly be in England upon business before very long, and one of my first duties will be to call upon you and congratulate you *in propria persona*.—Your affectionate cousin,

AMBROSE BURDON.'

'Of all the pieces of good-luck!' exclaimed Jack, half-a-dozen times in succession. He was too much amazed to be very intelligent in his remarks. 'And you knew it all the time, Ruth, and were chaffing me, and working me up into such a state of worry about what I considered your castles in the air, that I really don't know how it would have ended!'

'If Cousin Ambrose comes home, Jack, you will be quite friendly with him, won't you?' said Ruth.

'Of course, my dear,' replied the young man. 'He speaks so handsomely of me in a private letter to you, that I must admit I have judged him hardly. What a rum thing that he does not say anything about the robbery.'

'Is it so very "rum," dear? He knew it would take away from my pleasure at the other news; and besides, he isn't condemned yet. From what I have heard you say, it seems that the Home authorities of an Eastern bank expect their officers abroad to be provided with double sets of faculties; and you've told me that if a Chinaman makes up his mind to do you, do you he will, no matter how clever you are! So he may get off, and he evidently thinks he will.—But Jack, suppose anything were to happen to me before I came of age?—'

'My dear girl!'

'Well—the unforeseen is always happening. In that case, what would become of all this money?'

'Why, dear, unless the will arranges otherwise, I suppose your next of kin would have it,' replied Jack. 'Who is your nearest relation?'

'Why, Cousin Ambrose, I suppose,' said Ruth. 'I know of nobody else.'

The young man simply raised his eyebrows and said nothing.

'Oh, how thankful we ought to be for our good fortune!' exclaimed Ruth.

'So we are, dear, I hope,' said her lover, pressing her hand. The church beadle came up at that moment to lock the garden for the night, or there is not a doubt that the young man would have emphasised his remark with a kiss. So they sauntered out and homewards, perhaps as happy a couple as could be found in the City of London that night.

BRITISH AMAZONS.

THERE are several well-authenticated instances of women serving in the ranks of the army, and passing with honour through the perils and vicissitudes of war. Colonel Carter, in his *Curiosities of War*, quotes the following inscription, which is still to be found on a tombstone in the church of St Nicolas, Brighton: 'In Memory of PHEBE HASSEL, who was born at Stepney in the year 1713. She served for many years as a private soldier in the 5th Regiment of Foot, in different parts of Europe; and in the year 1745 fought, under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, at the battle of Fontenoy, when she received a bayonet-wound in her arm. Her long life, which commenced in the time of Queen Anne, extended to the reign of George IV., by whose munificence she received comfort and support in her latter years. She died at Brighton, where she had long resided, December 12, 1821, aged 108 years.'

Very little is known of Phoebe Hassel beyond the fact that she actually served as a private for many years with bravery and honour. George IV. allowed her a pension of half a guinea a week, which she enjoyed for many years.

In 1741 a curious book was published in London, entitled, *The Life and Adventures of Mrs Christian Davies, the British Amazon, commonly called Mother Ross*, which professes to give an account of the various 'transactions, both serious and diverting,' in which this extraordinary woman took part whilst serving as a trooper in Lord Hay's Regiment of Dragoons, better known as the 'Scots Greys.' A badly-executed frontispiece which faces the title-page, itself a curiosity, depicts 'Mother Ross' both in the uniform of a dragoon of the period, with a carbine slung over her shoulder, and a drawn sword in her hand; and also in female attire as a sutler, with a basket containing bottles of wine, and a glass in her right hand. The book is evidently in the main a true relation of the startling vicissitudes and adventures which were crowded into her remarkable life. Her father was a maltster and brewer, and his business was sufficiently large to necessitate his employing some twenty men, his family being reared in the midst of comfort and plenty.

Christian from her earliest years was as much inclined to outdoor employments as she was disinclined to the more maidenly occupations of needlework and household duties; she could handle a pitchfork with more facility than a needle. We may quote her own words: 'I was never better pleased than when I was following the plough, or had a rake, flail, or pitchfork in my hands, which implements I could handle

with as much strength and dexterity, if not more, than any of my mother's servants. I used to get upon the horses and ride them barebacked about the fields, leaping hedges and ditches.' Her father's loyalty to James II. induced him to sell all that he had of value and apply the proceeds to the defence of his tottering throne. He succeeded in raising a troop of horse, and equipped it entirely at his own cost, and led it with some credit into action at the famous battle of the Boyne.

During his absence, an event occurred which exhibited in a striking manner the courageous spirit that animated his daughter. We cannot do better than quote it in her own language: 'While my father bore arms for King James, the neighbouring Papists, in time of divine service, came to and blocked up the church door of Leslip with butchers' blocks and other lumber. My mother was then in the church; I was at home; but hearing the noise, and fearing my mother might receive some hurt, I snatched up a spit, and thus armed, sallied forth to force my way and come to her assistance; but being resisted by a sergeant, I thrust my spit through the calf of his leg, removed the things which had blocked up the door, and called to my mother, bidding her come away, for dinner was ready. In the scuffle, the Rev. Mr Malary, the Clerk, with several others, were wounded, and I taken into custody for having hurt the sergeant.' The facts of the case becoming known, and the sergeant with his friends being evidently in the wrong, after a short delay, Christian was acquitted and set at liberty.

The next event described is a love affair with a distant cousin, 'whose uncle on the father's side was a bishop.' It culminated in a manner discreditable to both, and proved a source of considerable sorrow to our heroine.

James II. having to flee the country, her father became a fugitive from justice; and although a pardon was eventually obtained for him, his effects were seized and confiscated by the Government. Christian, however, did not long endure the hardship of poverty, for on the death of her aunt she inherited her business, that of an inn, which proved the source of a considerable income.

Amongst her servants was a young man named Richard Walsh, for whom she soon began to entertain a strong feeling of affection, which he in secret returned. Her well-known strength of character—to call it by no other name—made him hesitate in declaring his passion, and it was not until she herself made overtures, through a female friend, that matters were satisfactorily arranged. He proved himself to be 'a careful and obliging husband,' but, unfortunately, was not proof against the temptations of the bottle. One day, after drinking a considerable quantity of wine with an old school-fellow, he was persuaded to go on board a vessel with recruits and have a bowl of punch in the captain's cabin. The result was that, being overcome with drink, he was carried off to Helvoetsluis, and there enlisted in Lord Orrery's Regiment of Foot, now known as the 'First Royals.' His wife not hearing from him for twelve months, had just put herself into mourning, believing him to be dead, when she received a letter

from him, complaining that he had written eleven letters home without obtaining an answer to any of them.

In spite of the fact that she had two children living, one born after his father's enlistment, she determined to proceed to Flanders in search of him. After providing for the welfare of her children, she cut her hair short, and dressing herself in a suit of her husband's clothes, proceeded to Dublin, where she enlisted in Captain Tichbourn's company of the regiment commanded by the Marquis de Pisare, under the name of Christopher Walsh. On arriving in Flanders, the company soon joined the grand army, and our heroine gained her first experience of war in the battle of Landen—the 'sound of the cannon playing and small-shot rattling round her' throwing her into a 'kind of panick,' not being accustomed to 'such rough music.' She had the misfortune to be wounded just above the ankle, which placed her *hors de combat* for several weeks.

Immediately on her return to duty, she had a narrow escape from drowning at the dikes of Gertruydenberg; and although she escaped this danger, within a few days she was captured by the French, with sixty of her comrades, whilst out on a foraging expedition. Owing to the good offices of 'King James's Queen,' the English prisoners were exceptionally well treated; whilst the Dutch were kept in filthy dungeons and supplied with only half a pound of bread daily. After nine days' imprisonment, she was exchanged with many other prisoners, and went into winter-quarters with the army at Gorkham.

We must allow her to relate the startling adventures she met with in this place: 'In my frolic, to kill time, I made my addresses to a burgher's daughter, who was young and pretty. As I had formerly had a great many fine things said to myself, I was at no loss in the amorous dialect.' She acted her part so well that the simple girl gave her heart fully into the pseudo-soldier's keeping. A sergeant of the same regiment, filled with a mad jealousy, grossly insulted the girl, who complained to Christian. A duel resulted, which is described in the following terms: 'We both drew, and the first thrust I made gave him a wound in the right pap. He returned this with a long gash in my right arm; but before he could recover his guard I gave him a thrust in the right thigh. The next pass he aimed at my breast, but hit my right arm, though it was little more than a prick of a pin, he being feeble from loss of blood.'

The noise of the combat brought up the guard, and she was imprisoned, as it was feared that the sergeant's wounds were mortal. The father of the young lady obtained our heroine's release, the payment of her arrears of pay, and permission to serve in another regiment, but not with a view of giving his daughter's hand in marriage to her. The young woman was willing to elope; but this Christian refused to do, and asked the maiden to wait until she had gained a commission by bravery.

She then entered Lord Hay's Regiment of Dragoons, and learned her duties as a trooper. During the year 1695 she served during the siege of Namur, and spent the winter with her regiment at the Boss.

The peace of Ryswick brought about the partial disbanding of her regiment, and she at once returned to Dublin. Here no one recognised her; and as she found that the nurse with whom she had left her children intended to present a bill beyond her means of discharging, she decided to remain incognito.

War breaking out again, she at once re-enlisted in Lord Hay's regiment, and saw a great deal of fighting. She escaped unharmd at Nimeguen, but her horse was wounded at the siege of Venloo. At Liège she obtained a considerable quantity of valuable plate by way of loot, which she sold to a Dutch Jew for a ridiculously low sum. At Donawert she received a very severe wound. She was present at the famous battle of Blenheim, and whilst guarding some of the prisoners taken in that action, she recognised her husband, who happened at that moment to be embracing a Dutchwoman. She made herself known to him, and forgave his faults, but absolutely refused him permission to disclose her sex. They agreed that she should pass as his brother until the termination of the war; and after giving him some gold from her secret store, they parted.

In spite of this meeting with her husband, her 'frolicsome' spirit induced her to pay attentions to a 'pretty vrow,' which fortunately ended less disastrously than her former love affair. At Ramillies she escaped unhurt through the hottest of the battle; but the last shell fired by the French struck her on the back of the head and fractured her skull. She was trepanned, and her sex at last discovered. The news spread rapidly, and she experienced the most courteous and liberal treatment from the officers of the army. Under pressure from the Duke of Marlborough, she was remarried to her husband, the ceremony being attended by a large number of officers, who all kissed the bride before leaving. She was appointed cook to her husband's regiment; and at the siege of Ath, seizing a musket, she killed one of the enemy during a fierce encounter. At the same moment a ball from the enemy struck her in the mouth, splitting her under lip, and knocking one of her teeth into her mouth. She says: 'Both this shot and mine, with which I killed the soldier, were so exactly at a time, that none could distinguish whether I fell by the recoiling of the piece or the enemy's ball. My husband and some of his comrades ran to take me up, and seeing the blood, imagined I was shot through the head; but I convinced them to the contrary by spitting the ball and tooth into my hand.'

At Courtrai she won a race on her mare with Captain Montgomery of her husband's regiment, who had ridiculed her dress and the wretched steed she rode. To let her speak for herself, she says: 'I offer'd to run her against his horse for a pistole, and we would both ride. Brigadier Godfrey, who was by, laid another pistole on my side. We both went to the place chosen to run upon, and starting at the beat of the drum, he suffer'd me to keep pace with him for some time; but finding he was going to leave me, I made a furious push at him, flung man and horse into a ditch, and thus won the race. The brigadier laughed heartily at my stratagem; the captain was half angry; but I got a couple of pistoles.'

Her husband was killed at the battle of Malplaquet; but at the end of eleven weeks she married Hugh Jones, a grenadier in the same regiment. Her second husband was mortally wounded at the siege of St Venant, and she found herself a second time a widow. Her third husband, who survived her, was a soldier named Davies, serving in the Welsh Fusiliers. Queen Anne gave her a pension of one shilling a day, to which she added by making farthing pies and selling strong liquors in Tuttle Fields, Westminster.

She died on the 7th of July 1739, aged seventy-two, from a fever contracted whilst nursing her husband in Chelsea College, and was buried with military honours in the cemetery belonging to Chelsea Hospital.

A PAGE FROM THE ANNALS OF AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

THE village money-lender in India has a use and a position that it is very hard for people in England to realise. A native saying describes him as the 'salvation and the ruin' of the cultivators; and it is a perfectly just description. Without him they would often find it impossible to farm their lands; and yet by him they are often almost pauperised. Most of the Indian cultivators are improvident. When the harvest yield is short, resort must be had to the money-lender before the next harvest, or starvation could not well be avoided. Often a cultivator is without seed for sowing; then it is from the money-lender he borrows it. The purchase of cattle to replace those that die, or of a new plough, is commonly made by borrowing from the same source. When money or seed or grain is borrowed, an extortionate rate of interest is demanded; it cannot, as a rule, be paid; and the unpaid sum is added to the principal debt, which frequently doubles in four or five years.

The cultivator, as a rule, is long-suffering, and not easily roused to any act, or even expression of enmity, unless the pressure of successive bad seasons has made the harsh dealings of the money-lenders feel more and more burdensome, until they become intolerable. In such circumstances, they sometimes break out into riots, with occasional acts of personal violence. It is one of these occasional outrages, with its far-reaching consequences, that we shall now describe, as it exhibits many phases of modern Indian life, that are interesting by reason of their great unlikeness to anything known in England.

In a large and prosperous village in the southern part of the Mahratta country, a Brahmin money-lender is still living, whose father and grandfather before him had been the largest and most prosperous of the money-lenders for many miles around. He has clients among the inhabitants of all the surrounding villages, and possesses capital enough for large loans and for advances to the petty money-lenders of his own neighbourhood. In the same place live the Khetkars, a widespread and at one time a very prosperous family. From time immemorial the Khetkars had been the hereditary head-men of the town—'Patels' as they are called. The Patel, though an hereditary officer, is a servant of Government,

and is the head of the local police, and chief tax-gatherer of the township. Even now he is usually a man of considerable influence, and much respected; formerly, he was frequently a man of large power, one with whom it was dangerous to be on bad terms. One of these Khetkar chiefs many years ago had been the means of having the present money-lender's great-grandfather hanged; and thus began a feud which was far-reaching in its consequences.

The dead man left a son, who determined to be revenged, though he kept this determination an absolute secret. With the Khetkars he succeeded in restoring the old relations, by professing to believe that his father was guilty, though he well knew him to be innocent. He continued, like his father, to be the person to whom the Khetkars went in all times of pecuniary difficulty. Such times came more and more frequently, for order and law were rapidly succeeding disorder and anarchy; and before many years had passed, the country came directly under British rule. The Khetkars, always an extravagant and improvident family, had no longer opportunities, as in former days, of levying blackmail and extorting forced loans, and they rapidly found the produce of the family lands insufficient for their expenditure. The money-lender was resorted to oftener than before and for larger loans. At first the loans were given on simple bonds; but as the amount borrowed grew larger and larger, the mortgage of lands was demanded; and the Khetkars began to fall into the power of the money-lender. The resources of the family, however, were still too large for the money-lender to take any steps towards realising his dream of revenge. In time, he died; and on his death-bed he made his son, Wamanrao, swear by the life of his own little son, a boy of three years, that he would in his turn devote himself to the fulfilment of a scheme of revenge. This oath was one of peculiar sanctity; and having sworn it, Wamanrao became as devoted as his father had been to the family cause.

Within fifteen years of the death of Wamanrao's father the affairs of the Khetkars became very seriously involved. The chief of the family of that time, named Santaji, was about to betroth his daughter, aged three years, to the five-year-old son of the head-man of a neighbouring village. The astrologers had been consulted, and had declared the time to be most propitious and the intended husband most suitable. But the caste rules, the position and the traditions of the family, required that the betrothal should be celebrated with lavish expenditure; and Santaji was absurdly impecunious. He visited Wamanrao, and asked for a very large loan, so large, that Wamanrao declared he also must consult the astrologers, for he could not lend so large a sum if the time were unpropitious. There were two astrologers in the village who were to be consulted, and were to give a joint opinion. One was a friend of Santaji, who promised him a handsome reward if his reading of the stars was favourable to the loan; the other was a friend of Wamanrao, and the money-lender informed him he should regard it as a matter worthy of substantial reward if the stars declared that the loan could safely be granted on the condition of a mortgage of certain fields, which he named.

The result was the astrologers were both of opinion that the time was most propitious for a loan, provided that these particular fields were mortgaged. It happened, as Wamanrao very well knew, that these fields were the best in the whole village, had been in the Khetkars' family longer than any others, and were peculiarly prized by them. But so desperate was Santaji's need for money, that he mortgaged the fields after some slight demur, trusting that no harm would come of it. The terms of the mortgage were that the fields were to become the money-lender's at the end of ten years, unless the loan, principal and interest, was fully paid up, and that the fields were to be the security for the interest year by year.

At the end of the first year the interest was paid; at the end of the second year, only half the interest due was paid; and the money-lender, with apparent good-will, refused to press for payment. At the end of the third year nothing was paid, and still Wamanrao seemed to be strangely magnanimous. At the end of the fourth year, also, nothing was paid; and now interest for two years and a half, amounting to one half the whole loan, was due. Then Wamanrao demanded payment. Santaji said he had no means of paying. The money-lender was obdurate, his client helpless. At last, the former declared that if he did not receive the money, he must take the land; but this Santaji said he would never agree to; he would never part with the land that was more highly prized and dearer to the family than all the rest in the village.

Thereupon, Wamanrao instituted a suit to recover the interest, or, in default, to recover his due by distress and sale of the three fields. When notice of this suit was served on Santaji, he swore that Wamanrao deserved to be hanged, like his grandfather, and wished that he had the power to compass his death. But times were changed since the old days; the Khetkars feared the English judge. In his extremity, Santaji sought the advice of an acute and much respected native lawyer. The lawyer questioned him closely regarding all the details of the case, and then suggested that Santaji should deny the mortgage and assert the deed to be a forgery. This struck the Khetkar as an eminently desirable and very clever way out of the difficulty; but he remembered that the deed had been taken by himself to the Registry Office, and that the registrar, who was a most respectable man, and would not tell lies for any but a very large bribe indeed, had seen him there, and heard him state that he had signed the deed and mortgaged the land. Santaji expressed his doubts, and besought the lawyer to suggest some other equally desirable way out of the difficulty. After much thought, the lawyer held that the only other satisfactory defence to the suit was to assert that the interest had been paid, bringing witnesses and receipts to prove it.

Thereupon, a reply to the suit was filed, setting forth that the interest claimed had been paid, and that the money-lender was little better than one of the wicked, being both an extortioner and a liar. Wamanrao was somewhat astonished at this; but, nevertheless, he filed the mortgage deed in court, prepared to proceed with his case,

and engaged a very astute native lawyer to conduct it.

In due time the suit came to a hearing; and as it had made no little stir, the court was crowded. The judge was a native, a learned and discreet man, who never accepted bribes—that is to say, he always gave judgment according to the evidence, though it is true he occasionally accepted presents from suitors. Both Wamanrao and Santaji had previously been concerned in suits before this judge, though never before in the same suit, and each had, on a memorable occasion, given the judge a handsome present. On each occasion, after being assured that the present was purely a testimony of friendship and had no connection whatever with any suit, the judge had taken it; and on each occasion he had given judgment against the giver. But for the recollection of these unsuccessful testimonies of friendship, it is very probable that both Wamanrao and Santaji would have trusted more to personal interviews with the judge than to evidence either true or false. As it was, however, there was nothing but evidence to fall back on, and for this both were prepared.

On the day of the trial, Santaji and his lawyer were surprised and disconcerted to see an Englishman in court, and to hear that he had come as a witness on Wamanrao's side. It was, however, too late to change their plans; and so, after Wamanrao had proved the mortgage deed and sworn that no interest had been paid for two years and a half, Santaji's lawyer called witnesses, who alleged that the interest had been paid as it fell due, and produced receipts for the same, signed by Wamanrao. The latter's lawyer contented himself with asking the witnesses a few questions as to the dates of payment, and then called up the Englishman. He was the manager of a paper-mill, and proved, by the water-marks of the paper, which were varied from year to year, that the three receipts produced were all written on paper made in the same year, and that the year was subsequent to the dates of two out of the three receipts. There was an air of depression about Santaji as he heard this evidence. His lawyer, after a few questions to the Englishman, in the hope of showing that he had been bribed by Wamanrao, left on the plea of a pressing case in a neighbouring court.

The judge gave judgment in Wamanrao's favour, and ordered that he should receive possession of the three fields if the interest were not paid within six months.

Time passed, and Santaji failed to obtain the means for paying off the interest. Again and again he prayed Wamanrao to have mercy on him, and give time; but in vain. At last he paid a final visit to Wamanrao on the last day of the six months, and with many tears and much prostrating himself, after the manner of orientals in trouble, he begged him to do anything rather than deprive him of the fields he loved so well, and which his father before him held so dear. Then, in cruel exultation, Wamanrao disclosed his secret. 'As your father loved his fields,' he said, 'so did my father love my grandfather; and as your father caused my grandfather to be hanged, so will I take your fields and use them so that no man's bullocks shall plough them again.' When he heard this, Santaji knew that entreaty was use-

less; and he went home and wept out the bitter story on the shoulder of his eldest son, Babaji. Babaji had more of the spirit of his grandfather than of his father, and listened in grim silence.

Wamanrao was cruel and extortionate in all his dealings, and there were hundreds of men who had cause to hate him. Babaji knew this; and herein, he thought, lay his chance for revenge. He collected together that same day six men besides himself, three his own cousins, all of whom he knew hated the money-lender with a bitter and active hatred. To them he told the whole story of his father's wrongs, and asked them whether they would join him in taking vengeance on Wamanrao. They all consented.

The next day, Wamanrao set out in his covered cart, drawn by two bullocks, for the court, to apply for leave to take possession of Santaji's three fields, as the six months were up and the interest unpaid. He was returning to his village about sunset, hot from the fierce sun beating against the thin covering of his cart, and thirsty from the incessant penetrating dust. As he approached the entrance gate through the village walls, he looked out. He saw a knot of seven or eight men, all of whom he recognised (amongst them Babaji), and knew to be his enemies; but he suspected no intention of violence until they came towards his cart. Then one man held the bullocks, whilst the rest came round to the back, where Wamanrao was sitting, and dragged him from the cart. He was completely at their mercy; few of the villagers were anywhere near, and if they had been, would not have interfered with Babaji and his companions. It was their intention to inflict on Wamanrao one of the most dreadful mutilations that an oriental can suffer: to cut off his nose, and then to leave him disfigured and scorned for life. Wamanrao struggled so violently that great force was needed to compel his submission. Wamanrao died of the effects of it within a few days.

There was no difficulty whatever in bringing home this crime to the offenders: Wamanrao had, before he died, made a statement implicating them; and many villagers had heard Wamanrao's cries, seen the struggle from a distance, and recognised the assailants. When put upon their trial, Babaji and the others boldly confessed their crime, and declared that they would treat any such cruel and extortionate money-lender in the same way. It was not proved that the man's death was intended, so the criminals were convicted of manslaughter only, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

For years after this Babaji was regarded by the bulk of the villagers as a hero and martyr; and the memory of Wamanrao was held in detestation. Nevertheless, his son Balwantrao continued his father's business, and was prosperous. When Babaji had served his term of imprisonment and was released, he was publicly welcomed back to his village, and his fellow-townsmen kept holiday and rejoiced in the event. This was distressing news to Balwantrao, who feared that at any time there might be a popular rising against him. He could not go into the town without seeing Babaji walking jauntily along in the company of friends, and noticing that they scowled at him as they passed. Twice also Babaji had whispered in his ear, 'Remember

your father.' Balwantrao grew sick with dread, and was afraid to leave his house. This continued for three or four weeks; and Balwantrao feared he would be obliged to leave the shelter of his own house to attend to his business, when one day, shortly before noon, he was terrified by the voice of Babaji shouting from the courtyard, 'Come down, Balwantrao.' He went down, white and trembling, and saw his enemy and five other men. When he asked what they wished of him, Babaji said: 'You are a cruel and extortionate money-lender, like your father, and we will deal with you as we dealt with your father.' The other five murmured approval, and then all went away. That night, when all the village was quiet, Balwantrao stealthily went away to seek the protection of the nearest English magistrate. He, after hearing the details of the whole story, and satisfying himself, from the records of the neighbouring court, that Wamanrao had been killed, as described by Balwantrao, sent out warrants for the arrest of Babaji and the five other men. Babaji and four of the five were arrested, tried for the worst form of intimidation, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment; Babaji for a term of five years.

Almost a year later, the last of the five other men was arrested and tried. By means of false entries, inserted in the registers of a hospital in a town two hundred miles distant, he sought to establish an alibi. It was however, conclusively shown that these entries were false, and he was convicted.

Balwantrao now lives detested by his fellow-townsmen, but safe. Sometimes, however, he remembers that Babaji is still alive, and dreads the coming of the time when he will be released from jail. His troubles have not softened his nature; he is still, as he always was, like his father, harsh and avaricious in his dealings with debtors.

FLOWERS AS ENTERTAINERS.

It is a trite saying that everything in this world was designed to fulfil some purpose, from the lowest form of vegetable life to the most complex organism, no matter how useless it may seem. A good example of this is found in connection with the Flowers to be met with in field, woodland, and hedgerow. To the unobservant eye, the glutinous exudations, the silk-like hairs, the spines, thorns, and prickles which characterise the different plants, appear to serve no purpose, unless it be that of mere ornamentation; but upon investigation they are found to be provisions of nature to repel the visits of unwelcome insects, or such as would not in any way be of benefit in promoting plant-life.

The great agents in plant-fertilisation are winged insects, especially the bee. These, when searching for nectar in a flower, become dusted with the pollen, which attaches itself to the hairs, &c., of their legs and bodies, and is by this means conveyed from one flower to another of the same species; and so the process of fertilisation is carried on. In the mind of the casual observer a doubt might arise, and it might be pointed out that there was a danger of the

pollen of one flower being conveyed to another of a different species, and so not fulfilling the purpose for which it was designed by nature. But nothing is left to chance; for it has been clearly proved that these insects do not visit flowers indiscriminately, but that they can be attracted by colour, and that when on an expedition they invariably confine themselves to flowers of the same kind. The insects which would not contribute to plant-life are the wingless class, like the ant, which, in going from blossom to blossom, would have to ascend from, and descend to, the ground by means of the stem, and all the pollen would be almost sure to be rubbed off their bodies, either by the leaves of the plants or by the grass through which they travelled. Flowers may therefore be said to be entertainers, not in the sense that their study affords pleasure, but in that they really perform the part of hosts and receive guests—that is, those insects which contribute to plant-fertilisation—and repel those from whose visits they would derive no benefit.

The provisions of nature to protect flowers from the visits of unwelcome insects are exceedingly numerous. The most unobservant must at times have noticed the glassy appearance presented by the stems of some plants. It is due to a varnish-like coating, and is one of nature's protective agents, since its presence renders a stem so slippery that no creeping insect can obtain a foothold upon it. A good example of this is seen in some of the willows, whose catkins are so rich in nectar that they are constantly swarming with bees; but not a single wingless insect can be found near them, the varnish-like covering forming a most effective barrier against their visits. In some cases this coating serves to protect the young buds against the cold, and also renders them unpalatable to cattle, thereby indirectly assisting fertilisation.

Pluck a sprig of stinking-groundsel ('*Senecio viscosus*') or rest-harrow ('*Ononis arvensis*'), which are common everywhere, and the stickiness of the plant will at once attract attention. Then note the distance of the petals, or leaves of the flower, from each other, and it will be seen that they are so far apart that, did a wingless insect once succeed in climbing the stem, there would not be the slightest barrier to its reaching the nectar. The stickiness already noted is a protection against the visits of unwelcome guests, and acts in a directly opposite way to the varnish-like coating which has been referred to, since, while the latter slides wingless insects off the stem, the former causes them to adhere, and they become so firmly entangled that they perish before they can reach the flower. This viscous secretion is observable on many plants. In the common butterwort ('*Pinguicula vulgaris*'), a very curious arrangement is observed for defending the flower against the approaches of unwelcome insects. The gummy secretion is on the leaves, and the presence of a creeping insect causes them to exert increased stickiness, so that the farther an insect proceeds the more it becomes embedded in the glutinous substance. But the leaves and stem are not the only portions of a plant on which this protective fluid is found. In some plants which put forth flowers before the leaves, as, for instance, some of the willows, it is found on the calyx or flower-cup. In other cases it is

to be seen on the style, which fills up the inner space in curly flowers. To this, small insects adhere, and can proceed no farther; but large insects, like the bee, can thrust their proboscis between the style and the petals, and reach the nectar of which they are in search.

A peculiar feature of most of these plants is that their viscidility is only temporary, for as soon as the flowering season is at an end, and the visits of wingless insects can do no harm, the protective secretion becomes dried up and non-adhesive.

A widely diffused mode of defence is seen in the thorns, &c., which are to be found on the leaves, stem, or calyx of different plants. Against soft-bodied insects, like caterpillars, the viscous exudation would be no defence whatever, as they could cross it with impunity; but a formidable array of prickles is a barrier which they cannot surmount. To add to the effectiveness of this mode of protection, not only are the prickles arranged point downwards, so that a creeping insect is confronted with their sharp end first, but they accumulate the nearer they are to the flower. A good example of this mode of defence may be found in the common thistle, whose lower leaves are much less thickly set with prickles than the upper ones. Again, the leaves of these plants are all concave, which further adds to the protection of the flower.

Another defence against trespassing insects is seen in the hairy formations which block up the entrance to some blossoms, and which serve to obstruct the passage of weak and useless insects, but are easily overcome by the stronger and beneficial ones. In other cases, access to the flower is impeded by parts of the plant being bent, dilated, or crowded together, as in the snapdragon, the mouth of which is so firmly closed that only a powerful insect, like the bee, can force it open; by the anthers combining so as to form a hollow cone round the pistil, as in the potato blossom; or by the stamens crowding round or the stigmas covering the corolla, as if by a lid. In other flowers, protection is afforded by swellings round the entrance to the nectary. For example, in the convolvulus the filaments expand and cause the central space of the corolla to be divided into passages resembling the arrangement of a five-chambered revolver, into which nothing but the fine proboscis of a bee can enter. In the bladder campion the calyx stands well out from the blossom, so that any insect which eats through the flower-cup gets no nearer the nectar, because the distance in that direction is as great as the distance from the mouth of the corolla.

How often in crossing a meadow have we found water stored up in the little cup formed by the conical bases of the opposite leaves of some plants! The purpose of these pools is to isolate the stem, and so protect the flower from the ravages of wingless insects.

Another form of protection is seen in the collar formed round a flower by means of embracing leaves, which are generally convex upwards, and slippery on the inside, as in the snowdrop. Creeping insects get as far as the slippery leaves, and in trying to turn the edge, they invariably lose their hold and tumble to the ground.

The common nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*) and flowers of that class, which are totally unpro-

tected against the attacks of marauding insects, open only during certain hours of the morning, before the dew has dispersed, when they are perfectly safe from the visits of wingless intruders, which never venture abroad until the dew is off the grass.

By reason of their situation, aquatic plants are protected against unwelcome visitors; but in connection with one at least, the spotted knot-grass (*Polygonium persicaria*), which, during a drought, is sometimes left high and dry on the banks of a stream, and is utterly defenceless against insect trespassers, a curious circumstance has been observed. In such seasons it has been known to secrete a viscous substance all over the stem, thereby providing a perfect protection against marauders. When, however, the subsequent rains have caused the stream to regain its former level, and there is no more necessity for this glutinous defence, it totally disappears, and the stem assumes its original smoothness.

Again, there are flowers which close their blooms during the day and open only at night, like the white lychuis, evening primrose, night-scented stock, &c. Such flowers have nothing to gain by being open in the daytime, as they are fertilised only by night-flying insects, which are attracted by the sweet-smelling odour they exhale, such perfume being given off only at night, the flower being scentless during the day. Night-blooming plants are generally either yellow or white, so that they are easily seen in the dark by the insects from whose visits they benefit.

The bird-cherry and some of the vetches, which are entirely defenceless against the attacks of wingless insects, possess a wonderful device for 'buying off,' as it were, unwelcome visitors, since on the under side of the leaves are a number of epidermic cells containing nectar. In these the marauder finds sweets to his heart's content, and does not ascend farther, and thus the fertilisation of the plant is not interfered with.

Truly, the more the secrets of nature are investigated, the more apparent becomes the truth of the old saying with which this article was commenced—that everything in this world was designed to fulfil some purpose.

IN BLOSSOM-TIME.

In Blossom-time, when all the land was white
With drifting May, and tremulous silver light
Stretched, like a jewelled path, across the sea,
You told the story of your love to me;
And when you saw my downbent face grow bright,
You smiled, and said: 'Twas only meet and right
That sweet new hopes should wind their happy flight
To maidens' hearts, and nest there tenderly
In blossom-time.'

Now, Spring is past, and on the gorse-clad height,
Where Day is loth to don the veil of Night,
You ask: 'When seems the world most fair to thee?'
And (still in love, as wedded folks should be),
I answer through glad tears that dim my sight:
'In blossom-time.'

E. MATHESON.

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THE ELY FEN-LAND.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

ONE of the most eloquent passages from the pen of the late Charles Kingsley is that in which, in his *Hermits*, he describes the condition of the vast Fen districts extending from Peterborough to the chalk hills of Cambridge, as it was before man took it in hand to drain it. He pictures the wondrous world of wild-fowl that hovered over the meres, the fish that swarmed in the waters, and the wealth of flowers that fringed the pools and floated on their glassy surface. But, beautiful as the Fen region was, it had its disadvantages: fish and fowl alike fed on insects; and mosquitoes, gaddies, and gnats swarmed there, rendering life insupportable to such as had not been born in the Fens, and whose skins had not become tough and rough with incessant stinging during the warm part of the year.

The beauty of the Fens is gone—it is Fen-land no longer. The water is drawn away, and the alluvial and peaty soil is the richest corn-land in England. And yet, here and there lingers something of charm. The dikes are still the homes of waterweed and flowers, and stand rank with yellow flag as strips of gold. In the lagoons that occupy old marl-pits still grows the water-soldier, a singular plant, that lies at the bottom of the water till flowering-time, when it rises to the surface, opens its pure white petals, and then sinks again. It is unlike any other plant we have in the British Isles, more resembling an aloe than any other. Its long stiff leaves are semi-pellucid, and are strangely toothed. It is found in the Rossal pits near Ely. The white-mallow is also to be seen in the Fens, and the blue water-forget-me-not and pink willow-herb abound. Moreover, on the water lie the golden flowers of the water-lily, locally called Brandy-balls. The yellow bog asphodel is not wanting; and the beautiful pale rose flowering rush, and the fair arrowhead with its three-petalled blossoms, adorn every dike.

Insects still abound. The gadfly is very pois-

onous, and lurks among the rushes. A man stung by one is incapacitated from work for two or three days. Here and there rise outcrops of white clay or marl from the dead level of the Fens, and these were formerly islets; their names end in 'ey,' the Norse for isle, as Ely=the Eel isle; Shipecy=the Sheep isle; Thorney=the Thorn isle; Ramsey, Sawtre, Stuntney, Welney, and the like.

The draining of the Fens was begun by the Romans; and Carr Dike—a drain extending from the Nene to the Witham—is attributed to them. But far more extensive operations were carried on by the monks and the Bishops of Ely. The drainage of the North Level was undertaken by Bishop Morton in the reign of Henry VII.; and he also dug a canal—called after him—a distance of forty miles, to carry off the overflowings of the Nene. In the reign of James I., a Dutchman, Van Muyden, was summoned to undertake the task of the drainage; but the works were brought to a standstill under Charles I. by the Civil War. However, some good work was done. The Bedford Level—seventy feet wide and twenty miles long—took away the superfluous water of the Ouse in floods. Works went on under the House of Hanover, and the Fens were gradually improved; but the complete reclamation of the Fens was undertaken by the great engineer Rennie, and by others who followed him.

The system of drainage may be roughly described as this. Certain main arteries have been established, whereby the rivers Nene, Lark, Ouse, Cam, are carried between high banks to the sea. These banks are built up of chalk rubble and marl, and rise some fourteen feet above the level of the Fen. At distances of two miles, a steam-engine is planted on the bank, and pumps up the water from a 'load' or 'dike' into the main canal or river. These loads are at a considerably lower level than the canal. They are fed by the 'drains' which surround every field, and which are in connection. A windmill is placed at the point where all the water of a certain complex of drains reaches the bank of

the load or dike. The wind is rarely still on the Fens; and it is employed to pump the drain-water into the dikes. The machinery is extremely simple. The wind turns the sails, and they in their revolution set a huge axle in motion that runs from top to bottom of the fabric. At the bottom, by means of cogs, it sets a paddle-wheel in motion, which throws the water up an incline, for the drains are at a lower level than the dikes. The maintenance of the banks, engines, &c., is in the hands of Commissioners. These Commissioners are the landholders of the district and certain elected members. They impose the rates necessary, which amount on an average to six shillings per acre. The Commissioners maintain a body of men, 'bankers,' 'gaulters,' as well as horses and lighters, to keep the banks in repair, dredge the canals, dig the requisite clay, and keep the engines going.

Occasionally, in great rains all the efforts of man are unavailing to keep the Fens from being flooded. A flooded Fen causes serious damage, and takes years to recover. There is now living in the Ely Fen a couple of whom it is said that they settled to be man and wife when a flood swamped the cottage in which they were. Each had to take refuge on a chair and sit on the back with the feet on the seat. Thus they sat for hours looking at each other and waiting to be rescued. Before a boat came to take them off they had made a match of it.

The continuous pumping has dried the spongy 'turf'—that is, peat—to such an extent that the surface of the land has sunk six feet in the last fifty years. It has now ceased to sink, as the peat will no longer contract. The result of this sinking is that houses built half a century ago have their doorsteps a man's height above the level of the road. Moreover, the shrinkage of the land has left the few poor ash-trees that grew in the Fens standing above it on the points of their roots, and they are blown over unless artificially banked up.

The land recovered by drainage is of extraordinary richness; and when it does become somewhat exhausted by the crops grown on it, the restoration of fertility is easily and cheaply effected, for the best possible dressing is actually on the spot. Below the turf or peat, at a depth varying from five to ten feet, lies the clay, rich and greasy, like black butter. A farmer engages 'clayers' to dig down to the 'gault,' nine holes in a chain, and throw up the clay on the surface; for this they receive about three shillings a day. The black butter is spread over the surface, and the dressing is done.

It is in digging these pits after clay that relics of a former age are found—flint weapons, bronze helmets, the tusks of wild-boars, and the horns of elks, sometimes the remains of a boat hewn out of one oak trunk. The former inhabitants of the Fen-land lived either on the islets, or upon platforms raised on piles above the water, precisely like the 'palafitte' habitations of prehistoric times in the Swiss lakes, and like the crannogs of Scotland and Ireland. Indeed, this was the case down to the beginning of this century, and a drawing of one is in existence which was made about 1810. The house was wattled and of rushes; the roof had no chimney; the smoke of the fire found its way out through

the thatch as best it could. From the door a ladder led into the water, and at the foot of the ladder lay moored a flat-bottomed boat. Those who lived in these palafitte dwellings picked up their subsistence by fishing and fowling, and cultivated a patch of land where left dry in summer. All the refuse of the house was thrown over the edge of the platform, and such heaps of refuse are found now when the plough turns up the soil, where formerly eels burrowed and ducks dived.

The inhabitants of the Fens have no peculiar dialect; their English is singularly good, with only a few peculiarities, as, 'I'm purely' for 'I am well'; 'I doubt' for 'I reckon'; 'frit' for 'frightened'; a 'boy' is a 'baw.' But the signs and names of the taverns are characteristic of the district. Such are 'Five Miles from Anywhere,' 'No Hurry,' 'The Fish and Duck,' 'The Spade and Becket,' 'The Sedgesheaf,' 'The Pike and Eel.' To give a salutation to any one is termed 'giving the seal of the day'; and one who has been overtaken with work is described as being 'played upon.' Surnames are Gont, Chote, Spraggins, Gotobed, Tunkiss, Verlander, Gaultrip, Beamess, Lavender, Cammel. Scriptural Christian names abound, but are oddly clipped; thus, Hezekiah becomes Ki, Ephraim is shortened into Pip; and the favourite Kerenhappuch is squeezed into Kainie or Kenapue. The Fen men and women are a singularly silent, morose people, and there is little of laughter and play among the children. Unhappily, a great deal of opium is taken in the Fens, and the children are given 'poppy-tea' to keep them asleep when their mothers go out to weed in the fields. Every cottage garden has in it a bed of white poppy, and the consequence is that nervous disorders abound. The use of alcoholic drinks is also extensive in the Fens, and this is to a large extent explicable and excusable, for the Fen water is not potable, and there are no springs in the land. The Fen water is not only unpleasant in the taste and to the smell, but is also unwholesome. The Fen folk are obliged to have recourse to the river water or canal water, which is to a large extent derived from their own dikes and drains. There is no other to be had. Consequently, men and women, and even children, frequent the public-houses in a way not common in other parts of Great Britain. After harvest comes what is called the Horkey Feast, attended by entire households, and these too often degenerate into drunken brawls.

Every cottage garden grows celery, and that to a large extent, for celery is regarded as good against ague. Among the businesses pursued in the Fens is that of 'Gozard,' a goose-keeper; 'a Moler,' employed by the Commissioners to catch moles, which are greatly dreaded, lest they should bore their runs in the banks and let out the water. A 'Banker' is one engaged in keeping up the embankments; and a 'Gaulter' is one who digs in the clay-pits.

Favourite sports are 'dagging' for eels. An instrument locally termed a 'gleve' is made of four jagged knives tied together at the head of a pole. With this a man dags into the water of the dikes and drains, and very frequently brings up an eel writhing between the knives, unable to extricate itself. 'Trunding' for larks is

another sport; it consists in drawing a net over the fields at night. As many as sixty dozen are captured at a time. Coursing is also in great favour. Hares are also caught in nets; the Fen hares are fine creatures, and fetch from fifteen to eighteen shillings. They are sent to Kempton Park to be coursed. Hares when alarmed always run to 'holt.' The holt is the lowest portion of a field, that which is most marshy, and where willows and shrubs grow. There is the only cover to be found in this treeless level, where there is also neither heather nor gorse nor coppice. At Michaelmas is the statute fair at Ely, when farm-servants are engaged for the twelvemonth. The lads tie a band of straw round their legs, and this is taken off as soon as they have hired themselves to a master.

The tools employed in the Fens are peculiar: a 'hodden spade' is a spade that comes to a point; a 'becket' is a long narrow spade with a piece of steel projecting from it at right angles. In going over marshy land, the men walk on stilts, or 'sketches' as they term them; and in working in water, wear 'diking boots' that cover their legs to their thighs.

In winter the great sport is skating, but skates are called 'pattens.' Formerly, sledges were employed to run on the ice, fixed on two horses' leg-bones as runners; and a bridegroom has thus run his bride to church to be married.

Horses used on a farm are not shod in the Fens, as there is no stone there; and the roads, locally termed 'drowes,' are unmade with stone. They are broad flat courses, with a ditch on each side; they are sloughs in autumn, frozen hard in all their roughness in winter, and in summer are deep in impalpable dust. The only making they ever get is with a harrow drawn over them; sometimes they are even ploughed, and then harrowed.

Owing to the Fens being a new land, the houses are all modern, and very ugly, of white brick. The cottages are sometimes of brick, sometimes of board, and thatched with rushes. All are built on piles driven into the peat; and if the piles have been badly driven, the houses lean on one side and have cracks in them.

Most of the land belongs to yeomen, sons or grandsons of 'Fen sloggers,' men wise in their generation and shrewd, who bought up the soil as it was being drained, when speculators who had invested grew weary of the repeated calls on their pockets and despaired of seeing a return. These men, on the spot, saw their advantage, bought at very small prices; and their sons and grandsons are now very wealthy. They are in many cases closely related to the workmen they employ, and they are not above turning up their sleeves and working with them, and harder than their best man.

The last scene in a farmer or labourer's career is certainly an impressive one. The largest wain on the estate is drawn forth, and the great farm-horses with black favours are harnessed to it. The coffin is placed in the wagon, and the mourners sit round on the wainboards. The horses, being unshod, step along almost noiselessly, but the bells on their necks tinkle. The labourers follow in lines along the drove, all silent.

There can be no graves in the Fens, for there

is no earth in which to lay the dead; consequently, the funerals have to take place on some of the isles, and the distance gone is often many miles.

The Fen wains are very large, have a high front board, and are usually painted vermilion, sometimes with blue wheels. In this gaily-painted vehicle sit the mourners weeping, as the procession takes its tedious way. The black windmills radiating to the far horizon in lines, seem to form part of the convoy; the Royston crows fluttering on all sides are in full harmony with the occasion; and very usually the sky overhead is sombre and gray. A Fen funeral is a solemn sight, and is eminently picturesque, and the Fen folk seem to feel that it is impressive.

Strange is the power of home over the human heart. Such a country as the Fen-land, one would have supposed, could have exerted no fascination on an inhabitant, so lacking is it in every element of loveliness and cheerfulness and variety. Yet it is not so. A Fen-man hardly ever leaves the Fens; and if by any chance one does get on to high ground, into undulating country, into woodland and rich green pastures by gliding serpentine rivers, he becomes sad; a headache wears him, and he is not at rest till he has returned to his flat Fen, which is chopped up into squares like a chessboard, and in which he may die, but cannot be buried.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXI.—DANIEL'S INTERLUDE.

THAT telegram signed 'Daniel' demands full explanation. When George Suffield (the younger) received his uncle's request for a few weeks of Daniel's service, he congratulated himself, on the whole. Daniel was useful—Daniel was even valuable—but that singular encounter with Daniel in the clough, and that mysterious light in the counting-house—which still was unexplained—had made him doubt whether, after all, there might not be more in Daniel than met the eye. He was loth to commit himself to suspicion of Daniel; so he welcomed the opportunity of being parted from Daniel for a time, so that he might turn his qualities over in his mind at leisure and consider whether he really ought to trust him or no.

As for Daniel himself, when Mister George told him that he must prepare at once to go to London to attend again for some weeks upon the Sahib Raynor, he bowed with his hands upon his breast, saying: 'Respectable Mister George, I am obedient as the horse to the rein;' but he went out from Mister George's presence into the night and wept bitterly, flung his white turban on the ground and stamped on it, and then went indoors and packed his bag—and saw that a long knife in a sheath at the bottom of the bag was bright and sharp—and finally he sat down with his chin in his hand and his nails between his teeth and viciously thought. With regard to this journey, he complained, it was a great pity that it must be gone upon!—oh, a very great pity! Just at the time when the things and the business,

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etcetera, which he had set himself to do were beginning to look as if they really would get done, he was removed, taken away, banished! But he would come back! Oh yes! Yet what if the Sahib Raynor said: 'Daniel must stay with me; I need him?' (Daniel chewed his nails with the mere thought of it; for he had not got rid of the old impression that the Sahib Raynor had to be obeyed without question.) He knew, he saw clearly as in a glass, what he would be and do. He would make himself—oh yes!—a stupid person, to the end that the Sahib Raynor might be glad to be rid of him again! And in addition, he would make the Sahib Raynor endure things—yes, he would!—for taking him away from his purpose now and causing him to lose precious time, and perhaps opportunity!

George was very considerate with Daniel next morning, being half-ashamed of his sense of relief that Daniel was going. He carefully instructed him what he must do when he left the train in London in order to reach Rutland Gate without mishap or loss, and he wished to send some one to the station with him to see him off. But Daniel so earnestly protested that he could manage completely by himself, that he was allowed to depart with his bag alone. Had George followed him into the town, he would have understood why he was so resolved to go alone, and he might have seen further reason to be suspicious of his guilelessness.

Arrived in the town, Daniel took a round-about way to the railway station, walking with haste, lest he should lose his train. In a certain old square whose houses, formerly dwelt in by City magnates, were now become business offices, and whose door-jambs or pillars were plastered with the names of men of all nations—Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia—he turned in at a door where was inscribed, among other names, 'TANDERJEE & Co., 2d Floor.' Up to the second floor Daniel lightly climbed, knocked at the door on the glass panel of which appeared 'Mr Tanderjee, Private,' and, without waiting for an invitation, entered. Mr Tanderjee sat at a writing-table, and his gleaming spectacles at once took in the significance of Daniel's appearance.

'A bag!' said he in English. 'You travel! You go away! What is this?' And he rose with a flourish of both his hands towards Daniel.

Daniel cast a hurried glance at the door of the other room, and answered in Tamil: 'It is to be deplored, O worshipper of the sun; but I must serve that I may rule. My former master needs me for a time, and my new master says: "Go. Peace be with you." And I must go: there is no help. But I will come again after not very many days—after, perhaps, another moon—and all will go well.'

Mr Tanderjee gently approached him with two ringed fingers spread in an expository fashion, and the two scoundrels faced each other and looked exceedingly respectable in their black alpaca coats. When they spoke, their tones were soft, which sounded uncanny, considering the quarrelsome matter of their conversation.

'It may be,' said he, also in Tamil, 'that all will go well. Yet, my son, consider. Gold-dust I will give much for, but brick-dust no man will buy. Things performed are to me as gold-

dust; promises are but brick-dust: you bring me, my son, only brick-dust.'

'You are unjust, O worshipper of the Lord of Light,' said Daniel. 'Have I not brought you and my wealthy, foolish master nearer together?—Am I not the strong link between you?'

'But the link goes,' said Tanderjee.

'The link will return,' said Daniel. 'Have no fear. And have you not benefited by his purchase of the cotton of India?—is there no gold-dust in that?'

'There is not much, my son. But where are the plans of the new—the precious, the beautiful—machines which are so jealously guarded? You do not bring them to me?' And there was an avid flash and glitter in the Parsee's spectacles.

'I did not find them when I looked. I was disturbed, and almost caught—as I have told you, O worshipper of the Lord of Light. But I cannot fail. I have my way of entering, which no man can guess—except it may be the old Gurn, who is a seeker out of strange and secret things; and him will I cause to be sent away when I return.'

'When you return, my son! It is brick-dust, my son!' And Tanderjee in his eloquence made his two fingers flash and flutter before Daniel's eyes.

'Listen and understand, O Mr Tanderjee!' said Daniel, losing patience at last. 'The danger is all mine! I am as a man walking about through many dark doors, whose lintels are low: I may knock my head at any time. I am as the mattress on which you and Mr Gorgonio rest: is the comfort of repose felt by the mattress? No, indeed!'

Daniel was turning away; but Tanderjee came before him and pressed him gently between his two outstretched hands.

'Behold, it is well. I did but try you, my son. We are brothers in this! But there is much to be done, ere the end arrives, and the time is uncertain. We are more than brothers! Behold, I bestow on you my ring.'

'Keep the ring, O worshipper of the Lord of Light,' said Daniel, 'until such time as I give you sufficient gold-dust to equal its value.—But the clock warns it is time that I go to the train.'

'Peace and prosperity go with you, my son,' said Tanderjee. 'Return with speed. I shall await you, as the mistress awaits her lover.'

So these two precious creatures parted; and Daniel went on to meet his late master.

Of the manner in which Daniel spent that evening in London we have had already some hint. Next day he set out with the Sahib Raynor on his fatal travels, taking charge of the familiar tent and other impedimenta which the Sahib insisted on carrying along with him. Daniel did not know when they set out where they were going; but the Sahib on the way to the station bought large maps of the south and west of England, paid a visit to his bank, and then took the train to Sittingbourne. Thence he hired a carriage and horses, and they were driven through the rich orchard-lands of Kent. Daniel found it difficult to carry out his design of showing himself 'a stupid person;' for by this mode of progression it fell to him to do little but sit beside his master and see that he was comfort-

able when they arrived at an hotel for the night. Moreover, his master was unusually silent and self-involved, and demanded little of him; so self-involved and absent-minded, indeed, that he seemed frequently to wake up to wonder why Daniel was in his company. It was only in pitching the tent for the night—the Sahib always contrived to put up at some village inn or out-lying hostel, attached to which was an orchard, or other private and secluded ground, where he could have his peculiar night arrangements—it was only then that Daniel could show himself awkward or stupid; but yet his pains were lost, for Mr Raynor took no note of him.

Thus they drove on from day to day through all that lovely southern land, by the secluded 'dens' and 'hursts' of Kent and Eastern Sussex, where peace and primeval content dozed on lea and furrow, in village and homestead—dozed with the heavy soil and the patient red oxen, slowly dragging through the clay ungainly wagons encrusted with primeval mud; by waving corn-field and breezy down, on into Hampshire and the New Forest, and so onward into the land of Arthurian romance. Everywhere as they passed, the 'swish' of the scythe or the 'hurr' of the reaping-machine was in their ear; the reaping was first of hay, then of barley, and then of oats; and so they drove on, as in a panoramic dream, to the greatest reaping of all, when the Sahib himself was cut down. And the farther they went the more did the ravishing sweetness of Nature, the gentleness and docility of beasts, and the patient toil of men and women, impress the mind and soften the heart of Mr Raynor, till one night in the loneliness of his tent his hardness completely crumbled and melted; he was suffused with tenderness as a man is suffused with blood when his heart breaks, and he wept as he thought of his brother and his niece. 'Women are far, far better than men!' he said to himself—unconsciously echoing a saying of his brother's uttered at about the same time; and he turned there and then in his prompt, business-like way, lighted his candle, found paper and a pencil, and wrote to his niece: 'I have been altogether wrong about you and your father. Forgive me. We shall be happy yet together;' and more to the same effect. Then he blew out his light, turned over and went to sleep, at peace with all the world—although it was written that he and his forgiven brother would never be 'happy together' again in this world.

In remarkable, wicked contrast with the blessed influence on Mr Raynor of the peace and sweetness of Nature was their effect on Daniel Trichinopoly. Never was better illustrated the folly of those who would reform the knave and the rascal by turning them into the fields and woods to 'commune with Nature.' Nature never yet made the wicked man turn away from his wickedness. The wide-spread calm and content gave Daniel a certain enjoyment; but yet they only served to make him more vicious, and more impatient to be back at the nefarious work to which he had set his hand. He was wroth that the Sahib Raynor was thus idly carrying him round the country, and it did not in the least appease his wrath that wherever they passed and wherever they stayed, his black face and white turban made him a more important and attractive

person than his master. It chafed him that no blunder, however egregious and however carefully planned, could provoke more than the mildest rebuke—the rebuke as of an indulgent father—and it amazed him, too; for the Sahib Raynor had been wont to be sharp and severe in his discipline. And all the while Daniel could not do other than exhibit his usual suave and gentle demeanour; the which he found to be such a constraint and repression of himself that it was necessary for him to relieve his impatience and rage by dancing round the Sahib's tent in the dark; and then, if the Sahib heard and demanded 'Who is there?' he fell down flat and slid away through the grass like a snake.

So the days and the weeks passed till towards the end of July when they were in Wales. The season—as I have already noted—was hot and dry beyond measure, but yet the Sahib insisted on walking far more in that land of mountain and stream than he had done anywhere else on the tour. He climbed Plinlimmon, and had a nasty fall down a rock; but still he climbed and scrambled in sun and shade, followed by the polite Daniel, perspiring with resentment.

It was on the morning of the hottest day they had yet experienced that they were at Beddgelert preparing for the ascent of Snowdon. The baggage was to be sent on by the high-road to meet the Sahib at Llanberis; and after a sufficient late breakfast, the Sahib, his servant, and a guide set out for the mountain, whose sides were quivering under the haze of heat. Of the three ascents of Snowdon it is well known that that from Beddgelert is the most difficult. It is doubly difficult on a sunny day; for not only is the route long and dangerous, but, since it is directly from the south, the sun beats upon the traveller's spine the whole way, and the rocks throw back the glare and heat on the traveller's face. That day the ascent was terrible; but Mr Raynor would not listen to the guide's suggestion that they should return and try again late in the afternoon or early next morning.

'It is absurd,' said he. 'I have felt hotter suns than this.'

So they laboured on in the terrific heat—now resting and panting in a scrap of shade, and now turning their hot backs to the sun again. About three o'clock, when they had accomplished about three-fourths of the ascent, and when the sun was beating most furiously on them, Mr Raynor suddenly reeled, pitched forward, and fell, as if shot. Both Daniel and the guide knew what had happened: the English sun had stricken down the old Indian traveller. If Daniel knew anything to do then for the recovery of his old master, he did nothing; but he waited by him while the guide ran on to the summit for a litter, and when the litter was brought he helped the guide to carry him—all the while secretly elated that his wanderings were now likely to come to an end. At the hut known as *The Summit Hotel* there chanced to be a doctor. He at once examined Mr Raynor, and ordered that he should be carried down to Llanberis, he himself going with him, Daniel following, docile and attentive.

For the first time since he had returned to England, the traveller lay in a bed in a bedroom—lay completely still, and apparently unconscious.

Daniel sat by him the whole evening and night through, and the doctor looked in every now and then. There was nothing to be done but to watch and wait; and Daniel watched and waited, afraid now, not so much of his old master, as of the shadow of Death. About midnight Daniel sat in silence, meditating in his half-pagan, semi-barbarous way on the strange facts of Life and Death, when the Sahib opened his eyes and looked at him.

'Ah, Sahib!' murmured Daniel, with his hands crossed on his breast. He continued in his Tamil: 'Lord of many travels, and are you indeed turned back again from the door of the other world? Is it a door that is hard to open? *Kāsi*, O master, is formed of but two letters, yet how many hours will it take to reach it! And although a man may go to *Kāsi*, he may miss his way to Heaven! But a good man is fit to sit at meat with the gods. Therefore, O master, be of good cheer.'

Daniel ceased; he perceived on the Sahib's countenance what he interpreted as a demand for attention.

'Ah,' said Daniel, 'and is the tongue stricken, as well as the limbs and the body, O master?'

The Sahib looked pointedly at Daniel, and from him to a small locked valise on a chair, in which Daniel knew the traveller carried his papers, his journal or diary, and other property of an intimately private kind. Daniel laid his hand on the valise with a look of approval from his master, and, still with his approval, took the keys from his master's pocket, selected the proper one, and opened the valise. He took out one thing after another, his master watching him the while, but giving no sign that the thing he wanted was reached until Daniel held in his hand the clasped volume in which the Sahib frequently wrote at night. Daniel held that up with a look of interrogation, and the Sahib gave a murmur of assent, and repeatedly tried to frame a word like 'Isabel.'

'Isabel?' queried Daniel; and the Sahib assented and turned his eyes again on the valise.

Daniel returned to it, and continued to take out one thing and another, until he produced the Sahib's pocket-book. The Sahib again murmured his assent. What did the Sahib wish to be done with it? Something in particular to be taken out of it? Daniel opened it, and his eye and hand first turned to some bank-notes. A third time the Sahib murmured assent, and seemed to frame the words 'Wages' and 'Good.'

'To me, O master?' inquired the astonished Daniel. 'But you have paid me my wages—all except a very little! And here, O master, are altogether five, ten—yea, fifty pounds!'

But the Sahib with insistence seemed to signify that the money was for him. Daniel with an agonised look of inquiry caught the bank-notes to his breast. The Sahib plainly assented to that, and with his eyes signified that he wished the pocket-book now to be returned to the valise. Then Daniel was overwhelmed for the moment with gratitude and shame: the Sahib thought he had behaved well, and the Sahib thus rewarded him! The undeserved reward was too much for even Daniel. The Sahib had closed his eyes, but he opened them again.

'Let me speak, O master,' he cried, 'words of thanks! Your generosity, O master, is as the generosity of Karnan, the greatest of the seven princes! And let me speak again, O master, but this time hear me not! Shut the ears to my words; for they are not good! My heart has nursed anger! I came with vinegar, and, behold, I bring away milk! But the Sahib's heart is noble as that of a king, and he rewards the undeserving! I shall for ever remember the bounty of the Sahib!'

Daniel was silent; for his master had again closed his eyes; a deep flush overspread his face; and he began to breathe very stertorously. Daniel glided swiftly to the door and called the doctor. The doctor came.

'Ah,' said he; 'effusion on the brain! Poor gentleman!—And, I suppose,' he added, looking at Daniel, 'he has endured many fiercer suns than ours.'

PUZZLES FROM A DIAMOND MINE.

THE following paragraph appears in a South African paper: 'At the "Premier" Mine a blast was put in about thirteen feet from the surface, and in the yellow ground some three feet below the limestone formation, which, upon being exploded, brought down, among the displaced diamondiferous soil, a perfect and full-sized ostrich egg. This wonderful discovery is apparently petrified, and evidently hollow, and must have been embedded in the ground for countless years; and, without exception, is the most extraordinary find yet made in the history of diamond-mining.'

This is certainly a very curious discovery, but it does not stand alone, for ostrich eggs more or less perfect have been found both at De Beers and Colesberg Kopje in a fossilised condition. Large pieces of charred fossil wood have also been found from time to time, one of which is described as a portion of a fossil tree, four feet in length, and nearly five feet in circumference. This was found in Dutoitspan Mine, at a depth of eighty feet. At Kimberley there was dug up part of a stem of a tree with a branch attached, at a depth of three hundred and fifty feet from the surface; and a still more singular find was an ant's nest, quite perfect and undisturbed.

Another very remarkable fact is that more than once a broken diamond has been found, and at some distance from it the other portion, the two parts uniting perfectly. This was the case with the wonderful black diamond which forms a portion of the collection of Mr Streeter, the well-known Bond Street jeweller. The diamond referred to, which is said to be the largest black diamond known, was found in South Africa three or four years ago. It was in the form of half a pebble, and has been reduced by cutting from one hundred and sixty-nine and three-quarter carats to sixty-six carats weight; and Mr Streeter has now secured the other half, which was found quite recently.

All these discoveries seem to militate against the generally received opinion as to the origin of these remarkable mines. As is pretty widely known, the diamond mines of South Africa, situated chiefly in Griqualand West, consist of

large depressions, filled with earth, varying in colour from yellow to gray and blue, which is described as a tough dry mud of volcanic origin, sometimes hardened into rock. This mud, or 'blue,' as it is technically called, is enclosed in a basin of rock geologically known as a 'pipe,' which is supposed to be a crater of an extinct volcano, into which the mud has been injected from below. The four principal pipes or mines lie within a radius of a few miles, and are known as Kimberley, De Beers, Dutoitspan, and Bultfontein. The general features of all are alike; in each, the upper part of the soil is yellow, changing, at from fifty to one hundred feet from the surface, to a blue ground of greater density. The diamonds were first discovered in the yellow earth; and when the miners had cleared that out, they imagined they had come to the end of the diamonds; but it was soon found that they were even more abundant in the blue ground; and since that time the mines have been carried down to six and eight hundred feet without any diminution in the yield; on the contrary, the deeper the excavations are carried the better appears the output.

The 'blue,' when excavated, is carried up and spread on the ground, where it lies for months, to be disintegrated by air and water, and is then washed and picked over carefully by hand to find the diamonds. Scattered through the blue earth are not only diamonds, but a great variety of crystals, agates, iron pyrites, and other substances, among which Mr A. A. Anderson, the traveller, believes he found many well-worked flint implements from different depths; and Mr M. E. Barber, as early as 1871, reported the discovery of many worn and perfect flint implements at Colesberg Kopje, in diamondiferous soil from considerable depths, which, if confirmed, would add another to the many puzzles connected with the diamond mines, especially if the volcanic theory is to be maintained. Mr Anderson, however, looks upon the blue ground as occupying the bed of an ancient lake, and that the diamonds, flint implements, fossil wood, and other substances—among which must be included a block of coal, and the ostrich egg alluded to at the beginning of this article—had been brought down by an ancient river, now represented by the Vaal, distant twelve miles or more, the bed of which at various points, and the rocky banks on both sides, are rich in diamonds, the rock of the river-bed being of the same nature as that which encloses the mines. Geologists generally incline to the volcanic theory, but believe that the diamonds are of an earlier date than the upheaval of the mud containing them from an enormous depth. It seems very hard to imagine a volcanic eruption of mud containing all the curious things found in the diamond mines, and especially the undisturbed ant's nest; and when we consider these and the various shapes and characters of the stones, the well-known fact that some have been split, the two halves remaining within a short distance of each other, whilst some have been welded together in an extraordinary manner, the puzzle increases.

The great majority of South African diamonds are amorphous, cloudy, yellowish-looking, soapy-feeling masses, varying in size from a pin's head to a small pebble; but some are perfect octa-

hedrons, white, and very brilliant. These are, of course, the most valuable; and, singular to relate, although these varieties occur in all the mines, yet the general characteristics of the gems, whether dull or brilliant, white or yellow, are sufficiently distinctive to enable an expert to say at a glance from which mine a diamond has come, the same holding good of the Vaal River gems, and of those from Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State.

Here, then, is another puzzle. How is it that gems so apparently similar, having presumably a common origin and embedded in the same matrix, have acquired varying characteristics? Dame Nature is an adept at hiding her secrets even from the prying eyes of scientists, for although the diamond mines of South Africa have been known and worked for more than twenty years, scarcely anything has been added to our knowledge of the gem itself. The ancients called it Adamant, and we still regard it as the hardest of all things; yet it is easily smashed by a well-directed blow, can be cut in flakes by the dishonest jeweller, and is often found so cracked and flawed as to crumble to pieces untouched; nevertheless, the splinters will pierce the hardest rock, and even when reduced to the finest powder, will cut and polish all other gems.

Until the discovery of the South African mines, all diamonds came from India and Brazil; but it was of course the Indian mines which supplied the Old World; and, strange as it may seem, to our belief in the superiority of modern craftsmen, the jewellers of ancient India, and possibly of Rome also, had discovered the art of engraving and even of piercing the diamond, an art which our modern jewellers find most difficult.

Whatever may be the origin of the diamond, we have proof positive that this world of ours does not possess the monopoly of the lordly gem, for it has been found embedded in a meteorite coming from who can say what distant or disrupted world? Thus widely does Nature scatter her precious things; and we, who fondly believe she has favoured our little world above others, are informed by this messenger from space, that the things we covet are sown broadcast where, now at all events, there are no hands to delve for them and no eyes to revel in their beauty. Thousands, perhaps millions of years, the diamond has been in existence, yet its origin is still a mystery. Pure carbon, chemists call it, but in what alembic it is distilled they know not. Embedded in mud, it remains undefiled; yet sometimes it will be found tinted by some chemical process so as to become pink, blue, yellow, and even black; but it always remains a diamond, not to be confounded with the commoner crystals which often bear it company. In the Vaal River diggings it would seem to have a constant companion in a curiously streaked pebble, known as the 'bundboom,' which, when a digger finds, he knows that diamonds are near. In these diggings the gems are not found in 'blue' ground, as at Kimberley, but sometimes at a depth of from twenty to seventy feet in yellow ground, and under immense boulders, although often in shallow beds of fine red sand or under a hard crust of lime. The puzzle here, again, is to know how all these gems came there. In this case there is no question of upheaval from an unknown depth;

they would appear to be water-borne, and the mountains of the Drakensberg, from which the river takes its rise, might naturally be looked upon as their original home; but hitherto none have been found near the source of the river, and none beyond a certain point of its course, although they may be unearthed for a distance of seventy miles along its banks; and almost invariably, if found at one spot, they may be looked for immediately opposite on the other side of the river; so that geologists incline to the belief that they have been formed *in situ*—but how, when, and by what process, remain among the unsolved problems of science.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER III.

AMBROSE BURDON arrived in England in the middle of September, made his headquarters at a quiet boarding-house in one of the squares off Holborn, and at once hastened to call upon his cousin Ruth. The girl was astonished to find him in good spirits; and as he made no allusion to the events which had necessitated his return home, of course she did not touch upon the subject. Ruth and her aunts were delighted with him, for men of the world rarely broke in upon the solitude of their humble North London home, and Ambrose Burdon could play an agreeable, sociable part as well as any man, when he chose. As cigars were necessities of Burdon's life, and as Ruth's aunts abominated the scent of the weed, he and Ruth went out for a stroll together, and after an hour, during which time her cousin spoke pathetically of the bad luck which had overtaken him, and heartily of the good luck which had befallen her, she arrived at the conclusion that next to her own Jack, her cousin Ambrose was the nicest of men.

As for his resemblance to Felling, in the uncertain light of fading day, it was absolutely ridiculous, and more than once she had to look hard at him to persuade herself that it was he, and not Jack, who was walking beside her. That evening she went to meet Jack with her cousin. The greeting between the two men was hearty in the extreme; and at the grave risk of mortally offending her rigid aunts, Ruth dined with them at a fashionable West End restaurant, and only parted with them at her door as the clocks were striking midnight.

The two men walked home together; and the next evening Jack Felling told Ruth that all his original prejudice against Burdon was dispelled, and that he was really a first-rate fellow.

In a week's time Burdon came before the Directors of the Pacific Bank. The meeting was a long one. Burdon minutely explained all the circumstances connected with the Comptroller's defalcations, and made out an excellent case for himself; but an example had to be made in the interests of the shareholders, and Ambrose Burdon received the intimation that six months' salary would be paid him, and that he henceforth ceased to be an officer of the bank. He bowed, and left the room.

September gave way to October, October waned into November. During this time the intercourse

between Ruth Tunstall, Jack Felling, and Ambrose Burdon was constant. They made excursions together; they visited places of public amusement together, and they frequently dined together. Jack Felling began to entertain so sincere a regard for Burdon, that he hardly regarded him as an intruder upon the sacred privacy of love-making, and Burdon had tact enough to know at once when three was no company, and never spoiled the evening tête-à-tête which the lovers still enjoyed.

It was now no secret that Ruth was an heiress, and so her engagement to Jack Felling was no longer withheld from the knowledge of her aunts; and in the bank it was known that at the New Year the headship of the Open Bill Department would be vacant. The marriage was arranged to take place in March; and already the young couple, always assisted by Ambrose Burdon, had plunged into the difficult and disappointing work of house-choosing. Indeed, Ambrose Burdon helped Ruth even more than did Jack, for his time was his own, and Jack of course was tied to the City, except upon Saturday afternoons. So little of a trouble did Burdon make of what had happened to him, that it was agreed that he must have saved and made money during his service in the East. At any rate, he said nothing about seeking for fresh employment: he dressed well, smoked good cigars, made free use of hansoms, and in five cases out of six insisted upon being the host at the little dinners which the trio enjoyed together. All this he could easily do upon the six months' salary awarded him by the bank; but Ambrose Burdon was not the man to take no thought for the morrow.

So all went on smoothly and smilingly until the third week in November. Then the sunshine was blotted by a great and terrible cloud. Upon arrival at his lodgings one afternoon, Jack Felling found a telegram awaiting him. He tore it open, and read that Ruth had suddenly been seized with the symptoms of what was called influenza. He immediately hurried off to Dalston. The aunts met him with grave faces, and told him that although there were certain symptoms of the prevalent epidemic, such as the external feverishness and the internal chilliness, Ruth did not complain of the other symptoms usually present, but of a sharp, biting pain inside, which was quite foreign to the common malady. Moreover, she had been seized quite suddenly, and without any premonitory cold in the head.

Jack waited until the doctor came, and with him Ambrose Burdon. Jack had an unaccountable dislike and distrust of medical men, and when Dr Soutter would say nothing and had no opinion to offer, growled that it was because he knew nothing about it.

'Do you mean to say, doctor,' said the young man, 'that you have no name to give to this attack?'

'I do mean to say so,' replied the doctor. 'All I can say is that there are grave symptoms which I cannot account for, and that unless they disappear before my treatment, I must call in a second opinion to share the responsibility of a case the like of which I have never known during an experience of thirty years.'

The next day there was no marked increase of the illness, but the symptoms for which the

doctor could not account remained. Poor Ruth suffered continual pain; but she bore it as often the most fragile of women can bear pain, her chief concern being for Jack, whose name was constantly on her lips.

On the third day she was, if not worse, at any rate so much the same that it was decided to call in a second opinion. The new doctor endorsed what Soutter had said, and was utterly at a loss to account for the particular symptoms which were giving the patient so much trouble. Accidental poisoning was suggested; but the stomach pump and the usual tests failed to reveal the smallest trace of poison; and Ruth was accustomed to live so simply, that she could describe exactly what she had eaten and drunk for a week previously.

At the end of seven days she had wasted to but a shadow of her former self. The young men were constantly in attendance, Ambrose Burdon by day, Jack Felling by night, vying with each other in their devotion to the poor girl; and the Eastern acquaintances of the ex-bank Manager would have almost doubted their senses could they have seen with what tact and readiness the hard, unsympathetic man of business settled to the work of the sick-room. It was he who brought the daintiest flowers and the most tempting fruit. It was he who relieved the nurse, who went for the doctor, who performed errands, and who spoke words of comfort to the poor, frightened aunts, and lightened their sinking hearts with his quiet, cheerful talk.

'Old fellow,' said Jack Felling to him one evening, 'I'll never forget this kindness of yours; and if it should please God to spare my poor darling to me, our home shall be yours whenever you please.'

'Don't talk of thanks,' replied Burdon; 'but go out for a spin, or you'll break down. I'll stop here till you come back.' So Jack Felling, instead of relieving Burdon, went out, sorely against his will, and only in obedience to the conviction that seven nights' consecutive watching was beginning to tell upon him, and that the news of a break-down on his part would add to Ruth's trouble. He walked straight away for the old trysting-place at the City churchyard. It was getting dusk when he started, and by the time he reached Cannon Street it was almost dark. He turned down into the quiet of Upper Thames Street, and was on the point of ascending the steps leading up to the garden, when he felt a light touch on his arm. Turning round, he beheld a squat little figure, which at first seemed to be all hat and greatcoat.

'Well, my man,' he said, 'what is it?'

'Good-evening, sir; I welly glad to see you,' was the reply.

'I don't know who you are,' said Jack. 'What do you want?'

'You no sabby my!' exclaimed the little man, and, turning his face towards the gas-lamp, showed the grinning features of an unmistakable Chinaman. 'Now you sabby my!—you sabby Ah Why—and you sabby welly well that Led-hot Needle!'

'Ah Why!—Led-hot Needle! What the deuce are you jabbering about?'

'Maskee, sir, maskee! Ah Why sabby you, if you no sabby Ah Why,' said the Chinaman.

In a moment it flashed across Jack's mind that he was being mistaken for Ambrose Burdon, and that this man could be no other than the defaulting Comprador after whom such fruitless search had been made. He was on the point of discovering himself to Ah Why, when it occurred to him that this Mr Ah Why seemed to be upon extraordinarily familiar terms with one whom he had caused to be turned out of the bank's service; that he was hardly playing the part of a fugitive from justice in general, and from an injured man in particular, and that he must be in London with some object.

So he determined to dissemble for a while. 'Oh! You're Ah Why the Comprador!' he said. 'Well! what on earth are you doing in London?'

'I wantchee see you, sir,' replied the Chinaman. 'That police mens have makee hunt me all sides—Hong-kong, Singapore, Penang—no side be long safe. I read that money offered for me by the bank all sides. Then I go that Manila side: I makee lose allo my money, and I come to England as cook's mate in a ship.'

'Serve you right! And now I suppose you want me to help you?'

'Yes, sir. You 'member that Led-hot Needle?'

'What?'

'That Led-hot Needle.'

'What do you mean? Speak plainly. What the dickens do I know about a Led-hot Needle?'

'Ah! I tink you no wantchee 'member it, sir—you no wantchee 'member it;' here he sank his voice to a whisper. 'Pelaps that Led-hot Needle have makee you lich man, and you no likee 'member it.'

There was an almost diabolical twinkle in the bead-like eyes of the Chinaman as he said this. Jack was roughly puzzled; but from what he could make of a language to which he was unaccustomed, it seemed to him that there had been some sort of private understanding between Ambrose Burdon and his Comprador. So he resolved to keep on his mask.

'Really, Ah Why,' he said, 'my memory must have been affected by that affair at the bank. What did I want this Red-hot Needle for? I quite forget.'

'Hush!' said the Chinaman fearfully. 'Man no talkee about it loud. That day when you makee find out about the forged cheques, you talkee my: "Ah Why, you sabby one thing can makee my lich man. I mean that Led-hot Needle. Supposee you get my that Led-hot Needle, I let you get away that China side before that policeman catchee you." Now you 'member?'

'Yes, yes; now I remember!' replied Jack eagerly. 'Well?'

'Well, I give you one pieceny chit to my cousin, Dr Quang Ti, and he give you that Led-hot Needle, and now I can secure you be long lich man.'

'That fool Burdon's been dabbling in charmas, that's evident,' thought Jack. Then he said aloud: 'Well, I can't say that I am a rich man.'

'No!' exclaimed Ah Why. 'Pelaps you not makee usee it all light. I talkee you, Mr Burdon, that Led-hot Needle never miss. Some time it take one moon, sometime two moon, sometime tlee moon—but it never miss.'

'Then how is it you are not rich?' asked Jack.

'Oh! that belong other thing,' replied Ah Why. 'Chinaman no makee usee welly often. Chinaman dare not. Beside, I have no pieceny man or woman to makee my lich. Supposee I have one pieceny welly lich uncle, and he can makee my lich, and he no makee, then pelaps'—

'Well,' said Jack, 'here's half-a-sovereign for you. Where can I find you if I want you?'

'Sailor-man Home, Well Street,' replied Ah Why. 'Tank you, sir, welly much. I hope I see you again.' So saying he saluted, and disappeared in the darkness.

It would be difficult to describe the state of mind in which Jack found himself after this interview with the ex-Comprador of the Pacific Bank; for, from what the latter had said in the fullness of his belief that he was talking to his late Manager, it was clear to Jack Felling that this man, Ambrose Burdon, who had won his heart by his attention to poor Ruth, had been criminally connected with the robbery. The theory he patched together as he walked on through the dark streets was this: He knew Ambrose Burdon to be a paradox—a keen, clever business man, and yet superstitious to an unusual degree in a practical age. It was clear that he had lost money, probably through speculations in which he and the Comprador had worked together—a by no means uncommon kind of partnership in the Far East. Matters must have come to a desperate pass, and an arrangement had evidently been made of mutual advantage to both parties: the Manager to screen the Comprador from the consequences of his peculations; the Comprador to put the Englishman in possession of the means of becoming rich—means veiled under the mystic name of the Red-hot Needle.

Of the nature of this strangely titled key to wealth Jack Felling of course could form no idea. He scouted as ridiculous and impossible the notion of a century-end business man, even if he was superstitious in such matters as sitting down thirteen to table, passing under ladders, crossing knives, spilling salt, and so forth, believing in the magic influence of anything like the Philosopher's Stone; but he saw in the name of Red-hot Needle the symbol of a power, and, from the hushed way in which Ah Why spoke of it, a terrible power. Jack Felling, who was brought constantly in contact with men who had passed long years in China, of course had picked up a large fund of various information concerning that country, and about one subject in particular, the Secret Societies, he was well conversant. Now, it struck him that, in a desperate plight, Ambrose Burdon might have put himself in communication, through Ah Why, with one of these societies, the chief object of which was to levy blackmail on the rich, and that the talisman, or passkey, had been this so-called Red-hot Needle; and he was supported in his notion that Burdon had done this, and that he had done it with success, by the strangely composed manner in which he had accepted his dismissal from the bank, and by his evidently easy pecuniary position.

So interested and absorbed had Jack Felling become in the extraordinary discoveries of the

evening, that he, for the time being, almost forgot about his poor suffering darling at Dalston; so, pulling himself out of his reverie, he walked sharply to the Broad Street Station. There was a man opposite to Jack in the railway carriage who was reading an evening paper. As he held the sheet so that one side of it was fully displayed, Jack found himself trying to spell out the items of news in the dim light. Suddenly his eyes became riveted on a paragraph headed: 'Strange Affair in Paris. The Chinaman and the Russian General.' So eagerly did he read it, that the owner of the paper, noticing him, asked him if he would like to see it.

Jack stammered out an apology for his rudeness, but declined the offer. He had read in that short paragraph what made him feel sick and faint, what made him fume at each stoppage of the train, what made him leap from the carriage when it was in swift movement at Dalston Station, fall heavily, pick himself up unconscious of bruise or sprain, rush past the ticket collector, and speed as he had never sped for many a day straight to the house of sickness.

That paragraph had given him a clue about the Red-hot Needle.

ARMY BAKERY.

THE provisioning of an Army is, of course, a matter of primary importance, and it is imperative that the arrangements for so doing should be such that, in whatever circumstances the army may be placed, and no matter where it may be located, it may never be without a sufficient supply. A separate branch of the service, the Commissariat Department, is set apart to attend to these arrangements entirely; and with them depends, to a great extent, the efficiency of an army when in the field, as well as its health and comfort when at home. This department is responsible that the supply of provisions both for men and horses is sufficient and regular, and also that these provisions are sound and of good quality; and it may be of interest to know how this is carried out. It is generally known that the soldier is provided with rations to the amount of one pound of bread and three-quarters of a pound of meat per day. We purpose here to treat of the bread alone.

In the first place, it is only at such stations as Aldershot that the bread is made by the Commissariat Department. At out-stations, where the number of troops to be supplied is not great, bread is issued by contract. These contracts are made by the Commissariat with such stipulations as the following: That bread is not to be issued before twenty-four hours or later than thirty-six hours after baking, except the bread for prisons, which is not to be issued before thirty-six hours after baking—in order that the prisoners may have it stale. That the loaves are to weigh two pounds each when issued. Such contracts are made for six months; but they can be broken by giving one month's notice, or, in case of insolvency or bribery, immediately.

When, however, the number of troops in a station is considerable, the bread is made by the Commissariat. In the British army, bread is made entirely from wheat flour, which is much

the best for the purpose, as rye flour—the only other which contains gluten of a sufficiently adhesive nature to allow of the bread rising well—is dark in colour and bitter to the taste. The percentage of gluten varies according to the different kinds of wheat, the red or hard wheat containing considerably more than the soft or white wheat. Gluten is the substance in flour which forms the coating of the cavities in well-risen bread—that is to say, by holding the carbonic acid gas given off from the yeast or other ferment, the gluten causes the bread to rise. Gluten is the muscle-making property of bread, while the starch is the fat-forming portion. The best proportion of gluten for bread-making purposes is found to be from twelve to fifteen per cent.

Samples of every quantity of flour brought in are carefully examined before they are accepted. There are two qualities of flour used in the service: one quality called 'Seconds,' which is used for the ordinary ration bread; and another quality called 'Firsts,' which is used for the bread known as 'Hospital bread.' Hospital flour, or Firsts, should be white in colour; while the ration flour or Seconds has a yellowish tint.

Sometimes the flour brought in is adulterated with alum or copper, which are used to make old or fermented flour appear of good quality. Chalk and plaster of Paris are also sometimes used. The presence of these can be detected by simple chemical tests.

We may now presume that we have a supply of flour of good quality in the bakery, and also a store of malt. At this point the work of the Commissariat bakers usually begins, for, as the process of malt-making is lengthy, it is more convenient and as cheap to get it by contract. The first process is to make the yeast. For this purpose, hops are used, in order to prevent the yeast turning sour. Hops for the purpose of making yeast should be fresh; indeed, it is laid down in the contract that 'they shall be of this or last year's growth.'

The yeast most generally made use of in the service is what is known as 'Patent or Hop Yeast.' Taking one thousand pounds of flour as the amount which is to be made into bread, three gallons of this yeast is required, which is made in the following manner: Three pounds of crushed malt are steeped in soft water and heated up to a temperature of one hundred and seventy degrees in winter, or one hundred and forty-five degrees in summer. It is then well stirred up, covered over, and left to stand for an hour and a half. At the same time two ounces of hops are simmered in a caldron in four and a half gallons of water for an hour and a half at a temperature of two hundred degrees. At the end of this time the fire is withdrawn and the liquor allowed to cool down to one hundred and eighty degrees in winter, or one hundred and fifty-five degrees in summer, when it is strained through a sieve into the malt liquor. The two liquors are then well stirred, covered with a cloth, and left to stand for ten hours. At the end of that time the mixture is strained through a sieve into a clean tub; four ounces of sugar are laid on the sieve, and half a gallon of old yeast is poured through this into the mixture. It is then stirred again,

covered, and left to ferment for ten hours. During fermentation, a brown and white froth forms on the surface, and this should be removed.

Yeast is greatly affected by thunder, which turns it sour. To guard against this, in thundery weather it is covered up well, and iron rods are placed outside the tubs, to conduct away the electricity. If the yeast is affected, one pound of sugar is added to every seven gallons. It is usual when making yeast in thundery weather to add two ounces of ginger, which prevents it from being affected.

The next process is to make what is termed a 'sponge'—that is to say, a certain proportion of the flour to be made into bread is set aside in the trough and the yeast mixed with it. There are three sponges used—the quarter, half, and three-quarter sponges. Taking again one thousand pounds of flour as the amount to be converted into bread, two hundred and fifty, five hundred, or seven hundred and fifty pounds, according to the size of the sponge to be used, are set aside, and the whole three gallons of yeast are mixed with it. The yeast acts quicker upon the small quantity than on the large, and thus small sponges are used in winter, large sponges in summer.

The sponge being mixed, carbonic acid gas begins to form, and raises the sponge until it bursts through it, when it sinks down again. This is termed the 'first drop.' The same process is repeated, and we have the 'second drop.' The sponge is then broken up; nine to fifteen pounds of salt, dissolved in about fifty gallons of water, are added, and the remainder of the flour is gradually kneaded in. After the first kneading, which lasts about half an hour, the dough is left to stand for three or four hours, when it rises or 'gives proof.' It is then beaten down, kneaded again, and left to rise again for an hour. The dough is now taken out of the trough, placed on the moulding-table, cut up, and scaled. Allowance is made for the weight in and after baking, so that a two-pound loaf for issue the next day is scaled at two pounds three and a half ounces. On Saturdays, when baking is done for the following Monday as well as Sunday, the two-pound loaves for issue on Monday are scaled at two pounds five ounces. After scaling, the lumps are moulded, and left on the table for a little while to expand, which they do to about double their size. They are then placed in the oven and baked. When they are sufficiently baked—that is, when the crumb on pressure by the hand will spring back to its original position—they are withdrawn. The two-pound loaves require to be baked about an hour and a quarter. The bread is now carried from the bakehouse and stored in the storehouse. Next day, it is drawn out and placed in Commissariat wagons, in which it is taken round to the various regiments and issued according to the amount required by each regiment. Here, again, it is issued under regimental arrangements to the men; a two-pound loaf between two men for the day.

There are two kinds of ovens used in the Commissariat bakeries—the brick oven and the steam oven. In the first-named oven a fire is

made in communication with the interior. When the temperature within has reached five hundred and sixty degrees, the fire is removed and the bread placed in the oven. Between each batch of bread the heat of the oven has to be raised again. The time required for the first heating is three hours; for the subsequent heatings, one hour. The steam oven is heated from a furnace in rear by means of steam-pipes underneath. The proper temperature for this oven is four hundred and seventy degrees. This oven can be kept at the same temperature always; thus, as soon as one batch of bread is taken out, another one is put in. The time required to heat the oven in the first instance is five hours. The advantage of this oven over the brick one will be readily seen as regards time. But beyond this, the floor of the steam oven being of sheet-iron lasts much longer than the brick floor of the other. Thirdly, it requires less fuel, and consequently entails less expense.

As regards the management of a bakery, the bakers are classified according to the kind of work they do. They are all under the orders of the Master Baker, and work in such a manner and for such a time as may be necessary. The Master Baker superintends in the bakery, keeps an account of the materials expended, and is responsible for the correctness both in weight and quality of things which he receives. It is his duty at once to report any breach of contract. A foreman is in charge of each oven, and is responsible for any bread spoilt in his oven. The bread-store keeper has to keep an account of the bread produced by each foreman, and report to the Master Baker upon any which is burnt or badly baked. He is also responsible for the cleanliness of the bread-store and of the insides of the bread wagons.

JUMPER ADAMS.

'THERE'LL be thunder and blazes in the diggin's when Peaceful Sam comes back an' finds 'is claim jumped,' observed Hairy Tom sagely to the crowd of loafers assembled in the bar of the 'Roaring Buster,' the first and by far the largest of the three public-houses that had sprung up like mushrooms at the recently discovered Merryberg gold-field; and, one and all, the listeners nodded their heads knowingly and agreed with the spokesman.

The first shock of astonishment had given way to a feeling of excitement, which pervaded the whole community, and became so intense that one by one the diggers had abandoned their work and collected in groups to discuss the situation and speculate upon the impending storm. Upon one man only had the general contagion apparently no effect; and yet, strange to say, he alone was the cause of the disturbance. When the others dropped their tools, he continued to hammer serenely away with his pick at the bank of the creek, humming the while a merry tune. No frown of anxiety creased his deep-bronzed brow, and no tremor of nervousness weakened the blows of his tool.

To describe the situation we must go back a little. When gold was first discovered at the Merryberg Fields, a month or two previously,

a 'rush,' in a small way, set in, and diggers from all parts of Queensland quickly congregated upon the scene like vultures round a carcass. In the first batch of arrivals was one Samuel Stoner, a big, hulking bully, with the strength of an ox, and the profanity of a carrier, who, on account of his fighting propensities, was facetiously dubbed 'Peaceful Sam,' a name which ever afterwards clung to him, and by which alone he soon came to be known. Having had some previous experience in prospecting, he was not slow in staking out the likeliest claim on the river and getting to work. Gold there was in his claim without a doubt, although at first he found no nuggets, and he worked at it like a nigger from early morning till late at night; and when he was on the work, there was nobody who could hold a pick with him. After two months of incessant toil, Peaceful Sam had amassed one hundred and sixty ounces of the precious metal. This would yield him something between five and six hundred pounds, quite sufficient to afford him a week's good spree, so a right royal spree he determined to have. Accordingly, he bought a horse, packed up his gold in a canvas bag, which he slung across the pommel of his saddle, and set out for Rockhampton, some sixty miles distant, with the avowed intention of banking his gold and then 'knocking down his cheque'—that is, the cheque would be handed whole to the landlord of some hotel or saloon, who would supply his guest and those whom he cared to treat with liquor until the amount was exhausted—or was supposed to be (which was not always the same thing).

In the meantime, Peaceful Sam had, by means of incessant bullying and the use of the most bloodthirsty threats, constituted himself a sort of 'cock of the walk,' and his name was a terror in the community; so much so, in fact, that upon leaving for Rockhampton, he not only made no provision for preserving the title to his claim, but openly dared anybody to appropriate, or 'jump' it, during his absence.

Upon the tenth day after he had left, a stranger appeared at Merryberg with a pick and shovel and very little else. The new-comer was a wiry but youthful-looking man, slightly below the middle height, whose beardless face made him perhaps appear younger than he really was. At the outside he could not have been more than thirty; but he had a shrewd look in his keen eyes, and a firm cut about the mouth and chin that spoke of indomitable pluck and set determination. He said his name was Adams. In a very business-like manner he proceeded at once to rig up a shanty, and the same night saw him housed beneath his own somewhat frail roof. The next morning he was stirring early, and, pipe in mouth, sauntered leisurely through the diggings. By-and-by he came to Peaceful Sam's vacant claim, and examined it with a critical eye, taking up a handful of soil and sifting it in his palm. Then he turned to the man who was working the next claim and inquired how it was that this one was vacant. The man, who happened to be none other than Hairy Tom, willingly supplied the asked-for information, and further descanted at large upon the character of the late tenant, and the probable treatment anybody would receive who had the hardihood to jump the claim. Other diggers came up and corroborated his statements.

'What's the name o' this 'ere terror?' asked the young man coolly.

'Peaceful Sam.'

'Ain't he got another name?'

'Stoner, I b'lieve,' replied Hairy Tom.

'Well, then,' went on the intrepid Adams, 'when Mister Stoner comes back, 'e can start prospectin' agen. There's gold 'ere, an' Adams is goin' to work it. An' if Peaceful Sam works in this claim agen, 'e works for me.'

At these words the little knot of listeners stared at one another aghast, and then tried to dissuade the young man from carrying out his design. But all their efforts only served to strengthen his determination.

'E'll chaw yer up,' remarked Hairy Tom; 'e's twice as big as you. There ain't a man in the diggin's durst tackle 'im.'

'Then 'e'll find a pretty tough bit to chaw at,' replied Adams nonchalantly.

'Or, mebbe, 'e'll cleave yer skull with 'is shovel,' hazarded another.

To which the doughty Adams quietly responded: 'If 'e don't get 'is own split open first.—Look 'ere, now, mates! I've only got five pounds in the world; but I'll lay that wi' any of yer, even money, that I stick to the claim; an' Peaceful Sam neither chaws me up nor splits my skull open; an' if you'll lay me two to one, I'll jump 'is bloomin' shanty too!'

The latter offer was quickly taken; Stoner's shanty was pointed out to the daring stranger, who at once took possession, after removing his few belongings to it, and then coolly and methodically set to work with pick and shovel in the deserted claim.

Eleven days had already passed since Peaceful Sam's departure to Rockhampton, and he might now be expected back at any hour. Just after sunset, that very night, when the bar of the 'Roaring Buster' was crammed with diggers, all still eagerly discussing the man they now referred to as 'Jumper' Adams, a bullock-wagon drove into the diggings and pulled up at the door of the public-house. At the front of the wagon sat Stoner, looking frightfully seedy and bilious. He had successfully knocked down his cheque, and had returned for another spell of work. As the bully entered the bar, an embarrassed hush fell upon the expectant crowd. Stoner looked from one to another inquiringly, but nobody cared to fire the train. Words of explanation hovered on the tip of many a tongue, but, reckless roughs as they were, they felt a sort of admiration for Jumper Adams's pluck, while at the same time they had no great love for Peaceful Sam, and each man was loth to set the bully at the interloper, although he knew that sooner or later the encounter must come off.

Stoner glanced savagely round, and then seizing a little man who stood near by the shoulder, fiercely demanded, embellishing his request with a few choice ornamental oaths: 'Wot's up? Out wi' it, yer flamin' crow-bait!'

'A stranger's come an' jumped yer claim,' the little man jerked out spasmodically.

Everybody waited breathlessly to hear the first explosion; but for a time everybody was disappointed. Never in all his chequered career had Peaceful Sam received such a staggerer as this. The shock was more than he was prepared

for. The bare idea of anybody daring to jump his claim! He could hardly grasp it, and he reeled back helplessly against the men who stood behind him. He even forgot to swear! The sight of the bully being so taken aback was so novel, that a broad grin appeared upon more than one swarthy visage, and an audible titter arose upon the outskirts of the crowd. Before Stoner could recover his composure, a voice from near the door piped out: 'An' 'e's jumped yer shanty too!'

The second shock was quite as severe as the first had been—if not more so—and for a few seconds Stoner glared vacantly around in silence. It was the ominous calm before the breaking of the storm, and ere any of the loafers volunteered any further intelligence, Peaceful Sam found his tongue and gave vent to a perfect avalanche of expletives. Never once did he falter; and in its way, his effort was a most finished performance.

'Where is the thieving snatcher, an' I'll go an' cut 'is liver out?' he roared passionately, with flashing eyes, bringing down his fist heavily on the counter.

'I seed 'im turnin' inter yer shanty when 'e knocked off work a bit since,' replied one.

Peaceful Sam made for the door, and emerged into the fast gathering night, showering curses around him, while the crowd followed close at his heels to witness the fun, and, if necessary, to prevent Jumper Adams from being killed outright.

Meanwhile, the object of the bully's wrath was peacefully unconscious of what was going on up at the 'Roaring Buster.' As the light began to fail, he had knocked off work for the day, and adjourned to the shanty, where he was now comfortably settled on an empty keg with a billy of tea and a damper before him. Calmly indifferent to the fate that was supposed to be hanging over him, he applied himself with keen appetite to the creature-comforts, and had almost emptied his billy, when the tramp of many feet broke in upon him through the bark walls of his shelter. Above the surging din of the advancing crowd he could distinctly hear the infuriated Stoner's sanguinary threats, and a curious smile played for a moment on Jumper Adams's shrewd features as he paused and listened intently. Then the smile faded, and he resumed his usual nonchalant air as he once more lifted the tin vessel to his lips and drained off the last drops from it. As he put down the empty billy on the cask that did duty for a table, the door of the shanty was burst suddenly open, and Peaceful Sam crossed the threshold, announcing his arrival with a specimen of his most belligerent oratory; while the diggers crowded round the door, hustling each other roughly in their eagerness to obtain a position from which they could watch the issue of events.

Apparently the curses had no effect upon Jumper Adams, for he quietly remained seated on his keg, and did not even take the trouble to raise his head until Stoner had advanced with clenched fist to the middle of the little room. Then—and not until then—did the lesser man, without rising, coolly turn his dark, determined eyes full on the bully, and very calmly and very deliberately he said: 'Sam Stoner, drop it! For close on five years I've followed your trail

from gold-field to gold-field and from rush to rush; from Sandhurst to Ballarat, from Gympie to Charters Towers, and from Canoona to Merryberg. You know what there is atween you and me; and now I've come up with you, you can bet your soul and swag, you don't shake me off.'

Whether it was the speaker's words or the sight of his face that wrought the electrical change in Peaceful Sam's demeanour, the spectators could not determine; but certain it was that the two shocks he had received at the 'Roaring Buster' were mere flea-bites to this. This was a clean knock-down blow, which instantaneously crushed every vestige of fight out of the braggart. His upraised fist fell listlessly by his side, his jaw dropped, and his eyes fairly bulged from his sallow cheeks as he stood for a second or two rooted to the spot before dropping limply on to a log that served for a seat. It was very evident that Jumper Adams stood in no danger either of being 'chawed up' or of having his skull split open. For a few minutes he kept his eyes steadily on the cowed bully; then he turned to the spectators, and with a grim smile of satisfaction on his face, said: 'You can leave us now, mates; there ain't goin' ter be no panternime performance to-night, an' Peaceful Sam an' me 'as a bit o' business to talk over together.'

So the mystified diggers returned to the 'Roaring Buster' to argue upon the inexplicable turn events had taken, leaving the discomfited Stoner and the triumphant Adams to enjoy each other's society undisturbed. What passed that night in the shanty nobody knew; but soon after sunrise the following morning, Peaceful Sam, with a sullen frown on his face, was noticed to be at work in his old claim under the personal supervision of Jumper Adams, who did not forget, by the way, promptly to collect the amount of his wager. What was the nature of the influence that Adams exerted over the former bully—now bully no longer—none of the other diggers could find out, and very soon they gave up trying to. From that day the two worked steadily together, Stoner doing the digging and heavy work, while Adams attended to the washing and lighter jobs. There were no more sprees—no more cheques to be knocked down for Peaceful Sam, for his new master was a strict disciplinarian, and kept the big man's nose diligently to the grindstone. Early and late, week in and week out, the thud of the pick and the creak of the cradle could be heard issuing from Adams's claim, and regularly twice a month a consignment of gold was sent down to the bank at Rockhampton.

Soon it began to be whispered about the diggings that some big nuggets had been found in Adams's claim; but how far the rumour was correct, Merryberg never knew, for the proprietor was singularly close upon business matters. Still, it was generally understood that he was making money fast, though how quickly was entirely a matter of conjecture. Perhaps Hairy Tom, who worked the adjoining claim, was the most competent of the outsiders to form an opinion, for he himself was doing remarkably well, although he was working single-handed, and his claim was, he judged, vastly inferior to his neighbour's.

As for Peaceful Sam, he at first submitted to the new arrangement with a very bad grace, and it was the unanimous opinion of the frequen-

ters of the 'Roaring Buster' that, had his task-master's hold upon him—whatever it was—been less powerful, he would speedily have kicked over the traces. By-and-by his sulky demeanour gave way to an air of hopeless resignation, which lasted for twelve months or so. At the end of that time he began to have occasional intervals of dismal cheerfulness, and once he was heard to laugh. It was a depressing, mournful sort of a laugh, it is true; yet it was a laugh, and Merryberg marvelled. But Peaceful Sam's spirit was broken. He had lost that fluency of language that had at one time been the admiration of all who heard him, and his fame as a rowdy had long since sunk into oblivion.

But Jumper Adams never changed. He remained the same shrewd, level-headed fellow he was the first day he appeared upon the scene right up to the very day upon which he suddenly left Merryberg, dragging Peaceful Sam with him like a chained hound. Nobody but himself—and, perhaps, Stoner—was aware of his intentions; and a few hours afterwards the news that he had sold his claim and left Merryberg for good came like a thunder-clap upon the diggings.

After another year of digging, and 'cradling,' and 'panning-off,' the gold in Hairy Tom's claim suddenly gave out, and he, too, left Merryberg. Now Hairy Tom was by no means the unmitigated fool that the Australian gold-seeker generally develops into. Occasionally he had varied the tedium of constant digging with a few days' spree; but he had never systematically knocked down his cheque whenever he had a hundred or two to his credit, and thus it happened that at the time his claim was played out he had a considerable balance lying in the bank at Rockhampton. With this he determined to quit the gold-fields and settle down. Of course his first thoughts turned to the Old Contry, and nothing would do but he must come to England. Accordingly, he made his arrangements. A few weeks later the good ship *Calabar* landed him at Plymouth, and in due time the mail-train deposited him at Paddington.

In the course of his sight-seeing rambles about the metropolis he wandered as far as Rotten Row one bright afternoon in May, and stood watching the endless stream of gay equipages that flowed before him, bearing along the rank and fashion of London. He had not stood many minutes when his eyes suddenly became riveted upon a well-appointed landau, drawn by a pair of spirited grays, which was approaching. It was not the vehicle itself that attracted his attention, neither was it the well-matched grays. He had eyes only for the figure of a big man with a white hat, a light dust-coat, and a flaming scarlet tie, who occupied the greater portion of the principal seat—a man with the features of Peaceful Sam.

'Say, parly,' he began, familiarly digging a gentleman who stood near in the ribs, 'can you tell me whose that kerridge is?'

'The one with the grays?' returned the gentleman good-humouredly.

'Yes.'

'That is Mr Stoner's, the wealthy Australian—or perhaps I ought to say Mrs Stoner's.'

'Mrs Stoner's!' repeated Hairy Tom.

'Yes—the lady in it.'

The vehicle being now quite close to where he

stood, Hairy Tom turned his attention to the second and only other occupant of it, whom he had not previously noticed, being too intent upon gazing at Peaceful Sam's familiar face. There was something about the lady which seemed strangely familiar to him, yet it did not at first occur to him where he had seen her before. He thought hard for a moment. Then a gleam of the truth broke in upon him, and he gave vent to a long low whistle as the carriage passed and disappeared in the crowd.

'You have seen Mrs Stoner before, eh?' queried the gentleman, watching him with an amused smile.

'Seed 'er afore?' he replied; 'well—yes, only the last time I seed 'er they didn't call 'er Mrs Stoner—she was Jumper Adams.'

GREEK-FIRE.

THE comparatively modern invention of gunpowder has blown many of the appliances of ancient warfare from the battlefield, and among the discarded munitions Greek-fire takes a prominent place. A very high antiquity has been claimed for its invention, the period of the early wars between the Greeks and the Romans being pointed out by some writers as the true era of its discovery; but there are no authentic records of the use of the compound prior to the sieges of Constantinople in the seventh and eighth centuries, although some indications given by certain Assyrian bas-reliefs point to the use of liquid fire as a projectile at a period long antecedent to the Christian era. One of the early Fathers of the Church, too, gives instructions for the manufacture of a combustible substance, the main ingredients of which were resin, pitch, turpentine, sulphur, and the juice of the plant 'all-heal.'

It seems, however, that the true Greek-fire was invented in the year 678 by Callinicus, an architect of Heliopolis, in Syria, and that he afterwards deserted from the Calif and carried his secret and the art of its use to Constantinople, where for several centuries the method of compounding the fire was preserved, according to Gibbon, 'as the palladium of the state; the galleys and artillery might occasionally be lent to the allies of Rome, but the composition of the Greek-fire was concealed with the most jealous scruple, and the terror of the enemy was increased and prolonged by their ignorance and fright.' The secret was so carefully kept by the Eastern emperors that Constantine even devised misleading answers to be returned to any too inquisitive barbarian who might be tempted to ask inconvenient questions. 'They should be told that the mystery of the Greek-fire was revealed by an angel to the first and greatest of the Constantines, with the sacred injunction that this gift of Heaven—this peculiar blessing of the Romans, should never be communicated to any foreign nation; that the prince and the subject were alike bound to religious silence, under the temporal and spiritual penalties of treason and sacrilege; and that the infamous attempt would provoke the sudden and supernatural vengeance of the God of the Christians.' The historian adds that the secret was confined for above four hundred years to the Romans of the East, and that at the end of the eleventh century the Pisans, to whom every sea and every art were

familiar, suffered the effects, without understanding the composition of Greek-fire.

However true it may be that the secret was successfully preserved from the Romans of the Western Empire, it is certain that the Saracens contrived to obtain possession of the art of manufacturing this important munition of mediæval warfare at least as early as the commencement of the tenth century. We read that, at the siege of Thessalonica, which took place in 904, the Saracens cast liquid fire by means of tubes upon the wooden fortifications of the city, and by thus destroying the defences succeeded in capturing the town. The black clays of Media and Persia probably supplied these pioneers of the faith of Islam with the principal constituents of the compound used.

The celebrated Englishman, Friar Bacon, who lived so many years in advance of his generation, and who is credited with several discoveries which have proved of inestimable value to succeeding ages, is supposed to have concealed his real knowledge of the composition of Greek-fire under the mask of an assumed ignorance, and to have returned anagrammatic answers to questions addressed to him upon the subject. He gives sulphur and saltpetre as two of the components of Greek-fire, and it is stated that a third is to be detected in the logogryph, 'Laru vopo vir Can utriel.' The words 'urit voraciter' can be extracted from the anagram with little difficulty, but the interpretation of the remaining portion has baffled ingenuity.

Giambattista Porta says: 'Greek-fire is made by boiling willow-charcoal, salt, ardent aqua vita, sulphur, pitch, frankincense, threads of soft Ethiopian wool, and camphor.' The Princess Anna, daughter and historian of the Emperor Alexis Comnenus, states that Greek-fire was compounded of sulphur, resin, and oil. It has, however, been maintained by many writers, both ancient and modern, that naphtha or liquid bitumen was the principal ingredient of the fire. It is possible, therefore, that the oil mentioned by Anna Comnena, whose ample opportunities of obtaining reliable information must have insured her from the possibility of a mistake, was actually naphtha, and not one of the animal or vegetable oils then used for illuminating purposes, especially as the use of naphtha in lamps is a practice of very ancient date. 'Naphtha,' writes Gibbon, 'was mingled, I know not in what proportions, with sulphur, and with the pitch that is extracted from evergreen firs—that is, resin—in forming Greek-fire.'

According to the author of *L'Esprit des Croisades*, the fire was compounded of the gum of the fir, pine, and other resinous trees, with the addition of brimstone and naphtha and other bituminous substances. Fanciful materials were sometimes included in its composition by those ignorant of its real nature. The water of a particular but unnamed fountain in the East, and duck's grease, are among these imaginary ingredients.

The liquid was used in various ways in the warfare of the times. Sometimes it was poured from ladders or caldrons upon the besiegers, or, enclosed in vessels of some brittle substance, was thrown into the ranks of the enemy by means of machines devised for the purpose. But frequently

the heavy ballista and other military engines used in early times for throwing missiles into besieged cities were pressed into service for scattering this destructive compound in large quantities—masses of the size of a barrel being sometimes propelled. 'It was either,' says the writer already quoted, 'poured from the ramparts in large boilers, or launched in red-hot balls of stone and iron, or darted in arrows and javelins, twisted round with flax and tow which had deeply imbibed the inflammable oil.' But usually it was vomited forth through long copper tubes from the mouths of fantastic figures, shaped to resemble the heads and jaws of savage animals, and set in the prows of ships, and by means of suitable engines it could be propelled to a considerable distance.

As long as Greek-fire was kept from the air it could be stored with little danger; but when poured out, it ignited with loud explosions, and vast volumes of thick black smoke issued from it. Owing to its viscid nature, it adhered to whatever it touched, and burned with an intense flame, which water not only failed to quench, but appeared to endow with more intense fury. Sea-water is particularly mentioned as intensifying its inflammability, and causing it to burn with doubled energy. It could only be put out by the use of large quantities of sand, vinegar, or earth, or by a very singular mixture, and one not likely to be met with.

The Saracens encountered the onslaughts of the crusading hosts by a free use of Greek-fire. The knights little feared the arrows and scimitars of their infidel opponents, but they retired aghast at the unearthly noise and hideous aspect of the mysterious enemy, of which we read in the *Memoirs of Joinville* that 'it came flying through the air like a long-tailed winged dragon, about the thickness of a hog'shead, with the report of thunder and the velocity of lightning; and the darkness of the night was dispelled by this deadly illumination.'

Greek-fire has been known under various names in different times and countries. Procopius calls it 'Meden's oil.' Cinnamus, who wrote in the twelfth century, mentions it under the name of 'Median fire.' The Romans knew it as 'oleum incendiarum.' French writers refer to it as 'feu grégeois;' and the Chinese call it 'oil of cruel fire.' It has also been spoken of as 'wild-fire,' 'maritime fire,' 'wet-fire,' and 'fire-rain.'

In the year 1755 two Frenchmen, Gaubert and Dupré, are reported to have rediscovered the art of manufacturing Greek-fire; but as the Government prohibited them from making the nature of the composition known, their secret appears to have died with them. Niepce experimented in more recent times, and found through his investigations that a mixture of benzol and potassium in the proportion of six hundred to one exhibited many of the properties of the ancient composition.

Greek-fire was undoubtedly the most formidable material of war known to the middle ages, though its employment would seem to have been confined to Eastern Europe and Asia Minor; but after the discovery of gunpowder we hear little of its use as an engine of destruction, and the best authorities agree that Greek-fire is unsuited for employment in modern warfare. An attempt, indeed, was made in the American Civil War to revive its

use, and fire-shells, containing saltpetre, sulphur, coal-tar, and naphtha, were thrown, by means of cannon, into Charleston by General Gilmore from a distance of four miles, but it appears very improbable that 'the most villainous compound ever used in war,' as the disgusted Confederate, Beauregard, called it, will ever again be employed as a destructive agent.

BRONZE AGE TRUMPETS.

In the Danish National Museum, the trumpets from the Bronze Age have always attracted particular attention on account of their size, graceful shape, and tasteful ornamentation. They have only been found in morasses (peat-bogs), never in mounds; and, what has specially struck antiquaries, always in pairs. It has therefore been considered probable that the trumpets, for the purposes of harmony, had been used in pairs, which may also have been the case with the six trumpets (three pairs) which were found at the beginning of the century in a bog near Hillerød, island of Zealand, Denmark. They were tried at that time, just to prove that instruments many thousands of years old could give out sounds; and this was thought sufficient. Connoisseurs examined them carefully all over, their casting, ornamentation, the position of their finding, and in every way which could interest an antiquary. A musician, Dr A. Hammerich, took up the matter, and instituted a number of experiments by getting clever performers to play on them. The shape of the mouthpiece—the taper form, so carefully preserved throughout—the smooth inside—the dimensions of the tube, which have so much influence on the intonation—all prove a considerable knowledge of acoustics on the part of the makers, and that to get lower tones they had to increase the size of the instruments. As the trumpets must be over two thousand years old, this is a remarkable contribution to the history of music; and that such ancient instruments can to-day be used in their original compass, throws a characteristic light over our Bronze Age, speaking highly for the intellectual culture which must have existed during that age in Denmark.

WAITING.

BELoved, in some dewy summer night,
Across the sapphire sea, the dusky sands,
Across the wind-fanned, ripening meadow-lands,
Fair June will come in shining robes bedight.
The amorous East will flush and flame with light
To welcome her. Set in the gleaming strands
Of her gold hair are roses: in her hands
She holdeth glistening lilies, cool and white.
Oh, warmer than the welcome the dawn skies
Give rose-crowned June, my welcoming shall be
For thee when thou wilt come. Dear love, I wait
In darkness weird, and cold, and desolate;
Yearning for that glad hour when I shall see
Thy sweet face with its love-lit, downcast eyes.

ALICE FURLONG.

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in Woolmer. As late as White's time, the deer-herds of Alice Holt Forest existed; at the present time, however, they have all vanished—when and how, is not to be ascertained.

It is surprising to observe how small an area of country it was to which White confined his observations on birds and animals, though this, indeed, adds to the thoroughness of his work. His Letters are confessedly on the natural history and antiquities of his own parish, and he rarely mentions places beyond its boundaries. He could not have been unacquainted, however, with Frensham Pond, though he only mentions it casually; for this—Selborne itself alone excepted—is the most interesting locality of the neighbourhood. One comes suddenly upon the pond, and at a first visit, a start of astonishment is unavoidable when its white sandy shores flash into one's view at a certain spot in the road. An open lake of over a hundred acres in extent, with banks of white sand, is the last thing one might expect to find in this corner of the world; ponds there are in plenty, some natural, others artificial, but a lake—well, we are thankful for it, since it adds another charm to an already charming district.

Any account of White's country would be incomplete without some reference to the heath-fires. Much of the pleasure to be gathered from a stay there is got upon the open, breezy, healthy heaths, that form such a peculiar feature of the scenery. Stretching for miles after mile, they offer an easy path to the pedestrian, since between the furze the grass grows soft and springy, and the wind that plays over them refreshes him even on the warmest day of summer. It is in early spring that the furze, dried by the east winds, burns with the greatest readiness, and at that time one may stand at some elevated spot and see the commons blazing in half-a-dozen different places. Says White in his seventh letter to Pennant: 'Though (by statute 4 and 5 W. and Mary, cap. 23) "to burn on any waste between Candlemas and Midsummer any grig, ling, heath, and furze, goss, or fern, is punishable with whipping and confinement in the House of Correction;" yet in this forest [Woolmer], about March or April, according to the dryness of the season, such vast heath-fires are lighted up that they often get to a masterless head, and, catching the hedges, have sometimes been communicated to the underwoods, woods, and coppices, where great damage has ensued.'

As in his day, so in ours; spring after spring, these fires are lighted, and such a degree of expertness have the people arrived at by long practice, that the owner of ruined plantations can never lay his hand upon the culprits. The reason given for these foolish conflagrations is that, when the old furze has been removed, young grass will spring in its stead, and afford pasturage for the commoners' cattle; but it more frequently happens that the devastation is so complete that several seasons elapse before the grass makes its appearance. A personal experience of the writer's may help to show the destruction thus wantonly set on foot. He was crossing at about eleven o'clock, one moonlight night in April, over the common known as Bowdon, to reach his inn. He had arrived at the highest point of the heath, where the road slopes rapidly

downward, when, suddenly, there shot up among the furze not a dozen yards from him a red tongue of fire. In a few seconds he was upon the scene; and though so short an interval had elapsed, no sign of the perpetrator of the outrage was to be seen; within this short space of time, the furze, that was as dry as tinder by reason of the rainless, windy weather, was spreading the flames in all directions. There was nothing to be done but to watch the fire as it rapidly extended, gathering strength at every yard, demolishing the tough gorse as if it were so much tissue-paper, and sending up to the clear heavens volumes of short-lived sparks and dense smoke. And in the morning, what a scene of desolation met the eye! Some thirty acres of the more beautiful portion of the heath lay reduced to ashes, in which only the charred stumps of the gorse stood erect. It is no wonder the authorities of olden days made the offence punishable with whipping and confinement.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXII.—THE LAST OF UNCLE HARRY.

THE shock of the sudden and unlooked-for announcement of Uncle Harry's probable death smote roughly upon Isabel, and upon all; and the worst was that no one could do anything but wait with painful expectation for further news.

'Poor, lonely Uncle Harry!' Isabel could not refrain from exclaiming that night to her father. 'To have wandered alone all his days with his life in his hand among strange, wild people, and now to lose it in his own country, and to be still alone! Oh, but the bitterest thought to me, father, is that he and you never met in reconciliation! He had intended that you should, I am certain; but it has been decreed otherwise!'

'Sad, sad!' said her father. 'All things were shadows to him except those which moved his affections! "Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue!"'

That was all; but he was manifestly much affected. He stroked his brow and twitched his fingers; and when he had withdrawn for the night, he tramped his bedroom floor for hours.

Isabel was anxious about him; for she perceived he was slipping into one of his nervous conditions, in which it was his habit to flee for relief to his deadly drug. Yet she must go to school next day. Before she went, she sent for Doughty, and earnestly impressed on him the necessity of being assiduous in his watchfulness over his chief.

'Miss Raynor,' said he, 'what man can do, short of absolute violence, I will do; be assured.'

Yet, when she returned from school, her father was gone, and Doughty too! There was, however, a pencil scrawl from Doughty: 'He would not be detained by any consideration I could urge. So I have gone with him. Do not blame me: I am a miserable being.—A. D.' To add to the overwhelming pain of that discovery, there was a telegram from her uncle Suffield: 'He was gone before I reached here. I am told the last word on his lips was "Isabel."—Will write.' Isabel took that to mean that Uncle Harry meant to

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convey his forgiveness to his brother. And why was his brother not there to receive it? She bowed her head on her hands and wept tears of bitter disappointment and humiliation. She knew herself well enough to perceive that if her father frequently behaved in this cowardly manner—ran away from the slightest touch of pain—then her patience would give out, and she would revolt against him. She feared that the feeling of revolt might suddenly rise within her to overturn and destroy all her careful plans for her father's salvation, and she cried through her tears: 'Don't let that happen! Oh, don't let that happen!'

Presently she dried her tears, and rose and bathed her eyes, and went out with all speed to ask Alan Ainsworth to help her. Like a true knight, he did not linger to get explanations, nor even to receive a kind word, but sprang away to perform her bidding. Three or four hours later the erring father arrived home again in a cab with Doughty. Ainsworth had sent them home thus after leaving them in the Strand, with an apology to Miss Raynor for not accompanying them all the way, because he had a theatrical performance to attend. Then Isabel blamed herself for hurrying him off on her errand when he had business of his own so imminent.

'Oh, father, father!' she said to her father when they were alone, 'could you not at such a time have endured to stay at home, when we were expecting to hear about Uncle Harry at any hour?—Read that.' And she handed him Uncle Suffield's telegram; and that was all the reproach she gave him.

'The bitterness of death is past for him!' said he, with that loose-lipped and limp manner peculiar to him at such a time. 'There remains for me the bitterness of life!'

Next morning came the promised letter from Uncle Suffield, giving such details as the reader knows—that there had been complications in Uncle Harry's case, that he had not spoken from the moment he had been struck down, save near the end, when he had murmured 'Isabel,' and signified that a book in which he had written many things was to be given to her.

'So you see, my dear,' wrote Mr Suffield, 'he had you in his thoughts at death, as I know he had you in his thoughts in life. He lay there looking very peaceful, as I saw him. I don't think he had let the sun go down upon his wrath: you know what I mean. Poor Harry! I could have better missed a better man. But he was a good man, was Harry, though he was obstinate and cranky. Yet he was thoughtful for all, as they will discover—and at the very last, thoughtful particularly of his faithful black servant. I am arranging for his burial at his native place in Yorkshire. It will be three days hence, on the 23d, and I think you ought to bring your father, who, I hope, is keeping well under your care, my dear.—I think that is all I need say at present.'

When the proposal that he should attend the funeral of his brother was presented to him, John Raynor shied a bit, as a nervous horse shies at its own shadow. 'I have not,' said he to his daughter, 'and never had, any dread of death merely as death! It's all the thoughts and memories and regrets that flap round it like hungry vultures that make it horrible and distracting. I can do

Harry no good by going to see his coffin put into the ground—our funeral arrangements are of the most gloomy and revolting kind—I can do him no good, and I can only give myself pain.—Besides, my dear, there is the great expense of so long a journey.'

'But just think, father,' urged Isabel. 'These things you say are quite true. But is it not in a proper sense unmannerly and inhuman to seek to live so much outside the common feelings and customs of average humanity? You can do no good to the dead by going, but you can please the living. If you do not go, it will be thought that you cherish resentment against your brother; and I am sure you don't do that.'

'I don't! I don't!' answered her father. 'Poor Harry!'

'Then, father dear, brace up your feelings to go. I'll go with you, of course, and it probably will not be so painful an experience after all.'

So Mr Raynor yielded, and went.

It was a beautiful day when Harry Raynor was laid in the little churchyard of his native village. The church stood high on a breezy upland, with its head set to look away over wold and sea towards the gorgeous and mysterious East, straining its eyes, as it were, to catch a glimpse of those distant lands where its latest dead had spent the best years of his life. It was always cool and fresh up there. The bent of the few trees showed how the wild north-easter ranged at will in winter, and the lean and ruffled clover and corn how even the soft zephyr of summer had a frolicsome briskness unknown below. As Isabel had anticipated, her father and her aunt met over the grave, and the natural tie of blood asserted itself. Mrs Suffield clasped her brother's hand, and a tear stole into the eye of each. And when the funeral was over, they had reminiscences of their youth to exchange with old friends and neighbours who had never left home, and whom they discovered to be living the same lives, exchanging the same opinions, and venturing on the same jokes as they remembered were in use when they were young. Is not that kind of thing the chief charm of a belated visit to the home of our youth?

To Isabel the most memorable fact of the occasion was the presence with her cousin George of Daniel Trichinopoly, 'the faithful black servant' of her late uncle. He was a picturesque reminder of her uncle's strange and adventurous career; and, moreover, he impressed on her the fact of his recent intimate connection with her uncle.

'Mees Isabel,' said he, approaching softly, with a bow and a smile, when the Sahib had been committed to the embrace of mother earth, 'may I address a word? With regard to the respectable Sahib, my good and noble master which is gone away, I am rejoice to say he have trusted me with a thing to do. He have say, hardly and scarcely, "Isabel," and have put his eyes on this book; and with attention I have took care and bring it myself; and I place it, lady, in your respectable hand.'

'Daniel,' said George, coming forward, 'asked me what he should do about the book. He had happened to bring it away, because he thought he was entrusted with it, and so I said he had better present it to you himself.'

'With regard,' said Daniel, 'it is so. It is

right—is it not? Hope the book will be handy to you, etcetera.—Respectable mees, I kiss the hand.'

'I am much obliged to you, Daniel,' said Isabel; and Daniel withdrew.

'So,' said her aunt, who, seeing what was toward, had come near with her husband and her brother, 'you have got possession of your book, Bell. I suppose poor Harry prized it, and expected you particularly to prize it. A clasped book too. Private matters written in it, I suppose.'

Isabel, considering herself thus challenged to open it, undid the clasp, and looked here and there at what was written.

'It seems to be a diary of his tour, with reflections,' said she, and closed it again.

'Your uncle and I,' continued her aunt, 'have been thinking that we should put up some monument or memorial of Harry; but we have thought also we should not do anything without consulting you.'

'Me, aunt?' exclaimed Isabel.

'A man's true monument,' said Isabel's father, sadly, 'is the work he has done.'

'Well, that to us,' said her aunt quickly, 'is represented by the fortune he made—which, I am thankful to say, is left in the family. But it seems only a nice and proper thing to do to put up something to show that the family appreciates what he has done. And now that the family happens to be all together'—

'But, aunt,' protested Isabel, 'the family, surely, will be all together many a time after this. Can't we let this day pass with its own proper duty?'

'It might be well, my dear,' said her aunt, 'to settle something now, since we must consult the clergyman whenever anything is done. But just as you please, Bell, my dear.'

'But why should it be as I please, aunt?' said Isabel, really perplexed. 'Why should you defer to me? It is surely a matter for you and uncle and my father to arrange.'

'And for you, too, my dear,' said her uncle, patting her shoulder. 'Though you will understand that better by-and-by; I think you will.—But don't worry her about it, Joann.'

Still Isabel did not guess why her opinion should be asked, nor why she should be deferred to. And her aunt again urged her point, and carried it; and then they all went in quest of the vicar.

'You had better bring Bell along, George,' said Aunt Joanna to her son, who was standing aloof. 'You haven't seen her since Whitsuntide, and you can tell her how things have been going in Lancashire.'

And still Isabel could not understand why her aunt, who had hitherto sought to keep her and George apart, should now seek to bring them together.

Soon it was time to separate—George and 'the faithful black servant' to return to Lancashire, and the others to London.

It was thus on good terms with each other they went their several ways. Mr and Mrs Suffield had first-class tickets, and Suffield insisted that Isabel and her father should travel back first-class also, smiling significantly when Isabel protested she could not afford it, and himself paying the difference on their third-class

tickets. But the journey was long, and the fatigue was great, in spite of the comfort of a first-class carriage; and the opposite tempers of Mrs Suffield and her brother soon were in a condition of friction. There was no open disagreement, but each felt that a very little of the other's company was sufficient for the day. As they sped away south, silence fell upon them; but when they entered upon the rich, flat, fen district, the quiet sleepy charm of the land soothed and softened their spirits. The day was almost done; the darkness was slowly gathering and rising like a vapour in the low east, and in the west the burning sun was sinking fast, thronged around with courtly clouds of glory. It was a gorgeous and bewildering spectacle, and as they watched it, the dark and solemn trees in the distance stood up tall—stood, as it were, on tiptoe to see the lord of light go down over the rim of the earth—reminding them of the mystery and the wonder of Death, from which they were being whirled away to the small cares and anxieties and the entangling hopes and fears of Life.

And then they rolled along through the swiftly gathering gloom, with their imaginations and feelings subdued; and at length rushed in among the lights and the hot haze and vapours of London. It was a notable experience for them all. At King's Cross the Suffield carriage was in waiting, and bore them on together to the gate of Isabel's lodgings, where they said adieu.

'I shall want to see you very particularly tomorrow,' said her uncle to Isabel at parting. 'Lucky that it's Saturday and you've no school. I'll come in the morning.'

(To be continued.)

SOME SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT SNAKES.

By Dr ARTHUR STRADLING.

To give a catalogue of all the errors and superstitions concerning Serpents which have prevailed throughout the historical period of man's existence would require a library of bulky volumes. It is perhaps not too much to say that nearly every popular idea which has ever held ground among the 'tribe accursed and banned' is in itself a superstition, even down to the conception of the facts and events of a snake's ordinary every-day routine of life; and, in spite of the widely penetrating disinfection of prejudice and delusion by education, and the rapidly growing taste for the study of natural history, the remark applies as much to the notions which are commonly accepted at the present time, and in civilised countries, with regard to the Ophidia, as to any prevalent in the darkest ages. With such mistakes as arise purely and simply from lack of correct information, such as the impossibility of a serpent dying of any injury before sundown, and vulgar errors of that description, I do not propose to deal in the course of this paper, nor with those doctrinal questions of ophiology which seem always open to argument—snake-charming, fascination of prey, the protective swallowing of young vipers by the parent, and so forth; but I offer a few more or less picturesque heresies, culled amongst diverse peoples in the course of my wanderings to and fro on the surface of the globe.

To those who are acquainted with the *cobra di capello* and the great square 'hood' or pair of fins which it spreads by the erection of the long ribs behind its head, that is a weirdly horrible fancy of the Singhalese Tamils, who assert that every time it bites and expends its venom after it has attained its full length, it loses one joint of its spine. The process of curtailment goes on until the whole body has disappeared with the exception of the head and hood, both of which have undergone a sort of compensating enlargement, while the mouth has widened until the face of the reptile presents the aspect of a malignant toad. With increased death-dealing powers, the exercise of which subjects it to no further penalty, it now betakes itself to an aerial mode of life, flying by the flapping of its extended sides after the manner of a bat.

A somewhat similar fable is heard amongst the natives of Bengal, who furthermore declare that this square-winged fiend is the only snake who refuses to be frightened away when the name of the king of the birds (Garudi) is called aloud in his hearing, and that the docking of the vertebra corresponds to the number of human lives which the cobra has sacrificed in former days. It is to be hoped that the latter allegation, at any rate, is not founded on fact, as there are often several hundreds of segments in the backbone of a serpent.

This superstition is curiously akin to that held by the settlers in many parts of America—though not, so far as I have been able to discover, by the aboriginal Indians of the same regions—to the effect that the rattlesnake acquires a new thimble to its rattle for every man it kills. How the tradition first arose is, of course, uncertain; but it is one of comparatively high antiquity, mention being made of it in some of the earliest descriptions of the 'Viper with the Bell.' Matter-of-fact people, as a rule, find a less romantic explanation of this remarkable appendage in the indication it is said to afford of the reptile's age—one joint for every year—which is certainly no more correct than the other, and has the additional demerit of being commonplace and prosaic in its fallacy. When the little *Crotalus* is born, its tail is furnished with a single tip of horn, incapable of producing any sound by the violent vibration which its owner nevertheless communicates to it whenever excited. In some near relatives of the rattlesnake, such as the curucucu of Brazil, this horny claw or nail persists throughout life without addition thereto. But in the rattlesnakes proper—and there are many species of them—two, and sometimes three, joints appear during the first few months of the creature's life; then and later there is probably no definite relation between their number or frequency of development and its age, though they may be proportionate in some measure to its rate of growth. Broods of young serpents belonging to this genus which I have reared have exhibited great diversity in this matter, so much so, that it has been impossible to base any calculation on observations of the phenomena presented by them. The overlapping 'thimbles' or cones of which the rattle is composed are thin, dry, and exceedingly brittle, and in consequence the instrument is easily broken off when it has reached the length of from one to two inches,

though longer specimens are occasionally seen; twenty joints make an exceptionally big rattle. This shedding of the rattle is in all cases accidental, and due to external causes, not a constitutional and periodical function like the casting of the skin. When it breaks off at the root or in the middle, there is generally no trace left of a fracture having taken place, as the thimbles are all alike and any one forms a symmetrical termination to the organ. Whatever purpose the rattle may serve in the snake's economy—and its use is still involved in some obscurity—it undoubtedly does not represent its owner's age, nor the sum-total of his manslaughter.

In many countries it is affirmed, most ungalantly, that the female snake alone is venomous. We know that a sexual difference in this respect is true of certain poison-bearing insects; but it is hardly to be supposed that such an idea with regard to serpents could have taken its origin from an acquaintance with a rather recondite fact of entomology. That those who recover from snake-bite are subject to a recurrence of the symptoms at the same time of each year as long as the aggressor lives, is also an article of faith with the inhabitants of far-sundered parts of the earth. To burn old shoes in places infested by these reptiles is said to cause them such disquietude that they vacate the spot as speedily as possible, with every manifestation of being seriously incommoded by the proceeding, and return no more. On some parts of the Continent, boys who pet snakes sprinkle the floors of their cages thickly with powdered brimstone, wherein they are thought to thrive appropriately. Little less than a superstition is the belief in the partiality for milk with which they are almost universally credited, and upon which are built up ludicrous stories innumerable. John Aubrey, the English antiquary, recommends the powder obtained from a snake which has been caught at midnight of Midsummer Eve—not an easy capture at that hour—'when all the planets are above the earth,' killed, skinned, and dried in the shade, as the wherewithal to procure invisibility; and this again, with local modifications, represents a superstition obtaining all over the world. One of the funniest notions is that mentioned by Madame La Barea, that those Mexican Indians who have been successfully inoculated with serpent-venom acquire the power of inflicting a poisonous bite!

The existence of flying snakes is spoken of with the most confident credulity in Java, in South Africa, in Yucatan and Mexico, and in many places besides India and Ceylon. Most ophidians have a habit of flattening their bodies and even their heads when angry or alarmed, a habit rendered possible by the loose attachment of their bones. The term 'spreading viper' is applied to more than one species in the States in recognition of this peculiarity, which, by the way, our common grass-snake evinces to a notable degree. Flattest of all, perhaps, is the long-headed or leaf-marked snake of Northern Brazil, which when enraged looks absolutely as though a broad cart-wheel had passed along its back from stem to stern, giving really colourable support to the statement of the Paranesse, that it rises in the air with an undulatory movement and skims straight for the eyes of its disturber. The

ordinary viper is said by the peasantry in certain districts of England to develop wings when it grows old, and to fly around on its deadly errands with a baleful buzzing. It is just possible that the world-wide traditions of crested, wattled, winged, and hairy serpents may be due to imperfect apprehension of facts actually observed. The normal method of a snake's shedding its slough is for the latter to be thrown off entire in one unbroken piece, forming a complete cast or envelope of the creature, with the perfect presentment of every scale. (This process takes place in a healthy reptile at intervals of from six to ten weeks, except during the period of hibernation; not once a year, as is commonly supposed.) But in old snakes always, and not unfrequently in young ones from various causes, this sheath of cuticle flakes away and is detached piecemeal, large sections of it becoming dry and remaining adherent to the body until accidentally removed by violence. One can readily imagine that a hasty glimpse of a serpent furnished with adventitious appendages of this character, and darting away into the bushes before any accurate note could be taken, might well give rise to misconception concerning its true nature.

After all, a winged snake is conceivable. It has a vacancy for limbs, two or four; and, once assumed, these might be of any recognised pattern or function without violation of zoological proprieties, such as is perpetrated by the conventional representation of an angel. Nearly as bad are the pictures of snakes in the water, where they are invariably shown with 'serpentine' loops and coils thrown high above the surface, the neck gracefully arched in the air. I believe that I have never seen a picture of a snake disporting itself in a pond or swimming down a river which does not exhibit this absurdity—and I keep a constant lookout for such things! The best of ophidians, even the oar-tailed sea-snakes, are poor swimmers—a glance at their conformation will at once indicate that this must of necessity be the case. The weight of the body is distributed over no large area, and their means of propulsion are almost *nil*. Under these circumstances, it is as much as they can do, by dint of vigorous wriggling, to shoot their heads alone above the surface when immersed, while to elevate any portion of their bodies arch-wise is as impracticable to them as flight through the air. The snake oft mentioned, but as yet unknown to science, which takes its tail in its mouth and bowls along the ground like a hoop, is no greater anomaly.

The Zunis, among their thousand snake-superstitions, have two that occur to me as especially curious. One is, that the aura of a dying person will attract all the serpents in the neighbourhood, and that the body of an Indian who has perished on the ground is frequently unapproachable by reason of the myriads of reptiles which surround it. They do not attempt to eat it, but lie with their heads towards it, looking at it. If a man has been killed, they will assemble at the spot where his blood fell, in like manner; but, though the Zunis offer no physical explanation of this, they do not seem to attribute it to any supernatural impulse. The other runs to the effect that a rattlesnake will refuse to bite an unfaithful wife. How the test is applied, I was never

able to learn; but the unfortunate squaw who is under suspicion would seem to be in a very awkward predicament if submitted to such an ordeal, whichever way the augury may point.

Hindus of all castes agree that the body of a snake accidentally killed should be burned, as it may have been the incarnation of a Brahmin. Such, at least, used to be their creed; but the Government rewards for the heads of venomous species would seem to have modified considerably their veneration for possible grandfathers and mothers-in-law in ophidian guise. At any rate, the collection and careful hatching of cobras' eggs is now a well-known practice of the dusky ophiolator, who feeds the young snakes until they are big enough to found a claim to the annas paid on evidence of their destruction. A very mischievous error lies in the commonly-accepted idea that the brutal process of extracting a venomous serpent's fangs necessarily renders its subsequent bite powerless to instil its death-dealing secretion. Unless the poison glands and ducts be extirpated—and one need hardly point out that this is not accomplished by the mere withdrawal of the two grooved teeth—the dribbled venom, constantly forming, may easily be inoculated by the scratch of a common tooth or the rough edge of the exposed maxillary bone; to effectually remove the parotids without inflicting mortal injury on the snake would require the knowledge and dexterity of an experienced anatomist.

Serpents are anything but monogamists, yet the glamour of popular superstition accredits them with such enduring affection for each other, that if one be killed, its spouse will track the slayer unrelentingly until it can avenge its companion's death. One of the prettiest of the numberless snake-stone hypotheses is that which ascribes their origin to the reptiles themselves. Certain snakes of India, on obtaining the respectable age of one thousand years, are endowed with a jewel in the head, a stone clear and pellucid as crystal, in the centre of which a live crescentic fibre vibrates and oscillates unceasingly for ever. This snake-born gem sucks the poison from an envenomed wound in the same way as the less romantic snake-stones are alleged to do, the latter consisting usually of calcined bone or horn, or concretions from the gall-bladders of goats. It has been recently stated, in apparent serious good faith on the part of the narrator, that the cobras of Ceylon carry shining pebbles of fluor-spar in their mouths, to attract the fireflies at night! Compared with these, the Guatemalan serpent which, instead of a head, bears a tulip-shaped flower, into which butterflies wander to their doom as the petals close upon them, sinks into nothingness.

Without the faintest desire to rekindle the embers of the terrible viper-swallowing-its-offspring controversy, I may mention as an example of that absence of maternal affection which I have found invariable amongst the reptiles which have come under my observation, that I once discovered a large brood of new-born viperine snakes (jarraraccas—over sixty of them, if I remember aright) in a broken tank on the island of Paqueta, near Rio de Janeiro. Not only had their mother deserted them, but she must have

taken considerable trouble to escape from the smooth-walled enclosure.

The horns of the deer, half-swallowed by a python, and allowed to stick out of its mouth until they rotted off, have had their day, and would scarcely find favour now in the 'Anecdotes of Animals' of a provincial newspaper; but what shall we say to the announcement boldly set forth in the label underneath the magnificent stuffed specimen of an anaconda in the Natural History Department of the British Museum, to the effect that the serpent twists its tail around a tree to afford purchase for the constriction of its prey? Great evolutionists have assumed, and their disciples have stated as a proven fact, that the vivid colours of the South American coral-snake serve to protect it from enemies by advertising its dangerous character; but to my certain knowledge it enjoys no immunity from the attacks of birds, rats, swine, and foxes, who devour it as greedily as do our own pheasants and peacocks the common viper.

But for all that is wildly and wantonly imaginative, the deliberate inventions, the typical 'snake-stories' must bear the palm, far and away above the traditions of the ages, be they poetic or grotesque. Why is it that the poor snakes have been the unvarying cause of lying amongst men, ever since the Father of Lies first assumed ophidian form? No other created thing seems to have a tithe part of the serpent's power of exciting gratuitously and unprovoked the most riotous invention. What genuine superstition, bred of the remotest antiquity, can compare with the three spiders which spun threads around a snake's mouth and sewed him up before proceeding to suck his blood—actually narrated in a scientific magazine as an instance of 'Sagacity of the Lower Animals'; or the copperhead that bit the Yankee's broomstick, 'which, jest as trew as you're there, was swelled up in five minutes as big as your leg!' or the affectionate rattlesnake which backed its tail into the baby's hand for him to rattle? And is there to be unearthed from the folk-lore of the whole world anything more delicious than the story of the prudent snake who, having caught a young rabbit by the tail, refrained from devouring him, but allowed itself to be dragged home to the ancestral burrow, where, like the ancient mariner of the *Red Rover*, it 'victualled free' on the entire family.

THE RED-HOT NEEDLE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

It was nine o'clock when Jack Felling ran breathlessly up the steps of the house at Dalston. Burdon opened the door, and a glance at his face informed Jack that there was no better news from the sick-room. He hurried past Burdon without saying a word and sped up-stairs. In about five minutes he came down again. Burdon was walking up and down the dining-room, his head bent, his hands tightly clasped behind his back.

'Burdon,' said Jack, 'if you've had a long spell of watching; let me take my turn. I've had plenty of fresh air. You must be almost played out.'

Burdon looked at him. Jack's tone was hard and strange: moreover, he had always of late addressed Burdon as 'old fellow,' or even 'dear old fellow.' Then he placed his hand on Jack's arm and said: 'No, no. It's you who are overdoing it. Your mind is harassing your body. Let me keep on watching. I'm not a bit done. Go and get a good night's rest.'

'Get a good night's rest!' repeated Jack, glaring at Burdon with a wild, haggard look, in a voice that made Burdon withdraw his hand and step back—'get a good night's rest!—and the darling of my life lying at the point of death—mur— No! no! I don't mean that! Excuse me, old fellow. I think I am a little upset—and yet'— He walked slowly to the other side of the table. 'So, so! There's a—a good fellow! I'll watch to-night. I must! I must!'

'All right!' said Burdon. 'I'll go. But mind if any change takes place, let me know!' He left the room.

Jack sank into a chair, leaned his arms on the table, and buried his face in them. Then he heard Burdon run up-stairs, and springing to the door, caught the following fragment of conversation between him and the doctor who was passing the night at the house: 'He must be looked after, doctor. His mind is unbinged. I don't think he's responsible for his words or actions.'

'Very well,' replied the doctor; 'I'll see to him, poor fellow.'

Then Burdon came down, put on his coat and hat, lit a cigar, and, bidding Jack good-night with a cordial shake of the hand, which met with no response, went out.

Jack filled a glass of sherry and drank it off; then he put on his hat, looked at his watch, walked up and down for ten minutes, stepped up to the doctor and told him that he should be back in an hour if possible, went out, hailed the first hansom, and was soon being driven rapidly in the direction of the Sailors' Home, Well Street. Arrived at the Sailors' Home, he asked to see Ah Why. 'You mean that Chaney chap, sir?' replied the porter. 'He ain't in, and won't be to-night, for he's flush of cash, and has gone off to spend it. But I think I know where you'll find him.'

'Where?' asked Jack eagerly.

'Number 42 Frigate Street, Wapping. Hopium den,' replied the porter; 'that's where them Chaney chaps goes in general when they has a few dollars in their pockets.'

In less than ten minutes Jack's hansom deposited him at the end of Frigate Street. Wapping is not a cleanly neighbourhood: Frigate Street is probably its least cleanly thoroughfare, and Number 42 was certainly not entitled to rank as amongst the cleanliest houses in Frigate Street.

A blear-eyed Chinaman answered Jack's knock at the little door, and opened it a few inches. 'No can see any man this side,' he said after a rapid survey of the visitor by the light of a dim oil lamp; 'all belong honest men, sir. Foo-chow Joe who makee steal the coals no have got, sir. Hai Ling, who get drunk and bleak that window, have makee sail this marnin'.'

'I'm not the police,' said Jack. 'Give that piece of paper to Ah Why.'

The man read the name 'Ambrose Burdon,' took another look at Jack, said: 'All light; I go catchee he;' and would have shut the door, but that Jack had slipped his foot in.

'Look sharp!' said Jack in a tone not to be mistaken.

The man shuffled away, and Jack was left with his foot in the door, half sickened by the fumes of opium, which came pouring along the pitch-dark passage. In ten minutes, which seemed an hour to Jack, Ah Why appeared. His eyes were heavy, and he was obliged to lean against the doorpost for support, as he greeted Jack with a dreamy smile. But a glimpse of Jack's haggard face seemed to brace him up in a moment.

'All light, Mr Burdon,' he said; 'I sabby what ting you wanthee. I sabby welly well.'

'Do you?' said Jack earnestly. 'Tell me.'

Ah Why put his mouth to Jack's ear and whispered a few words.

'Yes, yes, yes!' said Jack: 'that's it! How on earth did you guess? Well?'

'That makee cost much money.'

'Never mind! Can I have it? How much must I pay?'

'I tink five hundled dollar can do.'

'A hundred pounds. All right. Look sharp and get it.'

'If you pay my one hundled pounds, I go catchee it. A flend of my have got this side.'

'Will you take my IOU?'

'Yes.'

'Very well then. Be off and get it. I'll write the IOU.'

Ah Why shuffled off. Jack Felling had not seen Ambrose Burdon's signature on hundreds of letters and schedules without being able to imitate it exactly. Accordingly, when Ah Why returned, he handed him a leaf from his pocket-book on which was written: 'IOU one hundred pounds sterling.—AMBROSE BURDON.'

Ah Why examined the document and said:

'When you tinkee you pay my, Mr Burdon?'

'This day week,' replied Jack.

'All light! Mind, sir, I talkee you like me business man. Supposee you no pay my'—

'Well—what then?'

'I can talkee tings about you that no belong number one,' replied Ah Why.

Then he put the paper carefully away, handed Jack a packet wrapped in a silk handkerchief, wished him good-night, and went back to his earthly paradise.

The next three days Jack afterwards described as the most anxious of all his life. During this time Ruth simply battled on the very brink of the river of death, suffering intense pain, and almost always bereft of reason. On the third night the crisis came. On the fourth morning the doctor announced that the girl had passed through it safely. During the fifth and sixth days she shook off so many bad symptoms that the doctor told the anxious watchers that they might now count upon her slow but sure recovery.

Overjoyed, so overjoyed that he could settle to nothing, but simply roamed about, laughing and rubbing his hands, Jack Felling snatched half an hour from his now pleasant duties in the house

of sickness, and went down to the Sailors' Home to see Ah Why. The Chinaman was not in, so Jack left a card.

Just about the time that Jack Felling called at the Sailors' Home, Ambrose Burdon was passing down the steps of the Pacific Bank in Old Broad Street. His face was not pleasant to look upon, and when from the gloom of the Austinfriars archway Ah Why slipped out and confronted him, it grew as black as thunder. 'What the devil are you doing here?' asked Burdon savagely.

Ah Why smiled. Chinamen are impervious to the blackest of looks and the soundest of kicks, and smile upon the reception of either. All the same they remember them.

'I welly glad to see you, sir,' said Ah Why.

'That's more than I am to see you,' retorted Burdon; 'and yet I do want to see you too.'

'Yes, sir, of course you do,' said the Chinaman suavely. 'I wanthee you settle that piecey IOU you give me last week.'

Burdon looked at the man amazed. Had they been on the Bund at Yokohama, or the Queen's Road, Hong-kong, instead of in the heart of London City, Burdon's stick would have been laid across Ah Why's shoulders. As it was, he had to vent his rage in expletives, and Ambrose Burdon had plenty of this artillery.

'You—wanthee—my—settle—that—IOU—I—give you—last—week!' said he slowly. 'Why, you yellow scoundrel, I've never seen you since Yokohama—months ago. But, by Jove, let's get out of this.'

This remark was called for by the fact that a little crowd was beginning to collect near them, a crowd of those intelligent beings who become interested in the operation of a man tying up his bootlace, or buying a penny article from a kerbstone merchant, and to whom the spectacle of a well-dressed Englishman and a shabby Chinaman talking together was out of the ordinary groove of street attractions. So he called a hansom, and told the man to drive them to the Tower. Arrived at the Tower, Burdon took Ah Why to that length of river-side terrace, part of which crosses the approach to the famous Traitors' Gate, and sat down on a bench.

'Now, then,' said Burdon sternly. 'First of all, what are you doing in England? Secondly, what's all this rotten talk about an IOU given by me to you last week?'

Ah Why smiled as he said: 'You memory belong welly bad, sir.'

'Confound your impudence! let my memory alone, and answer my questions,' said Burdon.

'I talkee you how fashion I come England side two week ago, when I meet you outside that joss-house,' replied the Chinaman.

'And I've just told you that I've never clapped eyes on your ugly face since I was in Yokohama,' said Burdon.

'Why, sir!' said Ah Why, edging to the further end of the seat, for there was danger in the Englishman's look, 'you come and talkee my one week back at that opium shop in Wapping,' said Ah Why; 'and you talkee my to give you something to kill that Led-hot Needle, and I give it you, and you give my a chit for one hundled pounds.' So saying he handed Burdon the IOU.

Burdon looked at it. Then, with an expression of horror on his face and a fearful execration, he sprang to his feet, and seizing the terrified Chinaman by the shoulder, hissed rather than said: 'Do you mean to tell me that you gave me something to kill that Red-hot Needle, and that I gave you my IOU for a hundred pounds in exchange?'

'Yes, sir; five nights ago,' replied Ah Why. 'But—why, sir, I no sabby—I don't think it was you—is there one piecey Englishman with face allosame yours?'

'Why, yes, there is!' cried Burdon in a voice of agony, the perspiration literally standing on his brow. 'Now I see it all. Now I see why that Red-hot Needle has failed! Say, Ah Why, did you tell him anything else?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the Chinaman, who was trembling with terror. 'He askee my questions, and I makee answer. He talkee his memory have makee go; he not 'member anything; he belong allosame you, and I talkee him allosame I talkee you.'

'About—about the cheques?' asked Burdon.

'Yes, sir; about all thing,' answered Ah Why.

'Then it's all up. You must hook it out of England as fast as you can. So must I,' said Burdon. 'Here—take what I have and go.' So saying, he emptied a pocket of loose coin into Ah Why's hand and strode away.

Half-way up East Cheap he saw Jack Felling approaching. Thinking to avoid him, Burdon turned up Rood Lane; but Felling came after him, and took him by the arm. 'Miss Tunstall is on the high-road to recovery,' said Jack, looking straight into the eyes of the miserable man.

'Yes—yes; I'm delighted to hear it,' stammered Burdon.

'You're not. That's a lie,' said Jack. 'Look here, Burdon. I've found you out. You are a villain—a villain of the very deepest dye. You are a robber, and, but for what can only be termed the merciful intervention of God, you would have been a murderer. Being the next of kin to this poor girl, you have, after having robbed your employers, deliberately concocted one of the foulest schemes of murder that have ever been known. As it is, with this infernal Chinese poison, this Red-hot Needle, you have condemned her to weeks of indescribable torment, all the time that you were playing the hypocrite under the same roof. Now I have you, and I am going to'—

Ambrose Burdon placed his hand to his mouth, Jack thought to pull his moustache, a constant habit with him. But the next moment there was a splintering of glass upon the pavement; then Burdon uttered one short, sharp cry, and fell heavily before Jack could catch him. When he was raised up, he was dead.

When the news got abroad that the 'lately cashiered Manager of the Yokohama branch of the Pacific Bank had fallen by his own hand, the majority of people could say nothing too hard of Directors who could visit the oversight of an officer so harshly. But a strong minority stuck to their original opinion that Burdon knew as much about the robbery as any one, and declared that it was to avoid the consequences of criminal proceedings that he had killed himself.

Jack Felling kept to himself the terrible secret he had been the accidental means of discovering, and it was only after Ruth had been his wife some months that he told her the extraordinary story which we have embodied under the title of the Red-hot Needle.

WALKING-STICKS.

THE fashion or habit of carrying a Walking-stick, or some article of the same nature, seems to have existed from the remotest antiquity. The spear of the warrior, the shepherd's staff, the club, baton, rod, or wand of office, are all developments of the same idea. It has been used not only as a support to the body, but to lend dignity and grace to the individual, and as a means of defence. In modern times the use of walking-sticks has increased enormously, and to-day the manufacture and use of these articles are cultivated almost to the extent of a fine art. But though popular and well known as an article of everyday use, very little is known about the walking-stick as an article of commerce—where it comes from, who makes it, and how it is made.

Under the general term 'Walking-stick Trade' is included the manufacture of sticks for umbrellas, &c., of which an incredible number are produced annually. In England—which, by the way, almost supplies the world—the number of men employed is about four thousand. The trade is rather scattered, though by far the greatest part is done in London, where, in the East End, it is carried on extensively. The workmen are chiefly drawn from the poorer classes of St Luke's, Finsbury, Shoreditch, Whitechapel, and Bethnal Green, in which parishes the principal workshops are situated. The trade is strictly a season one; it is among the first to feel depression, and among the last to recover. A large number of the men employed earn on the average a fair living, especially those in the largest houses, who enjoy, as a rule, the most regular employment. But a large section of the trade pays bad wages—in fact, in some cases it is a mere existence. A great quantity of sticks produced by these latter are manufactured in dwelling-houses, nay, in the very living-rooms, though in this respect there is a gradual improvement going on. The people among whom this state of things exists are mostly small manufacturers, who work on their own account. In busy times, it often happens the man is compelled to work nearly all night in order to get the work done in time for payment on Saturday. It has been known for wives and even children's help to be put to account. This is true when trade is busy, which is generally from March to November, when slack time begins, and continues, with more or less abatement, till the following spring.

During slack periods, most of the men are on half or three-quarter time; but a large number have practically no work at all; this, added to low wages in busy times, renders their lives and surroundings quite deplorable. The men most in demand are those with the ability to make samples, and the first question most employers put to a new workman, is, 'Can you make me anything fresh?' This is important, as on the freshness and variety of new samples depend the

chances of new and large orders. Men have ere now made a small fortune out of a new sample. This, of course, is rare; but it has occurred several times in the last ten years. A sample known as 'Brazilian Pine' became so popular as to make the whole trade unusually busy for two or three years. Another, known as 'Acacia,' has been in great demand for the last five years, and bids fair to become a standing order in the trade. 'English Furze,' dressed, bent, joined, and stained in a countless variety of combinations, has had a run on the market for some years; and there are scores of new samples on the kinds of wood I have mentioned being prepared even now for next season or the season after.

The raw material from which are produced the almost countless varieties of sticks in the market is brought from nearly every part of the earth. There is a large quantity grown in England, but the bulk is foreign. To get an idea of the vast quantity of foreign sticks imported into England, one should visit the London Docks, East Smithfield Entrance Warehouse, No. 1, which is one of the largest storehouses of the kind in England. Here, piled from floor to ceiling, are all sorts of sticks imaginable: pimento, olive, myrtle, hazel, oak, ash, orange, bamboo, Tonquin canes, and a host of others, in such profusion as to be bewildering. It must be seen to be realised, by any person outside the trade. It would be impossible to name all the different kinds of raw material; but the following are the names of the most important: Olives from America, Queensland, and South Africa. Pimento from the West Indies, chiefly Jamaica, from which island from three to four thousand bundles, each containing from five to eight hundred sticks, are imported annually. Many of these sticks are sawn up into half-a-dozen smaller ones. Myrtle from South Europe, and most of the countries situated round the Mediterranean Sea. Ash from America, South Europe, and South Africa. Cornel or cornelian cherry from Mid and South Europe and some parts of Asia. This wood is very tough, and was used extensively when the 'acacia' became popular. Also several varieties of each of the following: Oak, orange, cherry, hazel, thorn, Ceylon vines, supple-jacks, palm, orange, crab, birch, beech, sycamore, lancewood, ebony, Amboyne, tulip-tree, snakewood, rosewood, Whangee, Jambeze, Penang, Rajah, Partridge, bamboo, Tonquin, betel, Malacca, Nana, Madagascar, Whampoa canes, bird's-eye maple, greenheart, &c. The chief produce of Great Britain are: Oak, ash, furze, birch, hazel, thorn, beech, crab, sycamore, cherry, and many other minor varieties. This list will show the great amount of skill required to become a judge of the raw material only.

But though extensive, the raw material is nothing compared with the multiplication of species, which arise as manufacture proceeds. The reason of this lies in the fact that from nearly every kind of raw material several distinct kinds of sticks are produced. One illustration will make this clear. Olives for walking-sticks are subject to nine different processes—sawing, filing, straightening, finishing, staining, varnishing, pumicing, finecoating, and ferruling. In large houses, each process is carried out by different

workmen. More than this—it is possible to take half-a-dozen olives, and, by treating each of them differently, to produce a corresponding number of sticks, which are known in the market as pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, Australian bay, acacia, and olive—six distinct kinds from the same wood. This is done more or less in every branch of the trade, especially among what is known as 'Naturals,' that is, sticks made from the single branch of a tree. The handle is made to the desired shape from a piece of a thicker branch, which is left on for that purpose when the stick is cut. As it is difficult to get a sufficient quantity of sticks grown like this, the difficulty is met by joining the required piece on. The joint is so neat that most people would never notice it, or if they did, it would be more by accident than design.

The other great branch of work besides the natural is called 'Fancy,' and embraces carving, bending, inlaying, and everything which might be described as other than natural. There are many curious things made up into walking-sticks, such as snake-skins stretched on wood, sinews of large animals, sunflower stalks, cabbage stumps, sticks rendered curious by nature, some of which are of very strange and fantastic growth. The most curious stick the writer has ever met with was made as follows: A smooth round stick, on which knots were made with plaster of Paris, and then covered neatly all over with American table-covering, the pattern of which resembled the grain of wood. The edges were joined so neatly as to be invisible. The whole produced a very novel and peculiar stick, which deceived many experts, who, believing it to be wood, were puzzled at the peculiar grain. It was only by cutting a piece off that the trick was discovered.

Many pieces of very rare wood are made into walking-sticks—pieces of old ships, &c., beside scarce specimens of wood almost unknown, such as Myall wood, Australian black wood, muskwood, Cypress pine, zebra wood, kauri pine, deodar wood, calamander, sabicu, and occasional pieces of lignum vite. The 'modus operandi' whereby sticks which grow crooked are made straight is not generally known, and has been the subject of some curious speculation. We do not remember to have met with a satisfactory account anywhere in print, although at different times sage advice has been given on the subject through the press, in answer to correspondents. All such advice, so far as we know, has been more or less erroneous and absurd. The main object is to render the wood or cane soft and pliable; to do this, it is plunged into heated sand. Woods such as oak, ash, orange, &c., require wet sand; while olives, pimento, and all varieties of cane, require dry sand. In addition to this, a contrivance called 'a horse' is used, which consists of a plank of beech two inches thick set up on one end at an angle of forty-five to sixty degrees. Out of the two edges of this plank, pieces are cut, to allow the insertion of the stick. When sufficiently heated, the stick is taken from the sand, and, using it as a lever, it is bent here and bent there until it is perfectly straight. This process is repeated at a later stage, which is called 'baking.' For this second process, dry sand is used; and the stick is not only made quite straight, but as stiff

as it is possible to make it. The success of this process depends entirely upon the judgment of the workman, who is known as a 'kilnman.' He must determine how much heat is required, and whether wet or dry sand. If he gives too much heat, the stick becomes stunned, and in most cases is useless, as it will rarely come straight after. If, on the other hand, he does not make it hot enough, it is liable to break in halves.

Wet sand is also used for bending purposes; but a more improved method for sticks requiring moist heat is to boil them in water. For bending canes and wood requiring dry heat, a powerful gas jet is used. All such work requires an extensive knowledge of the nature and growth of the material to be operated upon, and a large amount of skill in the process.

The dealers in raw material and the manufacturers are generally different persons; but during recent years, several large manufacturers have engaged in both kinds of business. There are several kinds of raw material, such as cherry, orange, &c., the supply of which being limited, is controlled almost exclusively by several of the leading manufacturers. Among them, they buy up the whole available quantity as soon as it arrives in this country. When secured, it is sorted, the best kinds picked out, and the remainder put back on the market for sale.

During the last decade, many important changes and improvements have been effected in the trade, nearly all of which may be traced to the general use of steam-power in place of manual labour, used hitherto. It began by the introduction of an elaborate system of band-sawing, to do the heavier kinds of work. A considerable saving in raw material was the first result, and many varieties of wood not in use at that time were successfully introduced. After this, steam-power was applied to turning, joining, varnish-making, and ultimately embraced the whole trade.

Although greatly developing the resources and extent of the business side of the trade, the innovation has certainly not improved the quality of work produced, neither has it raised the moral or material condition of the workmen. The reasons of this are (1) That by reason of the increased keenness of competition consequent on improved means of production, prices have gone down, and quality also in exact proportion; (2) That wages have declined in proportion as prices have fallen; and (3) That quality being adapted to the ruling prices, the workmen are satisfied with inferior results of their labour as compared with former times. Taken altogether, the trade seems quite different from that of twenty years ago. There is a larger and more varied supply of raw material, which in turn causes a more than ever bewildering variety of sticks in the market. The margin of profit is much smaller, and very difficult to obtain, as some considerable credit has to be given. The most rigid economy prevails almost everywhere, and the division and subdivision of labour are more minute and exact than ever. Foreign competition is not very formidable. A not inconsiderable quantity of finished sticks have been imported from Austria and Germany, at different times; but, as a rule, the finish of the work is not up to the English market. The

process of refinishing has mostly to be performed by English workmen before such sticks are saleable here. The Austrian sticks have many excellent qualities; but the main fault will be best understood by saying, The ship has been spoiled for a halfpenny worth of tar.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE recent eclipse of the sun seems to have been observed under the most favourable conditions by the different expeditions equipped for the purpose. The weather is described by Professor Pickering in a telegram from Minasaris as being perfect, and the results of his observations as satisfactory. Four immense streamers stretched for a distance of nearly half a million miles from the corona, and several solar prominences attained great distinctness and brilliancy. There was every evidence that the general condition of the sun was one of great disturbance, and a large number of spots were apparent. A comparison of the photographs taken at the various stations is looked forward to with great interest, and it is believed that the solar eclipse of 1893 will be a memorable one.

An *acrolite* is said to have fallen lately at St Louis, Missouri, breaking off the left arm of the statue erected in honour of John Brown, the well-known martyr to the cause of the abolition of slavery. It is further stated that Professor Joplin has analysed the stone, and has found that twenty-five per cent. of it consists of an unknown metal. If this report be true, and certainly it seems definite enough, we shall probably hear a good deal more of this messenger from starry space.

Experiments in freeing potable water from micro-organisms have recently been described in a German technical paper. The inquirers first of all reported some previous experiments in the simple addition of alum to water, a single grain of this compound to a gallon of water reducing the number of organisms in fifteen drops from eight thousand one hundred to eighty. Using larger quantities of alum, they were able to reduce the water to an absolutely sterile liquid. Another experimenter has detailed his investigations in the purification of water by sedimentation, and shows that during the storage of water in large reservoirs a natural bacterial purification takes place. Here is one of the results obtained: Thames water before being admitted to the reservoir of one of the London water companies was found to contain in every twenty-five drops 1437 microbes. These were reduced to 318 after the water had had time to rest; and after further rest in a second reservoir the number was reduced to 177. It has been long ago pointed out that the water of rivers undergoes a natural purification, and this, no doubt, is due to sedimentation.

We suppose that no habit has been more severely condemned and written against than that of opium-smoking. Now and then a

traveller has argued that the habit is not nearly so harmful as most persons imagine it to be, and they have actually asserted that it is not without beneficial effects. In a recent number of the 'Asiatic Quarterly Review,' Dr Nightingale speaks in defence of opium-smoking; and as the conclusions at which he has arrived are the result of personal experience obtained among the Chinese themselves, they are certainly worthy of consideration. He alleges that opium-smoking has the effect of warding off fevers and of allaying their effects, that it enables Chinamen to endure fatigue and perform heavy work in a high temperature which no other race of men would be capable of; and that it does not make its habitué quarrelsome, as alcohol does its victim in Western climes. He concludes that the more the matter is studied, the less harmful does the drug seem to be. If this writer's conclusions are correct, we are once more reminded of the advantage of looking at both sides of a question.

In California there is a six-mile tramway line which connects a certain town with a mountainous country in its vicinity, and on this tram line the curious spectacle may be seen of the horses riding on the cars. They first of all pull the car and its passengers up the steep gradient, and the car then finds its way back to town by gravity; and as it would be a useless waste of energy for the horses to run by its side, they are accommodated with a small platform at the back of the car. It is said that when they have an extra heavy load to pull up, they will frequently stop and make an effort to change places with the passengers.

News concerning the Antarctic whaling expedition which left Dundee many months ago has been received in that town. The four ships engaged in the enterprise failed in finding the valuable black whale of which they were in search, although they diligently scoured the ground where, according to Sir James Clark Ross, the animal used to be common. But seals were found in such abundance that between them the fleet secured no fewer than sixteen thousand pelts and a large quantity of oil. The absence of the black whale is attributed to the presence of its formidable enemy, the grampus. The seal-skins are said to be of unusual size; but it is impossible to appraise their value until later on. The weather encountered was most severe, and had the fleet been more favoured in this respect, an attempt would have been made to get farther south.

An interesting Report upon Jade in Upper Burma has been issued by Dr Noetling, of the Indian Geological Survey. There are, it seems, two different kinds of jade-mines—the quarry mines, which are on the summit of a hill, and the river mines. In the latter, the green stone is found in boulders in the river bed, and trained men dive for it. But in the hill quarries a wasteful and destructive method is adopted for winning the hard stone from its native rock. The rock is heated by means of large fires, and at night the cold is sufficient to crack it in all directions, after which wedges and crowbars are used to force the jade from its bed. Dr Noetling points to jade as being an example of a thing which is highly prized by the Chinese and Burmese, and is almost valueless to others. The

Chinese will pay for a piece of good jade as much as if it were gold, but there is no market for it outside China and Burma. With scientific appliances and the use of dynamite, the output of the mines could be enormously increased; but under present conditions the supply of jade is likely to diminish.

Some curious experiments have recently been carried out at Brest, having for their object the creation artificially of volumes of smoke, under the cover of which a torpedo boat can approach a hostile ship without being itself visible. The idea seems to be impracticable; but it has been considered worthy of protection by a patent, and its inventor, M. Oriolle, of Nantes, is confident of ultimate success, albeit he speaks of 'the consequences which may follow upon the discovery of a sure means of producing smoke or fog of sufficient stability and permanence.' It is singular that one set of warlike inventors should be busy upon the problem of doing away with smoke, while another is looking for a sure means of producing it in large quantities.

Some months ago, Mr Van der Weyde, the well-known London photographer, announced that he had invented a new apparatus, which he called the Photo Corrector, the object of which was to diminish the size of the head, hands, feet, or any other portion of a portrait, so as to correct any exaggeration which might easily be brought about by a too forward position of the sitter with respect to the camera. The means he employs is a supplementary lens of peculiar construction placed within the camera, close against the sensitive plate. This lens grasps, as it were, the light rays composing the part of the image needing correction, and while squeezing them into smaller compass, diminishes the size of the object. The idea is most ingenious.

A new and exceedingly useful application of the electric motor is exhibited in the 'Electrical Deck Planer,' which has been designed by Mr Malcolm Sutherland, of Dumbarton. This useful machine has the outward appearance of a lawn-mower, for it is pushed forward by a double handle, and has at its lower part a quickly revolving cutter, which, however, can be adjusted in height at will. The purpose of the invention, as its name implies, is to plane down decks and floors of all kinds, an operation which when performed with an ordinary hand-plane is very hard work, necessitating a cramped position for the labourer. The cutter in this instance is geared to an electro motor, and revolves at a speed of three thousand revolutions per minute. The machine borrows its power from a stationary dynamo, to which it is attached by flexible cables.

The New York 'Engineering Journal' recently published some interesting particulars concerning the employment of the metal platinum. The consumption of the metal for manufacturing purposes has increased from an insignificant quantity in 1880 to fifty-five thousand ounces last year. The increase is due, firstly, to the amount used in the manufacture of electric lamps. A large quantity is also employed yearly in the construction of stills for the concentration of sulphuric acid. For the attachment of artificial teeth to their supporting plates, platinum wire is used exclusively, and this industry uses many thou-

sands of ounces annually. Jewellers, chemists, opticians, and others also find uses for platinum; and of recent years a large quantity has been applied to the production of permanent photographs. The Siberian Urals have hitherto supplied ninety-two per cent. of all the platinum used in the world; but now Colombia, British Columbia, and the United States are competing with Russia in its production.

A well-known naturalist and Arctic traveller, Colonel Fielden, has suggested that the musk ox might with advantage be introduced into the Highlands of Scotland, where he believes it would thrive as well as it does in higher latitudes. This animal is covered in the winter-time with a long-stapled, light-yellow wool, as fine as silk, in addition to its coat of hair; and from this wool, stockings and other articles of clothing could be made, which would rival silk in softness and beauty. The animal is very easily tamed and reared; and Colonel Fielden says that they could be caught in any numbers in Jameson's Land.

Visiting cards are being made of iron with the owner's name printed upon them in silver. These cards are so thin that forty of them placed one upon the other are said to have a thickness of only one-eighth of an inch—each thin enough, we should imagine, to represent a very keen cutting edge.

We noted, some months back, several improvements which had been made in the Welsbach Incandescent Gaslight, in which, it will be remembered, a 'mantle' of incombustible mineral matter is suspended in the flame of a Bunsen burner, becoming white-hot. A battery of these lamps has recently been employed by Mr Treble, of Clapham (London), for photographic portraiture, and the light given is of such a highly actinic quality that it is possible to secure a picture at night in about five seconds. This new method of taking photographs in the absence of daylight is likely to become a favourite one, for the lamps give off no disagreeable fumes, and are cheap both in installation and maintenance.

Among the many methods in vogue for domestic decoration there is, perhaps, nothing more cosy and artistic than the old oak panelling with which our forefathers lined their rooms. Like many another good old fashion, this one has of late years been revived; and in houses of the better sort, panelled walls can now often be seen. As the work is far too expensive for general adoption, a modified process, patented by Messrs English Brothers, of Peterborough, by which the same effect is produced at about half the cost, is of some interest. This new panelling is in reality a thin veneer, which is associated with a cheaper wood. It can be screwed to rough deal fillets nailed to the walls; and great variety can be obtained by employing bird's-eye maple and other artistic woods in juxtaposition.

Coal which costs eighty-three pounds per ton to raise from the earth seems to be somewhat of a curiosity, yet that is the actual cost of raising from the Abram Collieries, Wigan, a huge block of cannel coal weighing over twelve tons, which is intended for the World's Fair at Chicago. Nine months were occupied in hewing out this monstrous lump of fuel, after which it was boxed up in planks and sent by train to Liverpool for

shipment to Boston. The cost price quoted does not include the expense of transport; and it is quite likely that before this 'black diamond' reaches its destination it will figure up to more than one hundred pounds per ton.

Electric lighting, which has already become so common, is expected to receive an enormous impetus as soon as the patents referring to the incandescent lamps and their belongings shall lapse, for their present price is out of all proportion to their actual cost. The price will also be still further reduced if a certain vacuum pump for exhausting the air from the little glass lamp-bulbs answers the expectations raised concerning it. This pump is the invention of Adolph Berrenberg, and is said to be in successful operation. In one hour it will exhaust six hundred lamps simultaneously, quite half this time being occupied in extracting the occluded gases from the carbon filaments. Hitherto, pumps have been used for this purpose which are very much slower in their action, and which are only capable of operating upon half-a-dozen lamps at one time.

The Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to inquire into the plague of field-voles in Scotland (of which we gave a full account in *Chambers's Journal* of June 25, last year) have recently sent in their Report. They estimate that more than one hundred thousand acres were affected by the pest, and that this visitation can be traced back to the year 1888. These little animals are so prolific, that under favourable conditions they increase most rapidly; and one cause of the outbreak is found in the favourable character of the seasons since the date above mentioned. Autumns have been wet, producing great luxuriance of grass on the hills, which afforded shelter to the voles; while winters, severe enough in England, have been mild in Scotland. A second cause for the plague is found in the destruction of hawks, buzzards, owls, stoats, and weasels by owners of game-preserves. All the witnesses examined by the Committee agree that the above are the main causes of the increase of voles. The damage done to the pastures is enormous, the habit of the vole being to eat the stem of the grass close to the ground, leaving the upper part to wither. This destruction of pasture naturally affects the rearing of stock most seriously. The Committee are reluctantly led to the conclusion that they are unable to recommend any specific method of dealing with or putting an end to the present outbreak; but at the same time they mention a number of remedies which in certain cases have proved effectual in diminishing the number of voles, and it cannot be said that their work has been altogether in vain.

Another bullet-proof fabric is presently to form the subject of experiments before a military Commission. In this case, the inventor does not claim that the material will be suitable for clothing, but he maintains that it will be useful in the construction of light portable screens, which will be quite capable of preventing a bullet reaching its billet. The inventor is Herr Sylander, of Pressburg.

M. Herrmann, the well-known conjurer, has been writing to an American journal concerning the wonderful feats attributed by travellers to

Indian jugglers. He once regarded India as the Mecca of magicians, and he went there in quest of knowledge. Most wofully was he disappointed. All the well-known tricks which have been retailed again and again, he expatiates upon. Some are simply travellers' tales; and he never saw them performed. The others can be very much better done by many a European prestidigitateur on his platform. The Indian juggler, he tells us, never advances, and never originates. Their tricks are clumsily performed, and of the most primitive kind. Thus ends one more of our childhood's illusions.

It has long been the custom to describe a very copious downpour as 'raining cats, dogs, and pitchforks,' and one of our greatest caricaturists, George Cruikshank, long ago gave the whimsical idea pictorial illustration. But romance and exaggeration have once more been outdone by reality. In a storm which occurred in New South Wales in October last, a reliable observer writes that 'substantial brick buildings came tumbling in all directions, and the air was full of iron tubs, galvanised iron, and tins of every description.' Hailstones fell in abundance, and many of them measured more than six inches in diameter. They slew sheep, kangaroo-rats, and birds, and the dead bodies were lying thickly on the fields. But the size and force of these terrible missiles will be better appreciated when it is mentioned that the hailstones made large holes in corrugated iron roofs. Trees twelve feet in circumference were snapped off by the winds as if they had been twigs. This terrible storm was described in all its details in a paper read before the Royal Society of New South Wales by Mr H. C. Russell, in November last.

A German process for depositing upon cotton cloth a brilliant and flexible coating of metallic tin is described as follows: Powdered zinc is made into a paste with white of egg, and is brushed into the surface of the cloth, the albumen being afterwards coagulated by a current of super-heated steam. The cloth is next immersed in a bath of perchloride of tin, when the metal deposits in a finely divided condition upon the cloth, which is afterwards dried, and passed through a calendaring machine. Very fine designs can be transferred to cloth in this way, and the invention is likely to meet with many applications.

In a recent article in *Chambers's Journal* (p. 116) on 'A Brazilian Convict Island,' it was stated that between 1884 and 1891 no British ship had visited the island of Fernando de Noronha. Mention was made of the 'Challenger's' visit in 1873, when permission to collect specimens of the fauna and flora of the island was refused. This, however, as we are kindly informed by a correspondent, was done with great success in 1887 by Mr H. N. Ridley, F.L.S., now Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens at Singapore. His party, of which our correspondent was a member, stayed for six weeks on the island, and explored the natural history as thoroughly as was possible, obtaining some fifty species new to science, and a full record of the geology and petrology of the place. The expedition was sent out under the auspices of the Royal Society and the British Museum; and the results of its labours

were published in the following year by the Linnean Society, the reports extending over 190 pages of that Society's Journal. A paper, with a map of the island, will also be found in the Royal Geographical Society's Journal, 1888.

A LEGEND OF NIAGARA.

IN the vast continent known as North America, there still exist, though in a degraded and debased condition, the descendants of a once free and proud people. Originally the undisputed possessors of their rich and fertile country, their inheritance has dwindled; and now only a small territory remains. For, before the indomitable industry—and it is to be feared the overbearing oppression also of the white man—the Red Indian has been compelled to withdraw his claim to his patrimony. No doubt, however, the mischief has been aided by his incorrigible idleness, and a fatal fondness for the 'fire-water' of the stranger. But the legend I have to relate has to do, not with the degenerate posterity, but with their brave and noble ancestors.

Many hundred moons ago, there dwelt on the shores of the great fresh-water lakes a branch or tribe of this nation. They were a brave and warlike race; and dwelling in a district which was well stocked with bison, deer, and other animals, by the chase of which they chiefly subsisted; and possessing other advantages by their proximity to the lakes, they were, perhaps, the most powerful of the tribes into which their nation was divided. They were noted for the courage and skill of their 'braves,' as the young warriors were called, and they were no less famous for the beauty and modesty of their maidens. The fame also of their wise men, the elders of the tribe, had spread through the land, and many another tribe envied them their firm and gentle governance.

Among the young men of the tribe, none was more highly esteemed by its elders than Ahdeck, the son of the chief. Brave, handsome, and kind-hearted, he was the beloved of the people. The young braves followed him on the war-path or to the chase with confidence; and many a bashful glance beamed from bright eyes, as Ahdeck, returning from the chase, passed by where the matrons of the tribe instructed the maidens in the simple arts of their nation. It was felt by all that when Gitche Manito (the Great Spirit) called away the old chief to the happy hunting-grounds, he would leave a capable successor behind him.

But if Ahdeck was the leader of the young braves, among the maidens no superior was acknowledged to Nokomis; lithe and agile as the mountain deer, her countenance—to use an Indian metaphor—was like the full moon. Among the youth of the opposite sex, a smile or a word from Nokomis was sufficient for a day's happiness. But gradually despondency spread among the young braves, as it became whispered about that the brave Ahdeck himself had fallen a victim to the innocent wiles of the winsome Nokomis. And who could hope to successfully compete with Ahdeck? The trophies of his skill and courage were laid by him at the feet of Nokomis; and the Indian maid's dark cheek glowed as she saw the meaning smiles of her

companions. But many a young brave was heart-sick for love of the dark-tressed Nokomis.

Now the time came round when a solemn annual festival was wont to be held by this tribe. Dwellers by the great lakes, and living within the ceaseless sound of the thundering cataract, great was their veneration for the Spirit of the Falls. And it had been declared by an ancient wise man that only so long as an awful annual tribute was paid, would the powerful Spirit continue to protect them. Therefore, it was the custom annually for the maidens of the tribe to draw lots; and the chosen one seated in a canoe gaily bedecked with fruit and flowers, floated down the river to meet certain destruction at the Falls. As this festival drew nigh, anxious depression filled the mind of Nokomis. Every year, as long as she could remember, a young and innocent maiden had been sacrificed in this manner. What if she drew the fatal lot? In vain did Ahdeck attempt to comfort his betrothed; the soul of the Indian girl was filled with dark forebodings of coming sorrow. Just as her life had reached its goal of happiness, the dark shadow of approaching grief hung threateningly before her. As Ahdeck wandered at night beneath the silvery birch-trees on the banks of the river, his heart sickened with anguish at the thought of the possible end to his hopes; and he formed the stern resolution that if Nokomis died, it should not be alone.

The fatal day drew rapidly nearer: at last it arrived. The maidens of the tribe were gathered around Nokomis, weeping, for, alas! the lot had been taken, and the beloved of Ahdeck was to die! Not to Nokomis had Ahdeck breathed a word of his resolve. And to neither of them had the thought of flight suggested itself; or if it had, only to be instantly dismissed as unworthy of an Indian.

The whole tribe was assembled on the bank of the river. All hearts were filled with sorrow and anguish, but none thought of violating the dreadful custom. To their simple minds, any deviation would have meant ruin, irretrievable and inevitable ruin for the whole tribe. It was a splendid autumnal dawn. A blaze of colour was on the foliage as the warm sun shed its beams over the far-reaching woods. To Ahdeck, nature seemed to mock him. How could the birds sing matins on such a day! He shuddered as he gazed upon the treacherous water, that rippled and dimpled in the early morning sunlight as if nothing unusual was about to happen, and thought how soon Nokomis would be lying stiff and lifeless beneath the waves!

Slowly the maiden drew near the bank, attended by her weeping friends. She was attired in white, her dark hair garlanded with the rich red autumn leaves. The last agonising farewells were made; but Ahdeck was absent. With piteous eyes, Nokomis looked around for him; but he was gone, and with a breaking heart, she stepped into the frail boat—which was decked with the gayest flowers that could be found—the hapless victim of an ignorant superstition. The priest of the tribe drew his knife and cut the rope that held the canoe to the shore, and slowly but with gathering speed it launched out into the current of the rapid flowing stream. The people gazed.

But see! another canoe has thrust out from

the bank, impelled by a vigorous arm. It is Ahdeck. The elders gaze anxiously. Is he about to rescue her! Then would they fear the wrath of the malevolent Spirit! But such is not his purpose. Swiftly he overtakes the canoe in which the unhappy girl is kneeling. With a cry of joy she welcomes him as he steps into her canoe; and hand clasped in hand, they float down the river, cheerfully acquiescing in the fate that permits them to die together. Swiftly and yet more swiftly they approach the frightful fall: one sudden swoop, and it is over! The awe-struck spectators peer fearfully into the deep dark pool beneath. For a minute the mingled tresses of the devoted pair are seen to dance on the white foam, and then disappear for ever.

It is not easy to describe the effect of the tragedy. Accustomed to the yearly tribute, the tribe had callously grown indifferent to the suffering involved. But now, the blank left by the death of Ahdeck and his bride made indifference impossible. Before the next festival came round, the camp was moved, and for many years the Falls were avoided. When they finally returned, the custom was never renewed. Not in vain had the lovers died!

Indian lovers, however, wandered on the river banks as before, and talked of the unhappy fate of Ahdeck and Nokomis, and glancing timidly at the deep blue sky above, pointed out to one another the bright twin-stars which appeared overhead at harvest-time; and told how the Great Spirit had taken compassion upon Ahdeck and Nokomis, and snatching them out of the cruel water, had placed them in the sky, for ever to adorn the bright heavens.

SONNET.—IN ILLNESS.

They also serve who only stand and wait.
MILTON.

'THE broken threads of life's all-tangled skein
I will take up when I am better!' So
The heart, hope-prompted, cries when that we grow
Each day more frail in illness, and the pain
Of dull inaction, knowing that but vain
Th' attempt to rouse the prostrate powers that now
No more their wonted active vigour show,
As if some palsy hand on them had lain!
Ah, it may be that in life's evening hours
The discipline is not to do, but *be*;
To know the broken threads no longer ours
To weave and fashion; and resignedly
To fold the hands—that wait the amaranth flowers
To clasp—in humble faith contentedly!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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SMAILHOLM TOWER.

A FEW miles north of the Tweed, in Roxburghshire, on an outcrop of trap rock nearly seven hundred feet above the level of the sea, stands the ancient and classic keep of Smailholm. It is seen from all the country round, standing, as Dr John Brown puts it, 'stark and upright as a warler.' It has two claims upon the interest of the literary reader. It was the witness of some entertaining episodes in the early life of Scott, and it was the scene of his strangely weird and eerie ballad 'The Eve of St John.'

Smailholm, more than the site of College Wynd in Edinburgh where Scott was born, and more than George Square where he was brought up, is closely associated with certain features of Sir Walter's life, because he, in his Autobiography, has recalled many graphic details of the period of his young life which he spent there. The rock on which Smailholm Tower is built is called Sandyknowe Crags, and near by stands Sandyknowe Farm. This farm was the birthplace of Sir Walter's father, and the residence in Scott's youth of his grandfather, Robert Scott. The 'Author of Waverley' was, as every one knows, a cripple—tall and strong and well built, but yet lame—the lameness being due to an inequality of the lower limbs. He had not, however, been born so. It was not till his eighteenth month that he was attacked by some kind of paralytic affection, which left him permanently lame. 'One night,' he says, 'I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed, and after being chased about the room, was apprehended and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility.' Next morning he was found to be affected with fever, and on the fourth day afterwards the melancholy discovery was made that the child had lost the power of his right leg.

It was in the hope that the boy, with his naturally good constitution, would throw off the partial paralysis, that he was sent to breathe the

free air of the country at his grandfather's high-lying farm of Sandyknowe. He was then about his third year, and it is characteristic of the wonderful powers of memory which he manifested in his mature years, that he so vividly recalls many episodes of his existence when but three years of age. 'It is here,' he says, 'at Sandyknowe, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies resorted to, to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that as often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcase of the animal. In this Tartar-like habili-ment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farmhouse, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl.' A neighbour and relation, old Sir George MacDougal of Makerston, in his cocked-hat and scarlet waistcoat, used also to assist on these occasions by getting down on his knees and dragging his watch across the carpet to induce the child to follow it. 'The benevolent old soldier,' as Scott remarks, 'and the infant wrapped in his sheep-skin, would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators.'

The boy being a favourite with the servants, was often carried up to the crags on which the old tower stands by his grandfather's shepherd or ewe-milkers, and here first dawned upon him some consciousness of the strange world that lay around him. In manhood, when he was writing 'Marmion,' he tells us how the remembrance of those early days and the tales he then heard still roused his feelings and glowed in his verse:

Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour....
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green....

I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its rounds surveyed ;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power.

It is difficult to estimate the influences which such a scene had upon the dawning consciousness of the boy, and almost useless to speculate about them. Genius works out its own ends, and scatters its riches where it wills. Other boys had wandered about those crags, and no doubt wondered, as Scott did, at the great tower, with its black blank window-spaces, its long winding stair, its battlemented summit, its ironed doorway ; and yet no strange thing thereby wrought in their brain. But to Scott it was precisely the environment in which the germ of genius within him could best fructify and ripen. The barren scene, the naked cliffs, the gaunt and empty tower—these, at first thought, looked but little qualified to excite the emotions or to fire the imagination. ‘Yet,’ says Scott—

Yet was poetic impulse given
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.

This ‘poetic impulse’ is indeed as the wind—we know not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.

If you would visit this spot in the uplands of the Merse sacred to the childhood of the Great Magician, it may be done either from Kelso or Dryburgh. It is a walk of seven miles either way, and as many more back. The most picturesque way is by Dryburgh, in which case the traveller by the Waverley Route leaves the train at St. Boswells Station, lying under the very shadow of the Eildons. A walk of a mile brings you to the Tweed, here spanned by a foot-bridge, and giving a glimpse of the river as it sweeps down from Old Melrose and Bemersyde, and plunges beneath the red cliffs on which the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey stand. And here, in passing, you may pause and turn aside by that ivy-mantled wall, which leads you along a winding path between the shining boles of overhanging beeches, and there before you is the beautiful fragment of St Mary’s Aisle, which holds within its solemn precincts the sacred dust of Scott. Let us recall that sombre September day—’tis now sixty years since—when he was borne thither to his final rest.

‘The courtyard,’ says Lockhart, ‘and all the precincts of Abbotsford, were crowded with uncovered spectators as the procession was arranged ; and as it advanced through Darnick and Melrose, and the adjacent villages, the whole population appeared at their doors in like manner, almost all in black. The train of carriages extended over more than a mile—the Yeomanry followed in great numbers on horseback—and it was late in the day when we reached Dryburgh. Some accident, it was observed, had caused the hearse to halt for several minutes on the summit of the hill at Bemersyde—exactly where a prospect of remarkable richness opens, and where Sir Walter had always been accustomed to rein up his horse. The day was dark and lowering, and the wind

high. The wide enclosure at the Abbey of Dryburgh was thronged with old and young ; and when the coffin was taken from the hearse, and again laid on the shoulders of the afflicted serving-men, one deep sob burst from a thousand lips. Mr Archdeacon Williams read the Burial Service of the Church of England ; and thus, about half-past five in the evening, the remains of Sir Walter Scott were laid by the side of his wife in the sepulchre of his ancestors—“in sure and certain hope.”

This old abbey where we now are, is one of the most picturesque ruins in Borderland. The green plateau on which it stands is half encircled by the full-flowing Tweed ; and the many aged trees—oak and ash and melancholy yew—planted by hands that have long since mouldered in the churchyard dust, give an aspect of serene awe and beauty to the place. Around the ruins, underneath the scattered headstones of the graveyard, reposes the common dust of common men ; but here, in St Mary’s Aisle, is the granite cenotaph that covers the sleeping-place of him who yet liveth, and shall live for evermore.

But let us leave him here in his dreamless sleep, and seek the heights where the tower of Smailholm stands. Thither, there are more roads than one ; but any native will point out the hill road by Mertoun Mill, and near Mertoun House, in which Scott wrote ‘The Eve of St John’—leading amid umbrageous trees down to the Tweed, where it sweeps along in unbroken majesty. It is an old road that thence runs upwards, with deep ruts, and long-intended roadway, rough with stones. It reminds one of an English lane, with its steep banks on either side, rich with the summer’s greenest grass, long and wind-shaken, and thickly set with wild-flowers. Upwards it runs, now between high hedgerows, and now beneath the dark shadow of scented firs, till, after an hour and more, you come out on the high moor at the back of Smailholm Crag, and there, before you in the distance, is the old tower, looking more than ever bare and barren after the rich peninsula of Dryburgh, its rocky site led up to by stretches of bog-land and stunted heath—a dreary wilderness, brown, desolate, wind-smitten.

When the castle itself is reached, it is found to be a tall and narrow Border keep of the conventional type of the sixteenth century. It was built by one of the Pringles, in the days when the Pringles were a numerous and powerful sept in the Merse and by Tweedside. The tower stands at one corner of the courtyard, or ‘barmkin ;’ but only a fragment of the inclosing walls remains. There are also some vestiges of a small chapel. The tower itself is intact. Unlike Bemersyde Tower, which otherwise it closely resembles, Smailholm has only one vaulted room—namely, that on the ground-floor. Usually the roof of the hall on the first floor is arched over, or vaulted, also ; but in Smailholm the ceiling of the hall must have been a flat one of oaken beams, the stone supports for which on each side still exist. The tower is accessible on three sides of the sloping ascent ; but on the fourth or south side, its site terminates just under the walls in a precipice of rock, at the foot of which lies a gloomy and stagnant lochlet of brown bog-water. Beyond this, a few hundred yards down the

southern slope of the hill, stands the farm of Sandyknowe, which we have just alluded to as the scene of Scott's infantile recollections, and all around are the rocks and crags and patches of velvety green as they impressed themselves on his childish imagination.

But the mystic spell which hangs about the old keep is not due either to its historical associations—for these are of the meagrest—or to its immediate surroundings, which are commonplace, though wild. That spell is due to 'The Eve of St John.' Scott wrote this ballad in 1799 at Mertoun House, and the subject was suggested to him half in jest. He had been urging his relative and host, Lord Polwarth, to make certain repairs upon Smailholm Tower, which was in parts dilapidated. His lordship assented, on the condition, half playfully made, that Scott should write a ballad of which Smailholm should be the scene. Scott agreed. Up to this time, though he was then twenty-eight years of age, Scott had not written anything of notable merit. He had made a few rhymed translations, and composed a few fragments in ballad style; but, under the inspiration of Smailholm, and his early reminiscences of it, he struck out at once, in 'The Eve of St John,' a piece of genuine ballad poetry, deeply infused with weird and wild imaginings, heightened by the gloomy and eerie imagery that well befitted the dark superstition embodied in its verse. Never, in all his writings, did Scott again touch so deep a note of unholy glamour, except perhaps in that fearful episode in 'Redgauntlet,' written twenty-five years later—'Wandering Willie's Tale'—as enthralling and blood-chilling a story of the supernatural as was ever uttered, its lurid horrors lighted up by an occasional gleam of humour that does not make the reader laugh, only deepens the spell of nameless terror in which he is held bound. Let any one who is fascinated with the artificial supernaturalism and wonder-mongering of certain of our modern novelists, lay these later efforts for a moment aside, and once more turn to Letter the Eleventh in 'Redgauntlet,' and read in its proper setting 'Wandering Willie's Tale.'

The view from the top of Smailholm Tower is one of the most far-reaching and magnificent in the south of Scotland—from the sea at Berwick-on-Tweed on the east to the far hills of Ettrick and Yarrow on the west; from the Lammermoors on the north to the blue girdle of the Cheviots that shut in the southern borders of Teviotdale. You can still enter the tower-gate as did the Baron of Smailholm, and mount the narrow stair to the bartizan-seat; and though you will not there find the lady, 'with maids that on her wait,' you can yet look as she looked 'over hill and vale,'

O'er Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

On your right is the Watchfold, where the beacon-lights were wont to blaze out their stormy warnings, and where the Lady of Smailholm held unholy tryst; and behind you is 'the rocky way' which 'leads to Brotherstone,' by which the vengeful Baron, 'without stop or stay,' rode forth on his revengeful quest. Standing on the summit of Smailholm you can see the Borderland as perhaps it cannot be seen from any other given

point, with its richly-mingling hill and vale, wood and stream, all heightened by the charm of old associations, and illumined by the light that was never yet on sea or land.

J. R.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.—WHAT WILL SHE DO WITH IT?

NEXT day there commenced a new epoch in Isabel's life. Her uncle came early, as he had promised, and at once opened his business to her.

'Well, my dear,' said he, 'poor Uncle Harry's gone, and he couldn't take his hard-won brass with him. To do him justice, he was not the kind of man that wanted to; he knew he'd have to leave it—though he hoped to enjoy it a little longer himself—and, to do him justice again, knowing he had it to leave, my dear, he fixed on the best heir to it that he could have chosen. I know that, my girl, because I saw the will when it was drawn up, and I am set down in it as executor. And who, do you think now, my lady, he has appointed his heir?'

'It would be absurd,' said Isabel, turning very pale, 'to pretend, uncle, that I don't know what you mean, and whom you mean, and that I don't now understand what you were hinting at yesterday. But I think you must be mistaken.'

'No mistake at all,' said Mr Suffield. 'You're his heir, my girl—and the best he could have chosen.'

'Still, uncle dear,' persisted Isabel, 'I would not be too sure about it. It was some weeks ago—was it not?—that he made that will; and things have happened since then: he was made angry and disappointed: he may have made another will that you don't know of.'

'Another will?' exclaimed Suffield, blushing with indignation. 'He wouldn't do such a thing! No, no. His property is all personal, and you've come into the enjoyment of it, to the tune of three or four thousand a year.'

'Three or four thousand a year,' exclaimed Mr Raynor, who had listened with interest, but unmoved until now. 'Has Harry made all that?'

'He has, John,' answered Suffield: 'coined it out of his brains and blood, you may say.'

Mr Raynor looked deeply envious an instant, then his brow cleared, and he rose and came to his daughter and took both her hands in his.

'I congratulate you, my child,' said he, in a voice that thrilled with emotion. 'I have not been able to provide for you as I ought; but I rejoice exceedingly that it has been reserved for one of my own blood to provide for you so nobly. That, to my mind, reflects a generous lustre back over Harry's whole life.'

'What?' said Suffield. 'Did you find Harry's life needed something of that sort, then, John?—But we had better not discuss it. We must go to the lawyer's, my dear, to see the details of the thing.'

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'I am ashamed,' said Isabel, 'that we should be talking of it at all now! It seems so dreadfully inhuman to be counting his gold over his dead body! Poor, dear Uncle Harry! I did nothing for him!—nothing at all!—that he should shower his wealth on me! Oh, I can't believe it's true! There *must* be a mistake!'

'You see, my dear,' said the practical Mr Sutfield, 'he was bound to shower it on somebody—unless, of course, he left it to an institution; and Harry always thought more of persons than of institutions—as I do.—But you must come away with me and make sure about it.'

So Isabel set out with her uncle; and her father settled down to talk of these strange and surprising matters with Doughty, who had just come in. At the lawyer's it was found that Mr Sutfield was right: that the will he spoke of existed, and that no other was known to exist. Unless, therefore, another will should be found among Uncle Harry's papers, when they came to be carefully examined, Isabel without doubt inherited all his property, with certain insignificant exceptions of small gratuities and presents bestowed here and there—notable among which was a legacy of fifty pounds to Daniel Trichinopoly.

A few days were enough to settle the point whether there was another will, and none being found, Isabel was, almost before she was aware, inducted into 'the usufruct' of her uncle's estate. It is not necessary to dwell on the details of this transition time. Two things only need be particularly mentioned: first, that she gave notice at the 'College for Ladies' that she would not return there after the end of the term—she did that with great good-will, though she thereby made herself liable to a fine of a term's salary; for she was not of those who take delight in the drudgery of teaching—and, second, that she had a long talk with Alan Ainsworth concerning her new prospects and designs.

Alan, having heard of the death and burial of Mr Harry Raynor, had let a becoming interval elapse before calling again on his friends in the Marylebone lodgings. It thus happened that he chanced to call on the very evening before the day when Isabel and her father purposed to travel with the Sutfields to the seaside. Mr Raynor—who sat alone with Alexander—at once opened the subject which in those days occupied much of his attention. Had Ainsworth heard of the extraordinary change in Isabel's lot? No; Mr Ainsworth had not. Not that she was the sole heir of Harry's property, and was now the recipient of something like three or four thousand pounds a year? No; Mr Ainsworth had not heard. And it might have been remarked, whether Mr Raynor remarked it or not, that while he made the admission Mr Ainsworth turned ghastly pale.

Then Isabel came in, and said she had been packing in view of their journey next day.

'And you were going,' said Ainsworth, 'without giving me an opportunity of saying "good-bye"?''

'I thought,' said she humbly, with a fresh touch of red on her cheek, 'since we had not seen you for some time, that you must be very busy, and would not care to be troubled: you have been very much occupied of late—have you not?'

'And,' said he, 'I understand you must have been very much occupied too: "The queen was in her parlour, counting up her money." You are now, I believe, the mistress of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice.'

'Oh,' said she, glancing towards her father with a slight contraction of her beautiful brows, 'my father has been telling you: he is full of the subject.'

'May I congratulate you?' said Ainsworth. 'I hope you will be happy in its possession, and I am sure you will spend it well.'

She looked at him frankly and half-sadly. 'You do not seem pleased,' said she, 'that it should have come to me.'

'Then,' said he, in his impulsive way, 'I am very ungenerous. But I *am* glad, truly glad, of your good fortune so far as it is good, and I hope you will be happy in spite of it.'—'You are going away,' he said, turning again suddenly to Isabel: 'if you can spare the time from your packing, let us all take a walk in the park, as we used to do. There will be no more walks when you return from your holiday; you will then be fully invested with your golden splendour, and nothing but carriage exercise must be thought of.'

'Yes,' said she; 'let us go into the park; but you must promise not to talk any more in that absurd strain.'

'I promise,' said he humbly.

Now it so happened that these two young people with the sincerest desire to be in accord were at cross-purposes of outlook. Ainsworth thought that Isabel's fortune now made all the difference in the world between them—and Mr Raynor had innocently emphasised that conclusion—while Isabel did not take her fortune into account as making any difference at all. The intent, therefore, of what each said to the other was a great deal misunderstood. Isabel saw that Ainsworth was disposed to make much of her altered circumstances, though she did not apprehend that he thought a gulf was now fixed between them, and she gaily and generously set herself to make him feel that she was the same Isabel as before, only with greater means to benefit her friends; while all these efforts to engage him in her interests Ainsworth took as more and more evidence that she was rejoicing in the new prospects that opened up for herself. He was very foolish; but remember he was at heart very sad and sore.

'I do verily believe,' said she, while her bright dark eyes sparkled as they stepped along together to the park, 'that you imagine I am going to turn all the gold poor Uncle Harry has left into a pedestal, and that I shall stand on top of it above all the common world I have known.'

'I suppose,' said he, 'that there is gold enough to make a pedestal of.'

'I daresay there is,' said she.

'I do think,' said he, 'that it is far too much for one person. What can one person do with so much?'

'Do?' she exclaimed mischievously. 'You do not seem to give me much credit for resource. First, I mean to spend a good deal on myself. I shall have as many new dresses as I like, and I shall get them made by the best dress-makers and the best tailors.'

'To attract,' said he, 'the attention of mankind all the day long!'

'Well, sir,' said she, 'and why not?'

'Why not, indeed?'

'But,' said she, 'you are wrong in thinking that a woman dresses to please men: she dresses chiefly to make other women envious.'

'Truly?' asked he, in his simplicity.

'Certainly,' said she. 'And then I mean to have a handsomely furnished flat: I have really very luxurious tastes.'

'Well,' said he, 'suppose all these personal expenses consume one of the thousands, what do you propose to do with the others?'

'There is my father,' said she seriously. 'And, really and truly, I confess that if it were not for him and for another purpose I have long thought of, I would rather, I think, not have the money: I would hand it over to my uncle, who has done so much for me, to whom I owe so much.'

'You would add water to the ocean,' said Ainsworth.

'Yes,' said she, 'it might look something like that. But I don't intend to do it. I have plans for my father that I cannot tell you about now. And then I have a great scheme which I used to dream about before there was any likelihood of my giving it practical shape: I want to make a Home for Aged Governesses. People have written about old donkeys: Dickens—or one of his young men—wrote an article about them once, as you know, of course, and asked what became of them; but no one has ever troubled to inquire about aged governesses, not even the parents of the children to whom they have been in place of parents. What becomes of them when they cannot play the part of parents any more? I don't know; but I wish to make sure that so many as I can entertain, who have no home of their own to go to, shall live in a big house I shall provide, where they will sometimes see younger governesses to remind them of past days—governesses who wish to take a holiday in town, or to look out for a situation.'

'Oh,' said Ainsworth, 'you would have your Home in London, then?'

'Certainly,' answered Isabel.

'Not at the seaside, or in the country?'

'Mr Ainsworth,' said Isabel, 'I did not think you would be so dull as not perceive my reasons for choosing London. Governesses have had enough in their lives of the seaside and the country; they are sick of the seaside and the country; and they do not need fresh air nearly so much as they need some wholesome excitement.'

'You are bent on giving them distractions and excitements, then?' said Ainsworth. 'That policy may have its advantage: you will kill them off quickly.'

'Really!' exclaimed Isabel, with a laugh, 'your misanthropy, or, rather, your misogyny, to-night is startling! But you are wrong again, Mr Ainsworth. Sufficient distraction and excitement are as necessary to civilised people as sufficient food—that, you must know, is the best scientific opinion—and my aged governesses shall have sufficient and no more, and so they shall prolong their days in the land. I'll make contracts with all managers of theatres'—

'Why not of music-halls?' interrupted Ainsworth.

'I must draw the line somewhere,' said Isabel; 'and I draw it there. The managers, I have no doubt, would be willing to quote reduced prices to a regular, and, as you may say, wholesale, customer.'

'I doubt very much if they would,' laughed Ainsworth—'especially to such a very wealthy person as you will be known to be.'

'Well,' said Isabel, 'let that pass; but I think I could prevail on them.'

'Oh,' exclaimed he, glancing with compulsory admiration at her noble and charming presence, 'if it comes to that, I have no doubt you could.'

'Then I should sometimes have Home dances. And you must come, Mr Ainsworth, and dance with my Aged.'

'I, Miss Raynor?' cried Ainsworth in abashed astonishment. 'I should be delighted, but I can't dance a bit!'

'Then, you must learn,' said she peremptorily.

'If I must, I must,' said he. 'When a great lady commands, she must be obeyed,' he added with a foolish and feeble touch of sarcasm.

'Of course,' said Isabel quietly, making the touch of sarcasm of none avail. 'And,' she continued, 'you must be one of my Committee of gentlemen. I don't know what I want a Committee for, since I intend to manage the Home myself; but it seems to be the regular and proper thing to have in such a case, and I intend to do all decently and in order.'

'Oh, a Committee,' laughed Ainsworth, 'need not interfere with your management. All it need do is to hear minutes, to propose, second, discuss, and accept or reject motions; and all you need do is to provide your Committee with a room to sit in, and a table to sit at, the table being furnished with a bottle of water and a tumbler.'

'And,' said she, 'Uncle George must be Chairman of Committee, and you must be Secretary.—Dear Uncle George! I should like to see him ruling the Committee with his gentle rod. He wouldn't say "Bo!" to the greatest goose or bore, for fear of hurting his feelings.'

'And what shall Mr Raynor and Alexander be?' asked Ainsworth.

'My father,' said Isabel with sudden seriousness, 'and Mr Doughty must be left out of this: I have other things in contemplation for them.'

Thus they talked and walked; and before they were quite aware, they were back again at the gate of the lodgings. Ainsworth refused to go in, but he lingered over his adieu to Isabel.

'I suppose,' said he, 'this is the last time I shall see you here. When you return to London, it will be to the luxurious flat and the splendid dresses; though I shall think of you,' said he with an instant's abandonment, 'as in these lodgings and in the dresses I know. I have behaved brutally to-night!' he exclaimed in a tremulous tone that startled, and moved her. 'I have been very ungenerous! Forgive me!'

'Oh, no; don't say that!' said she, scarcely knowing what she said, but impulsively giving him her hand again.

'God bless you!' said he. He pressed her hand, and was gone with a lump in his throat.

And she thought that his feeling was only the tenderest friendship, and he thought that hers was pleasant preoccupation with the change in her affairs!

SOME FACTS ABOUT MARINE SURVEYING.

THE stranding of the battle-ship *Howe*, and subsequent court-martial on the Admiral commanding the Channel Squadron, has directed public attention in this country to the inaccuracy of the Spanish charts. This discovery not unnaturally led to a good deal of ignorant criticism of the Hydrographic Department of our own Admiralty, which in some quarters has been unduly censured for issuing those charts for the guidance of our own navigators. How far the department deserves blame in this matter need not here be discussed; but in view of the desirability of the vote for the Hydrographic Department being materially increased, it may be interesting briefly to describe the extent of the work carried out by our naval surveyors, and to give, from personal experience, some particulars of the mode in which a Marine Survey is conducted.

The whole of the charts of British territory, including of course our colonial possessions, are compiled by a handful of naval officers attached to the Hydrographic Department as volunteers. These officers—only fifty-three in number—are bona-fide naval officers, who have adopted this particular branch of the service, and who for the most part join it after attaining the rank of Lieutenant. The elements of marine surveying are now taught at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, through which every executive officer is required to pass before he is granted the rank of Sub-lieutenant; but it is not until after an officer actually joins the surveying service that he usually acquires any practical knowledge of the work, and the Commander of a surveying ship is required to train his junior officers personally. As regards the area that has to be surveyed by our Hydrographic Department, it is noteworthy that although nearly the whole of the coast-line of the civilised world has been at least partially examined, either by British or foreign surveyors, yet the enormous increase of sea-traffic renders it essential to re-survey every coast and harbour frequented by shipping; and consequently, the work is practically endless. A large portion of the Mediterranean has from time to time been surveyed by British vessels; the charts of the Red Sea are also English; and for the past twenty years one or more of our few surveying ships have been constantly employed on the coasts of China and Japan.

The eight surveying ships now in commission are distributed as follows: Three are constantly engaged, except in the winter, on the examination of the coasts and harbours of the British Isles; two are on the China coast; two in Australian waters; and one in the Mediterranean. There are also a few small-hired vessels engaged in the survey of India and of the Newfoundland coast; but the deficiency of officers renders it absolutely impossible to maintain surveying ships elsewhere, and this is one of the points to which the attention

of Parliament is likely to be drawn at an early date.

Turning from generalities to particulars, it will be readily understood that the interest in a marine survey is usually greater when the area to be examined is new ground. There are still hundreds of miles of coast-line practically unsurveyed, or where the coast has been merely sketched in roughly. A vessel despatched to any of those districts has plenty of hard, but exceedingly interesting work before her. In such circumstances the first thing to be done is to ascertain the exact geographical position of the starting-point of the proposed survey, and this is usually accomplished by means of very careful observations, taken by practised officers. Observations of the sun are useless for this purpose, owing to the unavoidable errors of refraction, so that the position is invariably fixed by the stars. These observations are taken at a selected point on shore by means of an artificial horizon—that is, a small tank of mercury. Meanwhile, a base-line is carefully measured, one end of which is ultimately fixed—that is, its exact position is ascertained—by the star observations. The direction of this base-line, and its exact length, being also determined, the surveyor is thus enabled to draw a line on his blank chart, and from this single line the whole survey of the coast can be continued by triangulation. But the accuracy of the triangulation depends from first to last upon the measurement of the original base-line, so that the greatest care is necessary at the outset. After the triangulation has progressed to a small extent, errors can readily be discovered. Without going too much into details, it may be explained that triangulation is effected by means of the theodolite, a mathematical instrument by which vertical and horizontal angles can be taken with great nicety, and the use of which is easily learned. The same kind of instrument is used by land-surveyors; and for the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain one or two of unusual dimensions were constructed.

But to resume. For coast purposes a network of triangles is connected by means of these theodolite angles, and the positions of all prominent mountains visible from the sea are carefully set down. In some cases it may be necessary to send an officer and a party of men some miles inland for the purpose, and a difficult ascent may have to be made, as it is essential that the angles should be taken from the summit of the mountain. Sometimes on a clear day all the angles can be obtained in a few hours; but unless the atmosphere is clear, the party has to camp on the hill, and there remain until peaks farther up the coast come into view. The sailors, as a rule, greatly enjoy those tenting parties, and welcome such breaks in the monotony of a coast survey, and it is at such times that the ubiquitous character of the British seaman may best be studied. The men drag a tent up the mountain-side and pitch it somewhere near the summit, for the convenience of the officer in charge. They also have to take the necessary provisions, and sometimes fresh water in addition. Meanwhile, if there is any prospect of delay, the ship proceeds farther up the coast and lands similar small parties at other points. I thus spent a week on one occasion on a small barren rock on

the coast of China, together with four seamen and a marine servant; and our small stock of water was nearly exhausted before the ship was able to return to take us off. That, however, was regarded as quite an ordinary incident of a marine survey. On another occasion, a brother-surveyor, who was also landed on a small rock off the coast, had the unpleasant experience of being made a target of by a passing man-of-war. Needless to say the captain of the ship had no notion that the desolate-looking rock was temporarily occupied; but for an hour or more my friend and his men were in great peril, and only escaped destruction by crouching on the farther side of the rock while the shot and shell crashed against the diminutive island. Ultimately, the ship proceeded on her way without a soul on board having observed the angry and terrified surveyors.

The actual sounding is perhaps the most important work of the marine surveyor, although, as I have endeavoured to explain, this cannot be begun until after a variety of 'stations' on the coast have been fixed on the chart. The reason is this: the position of every sounding has to be accurately ascertained, and this can only be done by means of sextant angles. Thus, suppose the surveying ship to be running lines of soundings off some previously unsurveyed coast. She is running, perhaps, from a point above five miles seaward directly towards the land. The lead is dropped from the bows, and simultaneously two officers take angles to fix the ship's exact position. The bearings are laid off by means of an instrument termed the 'Station Pointer,' and at the point indicated the sounding is at once 'plotted' on the sheet. This process is repeated at short intervals; but it is not necessary to observe angles at every cast of the lead, as the vessel is kept on a straight course, and the speed being known, the soundings are divided between the points thus fixed every few minutes. These angles with the sextants, it will be understood, are taken between the hills or other prominent objects on shore, previously fixed by triangulation. When the soundings are regular, and shoal gradually as the coast is approached, it may usually be assumed that no hidden rocks lie in the immediate vicinity: but should the lead betray a sudden decrease of depth, the position of the ship is promptly ascertained, and a thorough examination of the neighbourhood has subsequently to be made. Pinnacle rocks are the most dangerous to navigation, and by far the most difficult to discover; but, strangely enough, a surveying ship is very rarely injured, as the constant use of the lead usually indicates a danger in sufficient time to avert disaster.

In a somewhat similar manner the inshore soundings are taken in the ship's boats. Here the work is necessarily carried out under greater difficulties, but the process of fixing the positions of the soundings is identical. Both ships and boats run parallel lines of soundings, the intervals between which have to be regulated according to the nature of the bottom and the anticipation of probable dangers. The boats can of course approach suspected rocks without risk; but as the ship cannot do this, she is principally employed when sufficient depth of water may reasonably be looked for. It is a fact insufficiently appreci-

ated even by nautical men that a marine chart, however carefully compiled, does not profess to indicate every hidden danger that may exist. There are necessarily intervals between the lines of soundings which cannot be examined, and it is only in frequented harbours that the marine surveyor is usually able to make so complete an examination as to justify the absolute confidence of the navigator in its accuracy. All coast charts have therefore to be used with discretion and with due regard to the possibility, not of actual errors, perhaps, but of errors of omission. Unfortunately, as I have said, this fact is insufficiently appreciated, and this is one of the reasons why ships are constantly wrecked even in the trade-routes of the world. I must not omit to mention the fact that the accuracy of the soundings is determined by careful tidal observations. To this end, tide-poles are erected whilst the sounding is in progress, and the rise and fall is noted for several weeks. The rise and fall is thus calculated; and, as a precautionary measure, the soundings set down on our charts indicate the least depth that will be found at any time—that is, at low-water ordinary spring-tides.

The actual production of the chart is an equally interesting process, which I have no space to describe in detail, and which taxes the accuracy of the surveyor to the full. The preliminary work, as may have been gathered from the above particulars, is executed on the officers' 'field-boards.' From thence, the soundings, &c., are transferred to a large sheet, kept in the chart-room; and from this plan, a fair sheet is ultimately drawn. The fair sheet is sent home to the Hydrographic Office in an air-tight tin case, and from it the Admiralty engravers produce the published charts, which are sold to the public at an absurdly small cost.

THE SACRED BEETLE.*

By LAMONT GREME.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

SOME years ago—a good many—I was putting up at Shephard's Hotel in Cairo. This place is a veritable caravanserai of travellers. Men and women of all ranks, classes, and nationalities then frequented it, and I reckon they continue to do so to this day. The babel of tongues, the many various languages constantly striking on one's ear, would have been, perhaps, tiresome and wearying to most men; but to a hardened old rolling-stone of a bachelor like myself the admixture was profoundly interesting. Most of the languages spoken were familiar to me; and I derived great interest from studying the different representatives of nations who made Shephard's Hotel a halting-place for a short or prolonged space of time, as the case might be.

One naturally gravitates in such a crowd towards one or two men who seem of a congenial spirit. Such a one I discovered in an American—a Colonel Merritt. Tall, well built, and a thorough gentleman, he attracted my attention almost immediately; a few casual words led to our monopolising a little marble-topped table to ourselves for after-dinner coffee and cigarettes; and our conse-

* The Right of Dramatisation reserved.

quent talk cemented a friendship which I hope to improve later on in the Colonel's own country. Every night we would sit out under the stars smoking and chatting; and at length, after some three weeks of acquaintanceship, the Colonel related the tale to me which I propose to lay before my readers. But as he told it in rather a disjointed fashion, beginning where the adventure concerned himself, then passing on to its termination, and finally winding up with what should have been the prologue, I have ventured to take upon myself to put it 'ship-shape,' or, as children always ask one to do, 'to begin at the beginning.'

It is needless to remark, after this preamble, that the story in itself is not my own: it is Colonel Merritt's. But the shaping and fashioning of it are mine, and therefore any faultiness in the construction and retailing thereof must be laid to my charge. It is a very strange experience for this nineteenth century—for the end of it—although Edison and others have so familiarised us with marvels that we should not pose as bigoted unbelievers in any tale, however astounding it may appear to our ordinary everyday senses. Rather should we exclaim with Hamlet that 'there are more things,' &c., and wonder, more especially when we remember that Egypt was the birthplace—at least I believe so—of very extraordinary things in the way of magic and science. Be that as it may, this story is one of the strangest I ever came across, and as such I deliver it over to my readers, premising only that it is perfectly true—according to the Colonel's word of honour—and that the reason it was not more universally known is that the actors therein were too ashamed of the parts they played, or were made to play, to say anything about it publicly.

These few remarks concluded, I will proceed with the tale of 'The Sacred Beetle.'

The clocks were chiming midnight from the various church towers of the ancient university town of Böllingen. After a few moments' pause, the bells of all the sacred edifices in the city broke out into a simultaneous clash and clang. It was the 31st of December 187, and they were bidding adieu to the old year and welcoming in the new. The night was calm and clear, but bitterly cold; and the moon poured floods of silvered light over the snow-clad roofs and streets, rendering the latter as clear as day, and intensifying, by comparison, the shadows of the buildings and trees which stretched themselves in flat black patches over the whitened ground. The stars twinkled brightly in the frosty air, and the voices of those who were hardy and bold enough to venture out to the midnight services rang sharply and distinctly through the keen atmosphere.

Dr Carl von Eberstein sat alone in his study on the second floor of the house wherein he lodged, poring intently over an ancient-looking, yellow scrap of parchment scrawled over with numerous symbols and—seemingly—algebraical signs, while by his side and on the floor lay scattered a number of loose sheets of paper covered with calculations and writing. As the sound of the chiming bells struck on his ear, he raised his head as though to listen, and then, pushing his documents from him, he rose, and,

drawing aside the curtains, gazed out into the starlit night. He was a man of about thirty-five, tall and well built, with fair hair, beard and moustaches, a handsome, though slightly wearied-looking face, and clear blue eyes. A very favourable specimen of the German type, and good to look upon.

'Ay! ring on,' he muttered as the bells leaped and jangled in their delight that a new year was born—'ring on! Do ye triumph in that I have discovered some grand old mystery of science, perchance, or do ye mock at me and my endeavours? Nay; let me rather assume the former;' and flinging open the window, he leaned his elbows on the sill and allowed the pure air to play about his throbbing temples. The bells were silent now, and the little retired street in which he lived lay sunk in repose. Presently he heard cheerful accents approaching, and then a clear tenor broke out into a song, the words and tune of which were at once caught up by eight or ten other men's voices, and the refrain rang out melodiously on the night:

We love the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the merry Moon;
We greet her smile in winter;
And we laugh with her in June;
The sun's broad face may bear the trace
Of mirthsome mood and jest,
But oh! the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the Moon the best.

By this time the student choristers had arrived beneath the Doctor's open window, and, glancing up, espied him leaning out.

'Good-evening, Professor,' they shouted. 'Are you bidding a tender farewell to another departed year?'

'Ay, ay, my lads,' responded Dr Carl, 'although after a somewhat different fashion from yourselves.—But good-night—good-night; it's time for bed.'

'Schlafen sie wohl,' was the reply, and with this cheery wish and a unanimous 'Happy New Year to you!' the little party moved on homewards, breaking out again, as they went, into their song:

The little stars peep out, peep out,
The little stars peep out,
And shudder into shade again
To hear our merry shout;
So let them shrink and nod and blink,
And blush at joke and jest,
But oh! the Moon, the merry Moon,
We love the Moon the best.

The chorus died away gradually, fainter and fainter as it receded, into the distance; and the Professor leaned thoughtfully against the side of his open window, listening to the melody as it came floating back to him in scarcely audible harmonies. Then he carefully closed the sash, drew the curtains, and strolled over to the fireplace, where he stood chafing his hands before the welcome blaze.

'Happy youth!' he murmured. 'What do they care about the future? No serious reflections, no weighty problems, trouble their light hearts. How they would laugh did they but get an inkling of the work their sober Professor of Oriental Languages has been this night engaged in. Well—let me see the result of my labours again, and make certain that there is no

mistake. Who would have thought that I should have discovered this old manuscript while unrolling that mummy some days ago! And still less, who would have dreamed of the tremendous secret therein contained! And yet it is not all unravelled; the mystery is not yet clear; let me see again.' And taking the parchment and a sheet of paper with writing on it from his table, he drew a chair close to the fire and commenced comparing the two documents. After half an hour's careful study, he raised his head. 'Yes, the translation of the cipher seems correct. How does it sound?' And he read off in slow, distinct accents the following:

'Stranger, whosoever you may be into whose hands these words may fall, know that I was the Priest Amunophis of the holy temple of Osiris. Owing to my skill in and aptitude for the various sciences and magical mysteries of our craft, I was admitted by our high-priest to his sole intimacy. From him and with him I learned much mystical lore, but in so doing I lost health and character—the former owing to my excessive toil and zeal; and the latter to the unholy reputation of wizard, which clung to me. Shortly before his death, the high-priest summoned me to his private chamber, and there exhibited to me, in great secrecy, a small, perfectly-formed, bronze beetle—a "scarab." "This," said he, "you must enfold carefully in prepared linen, and deposit on my bosom when I am embalmed and laid in my tomb. Its virtues are so potent and so dangerous, that I have determined none shall possess it, and I am forbidden to destroy it, now that it is fashioned. Swear to perform my bidding." I swore; and at his death I fulfilled my oath. Being now myself about to die, I have enjoined that this scroll should be wrapped with me in my shroud; and if it be the will of the gods, the Sacred Beetle shall, through my means, emerge from its obscure resting-place and complete its destined task, though what powers may be attributed to it I know not. If, therefore, thou fearest not, proceed to Phih, and seek along the river for the Temple of Abou-Symbel, which is dedicated to the worship of Osiris. In the innermost chamber are four figures, seated each on a throne. Under the feet of the second figure from the right as you behold them is situated the tomb of the high-priest Menhartis. It lies at the bottom of a deep pit, in a rock-hewn cavity wherein are three sarcophagi. The one in the farthest corner from the entrance is that of the high-priest. Remove the cover; unroll the mummy; and on its breast, folded in many wrappings, will be found the object of your search—the Sacred Beetle. Appropriate it, oh venture—some one! and test its powers, be they for good or ill; and blame not me, but thine own foolhardy inquisitiveness, should the result prove the latter. Farewell.'

The Professor ceased, and an expression of deep gravity overspread his features. 'Shall I take the matter in hand?' he soliloquised. 'If I do, I will carry the adventure through to the end be the issue what it may.—But pshaw! Am I to believe in talismans with magical properties in this nineteenth century? And yet'—Here he fell to musing again. Presently he rose, filled his pipe, fetched his Bradshaw and an atlas, and

began to map out the journey. His cogitations and his pipe were finished at the same moment. His face lightened. 'I can have a six months' holiday,' he exclaimed briskly, 'and I will take it. I will start at the earliest possible date, and I will get to the bottom of this affair; and if there be any elucidation of the mystery, I will fathom it. And now to bed.'

So saying, he carefully locked up his precious manuscript and its translation, and retired to his couch to dream, disturbed by visions of tombs, and Pharaohs, and magical scarabs, all of which played havoc with his bewildered brain.

HINTS FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.

It may not be generally known that tough meat can be made tender by laying it a few minutes in vinegar. Remember not to salt fresh meat when frying until it is nearly cooked, as salting makes the juice of the meat run out, and the meat is not so tender. The general rule for roasting is to allow fifteen minutes to a pound, provided the fire be good, and ten or twenty minutes over, according as the family like it well done or not. Perhaps few people think how much better a leg of mutton looks if boiled in a coarse muslin cloth or white netting.

Does every housewife recollect how to remove the strong flavour of poultry? The fowl should be washed in soda-water, rinsed in cold water, and wiped dry.

How many housekeepers are competent judges of fresh eggs or fish? In judging the former, you should notice that a fresh egg has a lime-like surface; stale eggs are glossy and smooth of shell. Firmness of the flesh and clearness of the eyes are the great criteria of any fish being fresh and good. Fresh fish also lie in a slightly curved position, and never quite straight. Herrings and cod are known by the redness of their gills and clearness of the eyes. It is worth recollecting that salt fish is best and quickest freshened by soaking in sour milk; and that all fried fish should be dried in sheets of paper in front of the fire.

Lobsters, crabs, and crayfish, when recently caught, always retain some remains of muscular action in the claws, which may be excited by pressing the eyes with the fingers. Shrimps are firm and crisp when fresh. If oysters are fresh, the shells are firmly closed. Speaking of shell-fish, it may here be mentioned that the Consultation Committee of Fisheries in France came to the conclusion that the poisonous action of mussels is due to the presence of a particular microbe occurring only in mussels that have lived in stagnant waters. It is more assuring to learn that such mussels are deprived of their poisonous property by the addition of sodium carbonate to the water in which they are boiled—a simple precaution which might well be taken by every consumer of these fish.

Some people are not always careful to drain the water from vegetables as soon as they are cooked. Others do not know that potatoes should never be put on a table in a covered dish; they will re-absorb their own moisture and become sodden. Before attempting to chop parsley, wash it and squeeze it very dry in a clean cloth. It is also well to know that if you rub the hands on celery after using onions, the smell will disappear.

The medicinal properties of vegetables are not always appreciated. Celery is good for nervousness, rheumatism, and neuralgia. Lettuce is cooling and sleep-producing; and asparagus purifies the blood. Tomatoes act on the liver, while beets and turnips are excellent appetisers. Potatoes should be avoided by those inclined to be stout; but peas, broad-beans, and haricots are positively strengthening. Onions, garlic, leeks, olives, and shallots all possess medicinal virtues of a marked character; while onions eaten raw are recommended as a remedy for insomnia. Soup made of onions, being a tonic and nutritious, is regarded by the French as an excellent restorative for debility of the digestive organs.

Apples are also said to possess great medicinal value, especially for persons of sedentary habits. Apples and pears cut into quarters, stripped of the rind, baked with a little water and sugar, and eaten with boiled rice, are capital food for children. Another hint worth noting is to scald rhubarb before cooking it. It then takes much less sugar, and yet loses none of its acid. Orange-peel dried and grated makes a fine yellow powder that is delicious for flavouring cakes and puddings. It will also be found that apple and pear pips when bruised impart an excellent flavour to milk-puddings. Not a bad substitute for eggs in cooking is corn-starch. In short, it may be remarked that one of the great weaknesses of cooks in this country seems to be their contempt for economising in any way. They appear to fail to realise that it is better to begin life on Indian-meal pudding and salt cod-fish, and rise to roast beef and mince-pie, than to begin on roast beef and mince-pie, and get down to Indian-meal pudding and salt cod-fish.

It is advisable in cold weather that we should eat heartily of substantial food and drink milk and cocoa. Before boiling milk, rinse the saucepan out with cold water, to prevent burning. To keep milk sweet or to sweeten sour milk, put into it a pinch of carbonate of soda. Useful, too, is the knowledge that a pinch of salt added to a glass of milk renders it digestible to most persons; but salt should never be added to new milk when cooking, as it will cause it to curdle. Unfortunately, it must be admitted that the spread of infectious diseases through the agency of milk constitutes one of the dangers of the day. It has been noticed how the consumers of boiled milk, as a rule, escape any ill effects. In short, boiled milk may be said, for practical purposes, to secure immunity from infection by its means. The prudent housekeeper will therefore consume only boiled milk.

Not everybody knows how to preserve drawn beer. Cover over the vessel containing it with a saucer or plate. Place a couple of raisins, a little sugar, or a few grains of rice, into it. This generates the desired effervescence. Vinegar or yeast should never be kept in stone jars; the acids contained in them attack the glazing, and this is often poisonous.

Great improvement will be found in tea and coffee if they are kept in glass fruit-jars instead of tin boxes. The flavour of this favourite beverage is easily spoiled by the vicinity of any articles of pronounced odour, such as cheese, bacon, &c. How many people know how to make tea on scientific principles? Immediately that the water

boils it should be poured on the tea. Experience tells us that six minutes is best for the process of drawing, to bring out the proper quality, flavour, and strength. It is a mistake to neglect thoroughly heating the teapot before the tea is put in it.

If you rub the tea-kettle with kerosene and polish with a soft dry piece of cloth, it will appear as bright as new. Tea-stains may be removed by pouring boiling water through them. But never let boiling water touch japanned tea-trays, because it will cause the varnish to crack and peel off. Have a sponge, wet it with warm water and a little soap, rub with a cloth, and polish with a dust of flour and a wash-leather. If there are any marks, rub them with sweet-oil till they disappear.

Tea is recommended for washing grained wood. Stains on cups and saucers can be removed by scouring with powder, bath-brick, and soap. Save some tea-leaves for a few days to use for varnished paints; steep them in a tin pail for half an hour; strain through a sieve, and use the tea for cleaning the paint, which will look almost new. It will not wash unvarnished paint. A little ammonia in the water reduces the labour of cleaning soiled paint, while white and pale shades of paint may be beautifully cleaned by using whiting in the water.

If you wish to observe method in the house in winter, get your work forward by daylight, to prevent running about at night with candles. Thus you escape grease-spots and risks of fire. By the way, candles should be bought in winter. They are better when made at this season, and if stored in a cool dry place, will improve with age.

When house-cleaning, it is wise to begin at the cellar, and to give more thought to the condition of things in that region than to the drapery of the parlour windows or the ruffled pillow-shams in the 'spare room.' It may not be generally known that masons' dust from stone-sawing makes a perfect substance for scrubbing floors and plain deal tables, rendering them beautifully white. Tiled floors should be washed with lukewarm water and soap, dried with a soft cloth, and then rubbed over with a little linseed oil on an old silk handkerchief, and polished. Oil-cloths should never be washed with soap suds, but washed first in cold water, then rubbed dry with a wet cloth.

In cleaning carpets, go over them once a week with a broom dipped in hot water, to which a little turpentine has been added. If soot falls on the carpet, do not attempt to sweep it, or the result will be an ineradicable smear. Dry some salt thoroughly in the oven, sprinkle it over the soot, then sweep, and no trace of the soot will remain.

To clean paper hangings, first blow off the dust with the bellows. Divide a loaf a week old into eight parts. Take the crust in your hand, and, beginning at the top of the paper, wipe it downwards in the lightest manner possible with the crumb. Those disfiguring oily marks where people have rested their heads may be removed from the paper on walls by mixing pipeclay with water to the consistency of cream, laying it on the spot, and letting it remain till next day, when it may easily be removed with a brush. In choosing dusters for your house-cleaning, you will find cheese-cloths are the best, especially

after they have once been washed. A cloth wet in hot vinegar will remove paint from window glass; and diluted spirit of salts will get rid of window-stains; nor must it be forgotten in cleaning that a rich gloss can be put on glass by rubbing it quickly with soft old newspapers or tissue-paper. It may here be remarked that the kitchen window is the best of all windows for plants; the steam from boilers and kettles keeps the air moist. Finger-marks may be removed from varnished furniture by the use of a little sweet oil upon a soft cloth. Kerosene will remove spots from furniture; and stains on marble will disappear before the application of paste made of chloride of lime and water, if rubbed into the parts stained and left to remain for six hours. It should then be washed off with soap and water.

Metal will not prove so troublesome to keep in order if we only go the right way about cleaning it. For example, salt of lemon juice will remove iron rust. Fine emery paper and sweet oil are all that are necessary to keep steel bright; while a cloth saturated in kerosene and dipped in whiting will be found best for cleaning tin-ware. Strong ammonia should be poured over old brass to clean it, then thoroughly scrub with a scrubbing-brush, and presently the brass will shine like new metal. Stair rods should be cleaned with a soft woollen cloth dipped in water, and then in finely sifted coal-ashes. Then rub them with a dry flannel until they shine and every particle of ash has disappeared.

To at once heat rooms and save coal, buy a fire-brick about two inches thick. When the coals are aglow, lay this flat brick on the top of the fire, when it becomes red hot, and throws the heat out into the room in a way that a fire without this simple device will not do. Should your house be afflicted with chimneys that smoke, it should be borne in mind that the best preventive to the nuisance is to open the windows of the room ten minutes before the fire is lit, and not simultaneously with the lighting, as is generally done.

Those other nuisances—vermin in a house—may be got rid of in various ways. A hedgehog in the kitchen will soon exterminate black beetles. An india-rubber plant is said to drive flies from an apartment. Chloride of lime about the fireplace, or a little Scotch snuff, will cause crickets to cease to chirp. A few drops of essential oil of lavender on cotton-wool quickly rids a bed of troublesome insects. Cayenne pepper sprinkled freely in the haunts of rats will make them leave the premises. Ants will not like powdered alum scattered on shelves, nor moths damp salt, if used in sweeping carpets. It is comforting to know that blankets and furs sprinkled with borax and done up air-tight, will keep free from moths.

When cleaning hair-brushes, use warm water and a little ammonia. When possible, dry in the hot sun. Take every opportunity of putting your sponges in sea-water, for nothing cleanses them as this does. When on the subject of sponges, we are reminded that satin may be cleaned by sponging lengthways—never across the width—with benzene, if greasy, or alcohol, or borax water. This will not be injured by direct contact with iron; press on the wrong side.

Stains of every description may be removed from silk, linen, or woollen stuffs. Mix a wine-

glassful of rectified spirits of turpentine with half a teaspoonful of essential oil of lemons, and preserve the mixture in a well-stopped bottle. Apply a little on the stain with a bit of silk. The colours of the fabric will sustain no injury from the application.

Don't despair of being able to restore scorched linen, but peel and slice two onions, and extract the juice by squeezing or pounding. Cut up half an ounce of white soap, and add two ounces of fuller's-earth; mix with them the onion juice and half a pint of vinegar. Boil the composition well, and spread it when cool over the scorched part of the linen, leaving it to dry thereon. Afterwards wash out the linen.

Kid-shoes may be kept soft by rubbing them over once a week with pure glycerine and castor oil; and the leather of shoes and boots can be softened if washed monthly in soft warm water and then oiled thoroughly. They may be rendered permanently waterproof by soaking them for several hours in thick soap-water. If you wish to have dry boots, observe the American plan of filling them, when taken off at night-time, with hot oats, the best grain for the purpose. They do not injure the leather, and preserve the shape of the boots.

The neglect of many of these seemingly little things such as are here hinted at, but which are so important to the well-being of a household, frequently may arise less from disinclination to take trouble, than from ignorance, or forgetfulness of the remedies to be employed.

THE HILL OF SEVEN TREES.

By REGINALD HORSLEY.

You know that long blue hill which one can see from Toogong on a clear day? I mean the one on the top of which grows an irregular circle of six tall iron-barks, with a dead one in the centre. 'Gum Tree Hill,' it is usually called for short; but the literal translation of the native name is 'The Hill of Seven Trees.' Well, that hill was the scene of an adventure, which, though it ended agreeably enough, yet began in a fashion which threatened a very different termination; and indeed, if it had not been for what Foster is fond of calling my phenomenal luck, and the fact that I have apparently as many lives as a cat, I should probably not be here to-day to tell the story.

I was out after a gang of desperadoes so ruffianly that their deeds threw all previous bush horrors into the shade. They were known from the name of their leader as 'The Flower Boys,' and as a gang their career had been remarkably successful, though, individually, of course they suffered from time to time. Eight of them still remained at large, and they kept the country side pretty lively, carrying out their plans in so clever a manner that it was almost impossible to trace them, much less run them to earth. What became of all the money and valuables they secured, or how they got rid of them, is hard to say. No doubt, many of the small settlers of the baser sort were in their pay, and vast sums must have been expended in keeping shut the mouths of these gentry. But we were certain that, notwithstanding this, a big pile

must be stowed away somewhere; and at mess, or round the camp fire, we often speculated as to who the lucky man would be to discover the hoard.

One blazing hot February the gang came down in force upon a pack of fools who had been lucky at Tambaroora, and, disclaiming the services of the escort, started to take their dust down to Sydney on their own account. Things leak out at the diggings, and no doubt some of the 'Flower Boys' were on the prowl for news. At any rate, on the second night of their journey the 'lucky five,' as they were called, were bailed up, and making some resistance, were shot down and all their gold stolen. It was a few days before the matter came to light, and then, with four picked men, I set to work to scour the country for Flower and his gang, for it was pretty certain they were at the bottom of the outrage.

We had been out about a week, with never a hint of the men we were after, when one day, as we were riding rather aimlessly over a long flat, Foster, who was on the right, brought up his horse with a sudden jerk and sprang to the ground with a sharp exclamation.

'What is it, Tom?' I called out.

He stooped to pick up something, and then ran towards me. 'Look, sergeant,' he said excitedly. 'What do you make of this?'

'What?' I asked, leaning over my horse's neck as he came up. Foster held up a small nugget of pure gold.

'Nuggets don't grow on this kind of soil,' said he.

'No; and diggers don't come this way down to Sydney,' put in Longmore.

'What do you suppose it means, sergeant?' queried Foster.

I did not answer him, and the men fell to discussing the matter among themselves. Indeed, I had scarcely heard Foster's question, for the moment I saw the nugget in his hand an idea had taken strong hold of me, and I sat silently on my horse, working it out, with my eyes fixed upon the distant Hill of Seven Trees.

'Boys,' I said at last, rousing myself from my meditations, 'I've a notion this bit of gold means a good deal to us. There is nothing to stick up in this direction; so, if Flower and his gang have passed over this ground—and we will assume they have—there is every likelihood that the nugget has been dropped by one of them on the way to their lair, wherever that may be.'

'I wish I knew,' interrupted Peterson fervently.

'Well,' I went on, 'if we have decent luck, you will know before to-morrow morning.'

'How?' 'Why?' 'What do you mean?' cried the men.

'Look!' I answered, pointing to the hill, from the summit of which curled upwards a thin, very thin column of smoke, so faint as to be almost invisible in the shimmering distance.

'Bush-fire beginning,' said Longmore.

'It may be so,' I acquiesced; 'but remember, this is an out-of-the-way place, and that smoke may have another origin.'

'Flower is too good a bushman to light a fire where it could be seen,' argued Foster.

'Hope for the best,' I returned. 'At all events, it can do no harm to reconnoitre. We are much too far off to have been observed, so

we will dismount for the present, hobble the horses, and remain where we are till nightfall, when we will go forward and examine the hill.'

The afternoon wore on, and by five o'clock the column of smoke was no longer to be seen.

'What about a bush-fire now?' I asked.

'Well,' said Foster, 'probably it was a "sundowner's" fire. Flower is a bigger fool than I take him to be if he lit it.'

As the sun sank behind the ranges, we jumped into our saddles again, and in a couple of hours reached the base of the hill, which, as you may know, juts out in a very peculiar fashion from the range of which it forms part, showing a bold, precipitous front to the east, and sloping away in a long ridge, or neck, to the hills behind it.

'It is useless to attempt to scale that, lads,' I said, looking up at the rugged face of the cliff that towered above us. 'We must work round and climb up the neck.—Vincent, you stay here by the horses, and keep your eyes open and your six-shooter handy. The rest of you come with me.' And with a parting word to him, we plunged into the darkness and made for the ridge on the right side of the hill. Once round the face of the cliff, the ascent was fairly easy over the stone-strewn ridges, and in no very long time we stood upon the summit of the spur, nearly half a mile from the front of the hill. Then I called a whispered halt, and gathered my men round me.

'Now, lads,' I said, 'we must search this hill thoroughly. Go slow, for we have plenty of time before us, and the work must be well done. Spread out in a long line, and examine every inch of the ground. If one of you should discover anything he thinks I ought to know, let him hoot thrice like the mopoke, and I'll join him. The same cry thrice repeated will be the signal for the rest to come up. If nothing comes of it all, we'll rendezvous at this point at sunrise. Be very careful. The moon will soon be up, and then you must take advantage of whatever cover you can find. Above all, don't hurry.—To your places.'

We started in an extended line, like skirmishers, Foster on the extreme left, Peterson next, then myself, while Longmore took up his position on the right.

For some time we worked on without result, and not a sound broke the stillness of the night. Then, suddenly, from the left came the mournful notes of the mopoke, thrice repeated.

'Confound it!' I thought. 'I wish the signal had come from the other side. One can never trust Tom Foster except in a fight.'

However, there was no help for it, and I turned and made my way in the direction of the sound, wondering what mare's-nest Foster had discovered, and grumbling generally, when all at once the ground seemed to glide from under me, and the next moment I felt myself falling, falling, falling, through what seemed in the pitchy darkness an infinity of space. Instantly the horrifying thought shot through my brain, 'I have gone over the edge of the cliff;' and then I plunged violently into a thick shrub, rolled out of it, and was off again, crashing through bushes and saplings, grasping wildly right and left, and clutching madly at whatever came in my way, till at length my headlong course was arrested by some hard

object, against which I came sideways with a fearful thump, which nearly knocked all the remaining breath out of my body. Then, as I felt myself slipping away again, I made a desperate effort to recover myself, and flung my arms round the opportune obstacle which had arrested my fall, while at the same moment a large piece of rock, dislodged by my struggles, went whirling into the air, struck a ledge immediately below, rebounded off, and thundered down the side of the steep, while I hung on to my friendly support with a tenacity born more of terror than of necessity. But there is some excuse for a man who has fallen I don't know how many feet through space, and then rolled I don't know how many more down a rough mountain side.

Presently, however, I began to collect my scattered senses, and then I saw that I was clinging to the trunk of a sassafras tree, which grew out and made a convenient angle, into which I had fallen, and but for which I should doubtless have gone the way of the rock. While my arms clung to the tree, my body lay stretched on a small projecting ledge, so that I soon realised that all danger was over for the time being, and, loosening my grip of the tree, felt myself all over, and stretched my legs to see if any bones were broken. No. I was badly bruised and shaken, but otherwise quite unhurt, and I took a fresh grip of the tree, intending to haul myself up into a more comfortable position, when in an instant I stiffened into immobility, and lay as still as a snake in the sand, my face buried in my arms, lest the sound of my breathing should betray me. And this was the reason. Immediately below me I heard rough voices conversing together in low tones, and evidently not more than a few feet away.

For a moment I lay and listened, as from beneath came up a muttered conversation.

'Wot d'yer reckon it wuz, Bill? Wallaby?'

'Wallaby be blowed!' answered Bill. 'It was a great junk of rock. I see it strike the ledge 'ere and go over. It just missed my head.'

'I wish it had been one of them troopers,' said a third voice with heartfelt emphasis.

A fourth voice added a word or two which I failed to catch, and then the first speaker exclaimed with a fierce oath: 'Well, it's all right, anyway. Whatever it was, hez gone to the bottom long ago. I'm going to turn in again.'

Then for a moment there was a shuffling of feet, and afterwards silence, profound and enduring.

I lay as quiet as a mouse, my eyes fixed upon a silver streak that touched a low bank of clouds somewhere in the sky. The moon was rising, and when once she was up, I should know better what to do.

Just then a spasm of dismay seized me. Foster, having given the signal, would naturally be waiting for me. What if, finding I did not join him, he should coo-ee! He was ass enough to do it; and if he did, good-bye to all chance of coming unawares upon my game below. It was scarcely likely my men had not noticed the noise I made in falling, but I could only hope the same idea had occurred to them as to the fellows underneath—namely, that a rock had been dislodged from its bed. I felt thankful I had not cried out as I fell. Profound stillness reigned, however, and I concluded that either Foster was showing

a most unusual discretion, or that he had fallen in with Longmore or Peterson, both of whom knew better than to give any indication of their whereabouts.

A quarter of an hour passed, and the silver fringe on the cloud-bank grew more intensely brilliant, and at last a magnificent full-orbed moon sailed majestically into the sky, shining with such radiance that one might have supposed it to be day. I gazed about me in astonishment. From the ledge on which I lay I could see that I had fallen down one side of a great chasm, a hundred feet wide, which apparently clove the Hill of Seven Trees in two.

Having taken a broad survey of my position, I began to examine the immediate vicinity. I found that I lay on a narrow out-jutting rock about six feet wide, down the sloping side of which I must inevitably have slidden had I not grasped the tree in time. Immediately below me was a ledge about fourteen feet long, and on this, I at once concluded, had stood the men whose voices I had heard. But where were they now? That was the puzzle. Just then, I heard a curious sound, and craned my neck over the rock as far as I could. But its surface slanted so peculiarly that still I could see nothing but the ledge. Again the sound was repeated—this time an unmistakable snore.

'Ah, there they are,' I said to myself; 'sleeping the sleep of the just.' But where? On the ledge, under the shelter of my rock? Or—ah! I had it. The truth flashed upon me in a moment. There was a cave or hole in the side of the gully, and they were in it. How could I get down to the ledge? I leaned over still farther. Yes, it could be done. It was only a drop of six feet or so, the tree grew out over the ledge, and if I swung on to that, my feet would almost touch the rock.

At that moment, while my head still hung over the edge of the rock, there was a sudden movement beneath me, and a burly ruffian stepped on to the platform and stood in the clear moonlight looking about him. I am used to surprises, and I kept quiet, though my heart thumped so violently against my ribs that it seemed to me he could not fail to hear it. However, he stood still and made no sign. So close was he that I could have knocked off his cap by stretching out my arm. Had he looked up, he must have seen me; but he did not, and as I lay breathless, motionless, rigid as the rock upon which I was stretched, I heard him soliloquise: 'What's the use of keeping this confounded watch? There's nobody round. I'm going to turn in like the rest of 'em.'

All the time I was rapidly forming a plan of action, while one hand stole silently to my hip, where my second revolver reposed in its case. My first had gone goodness knows where when I left the top of the hill behind me. Presently I had the weapon out, and extending my arm far over the edge of the rock, I held it within a foot of the bushranger's head. He yawned and turned in his tracks to go back to the hole, and, turning, looked straight down the gleaming barrel. It was all over in an indescribably short space of time. Astounded at the unexpected sight, and anticipating nothing less than instant death, the man stepped backwards mechanically.

One foot went over the ledge, and then, throwing up his arms, he fell with a shrill shriek into the gloomy depths below.

I had not anticipated so sudden and terrible a result, but I had no time to take in the horror of it all. The situation was instinct with danger, and I braced myself to face it. So thrusting my revolver into my belt, I grasped the tree, swung myself silently down, and drawing again, stood prepared for whatever might follow. I stood on the platform about two feet from the mouth of a great hole in the mountain side, into which I could not see for a wall of rock which projected between me and it. But as I stood, a voice came from within in sleepy tones: 'What's up, Bill? Another rock?'

I did not answer, and the voice continued: 'Bill! I say, Bill!' Judging it unsafe to keep silence any longer, I answered in a gruff whisper: 'Wot?'

'Did yer call?'

'No; it was a curlew.' And fortunately the weird wailing scream of that bird rang out on the air as I spoke.

'That's all right, then,' growled the voice, and silence fell once more.

I allowed a minute or two to elapse, and then wormed my way round the rock and looked upon a strange scene.

In front of me was a vast hole, one of those natural excavations so common in the mountains, a place altogether about the size of an ordinary room, with a wide floor, and a roof sloping away to a narrow angle at the back. On the floor was a fire of logs, which had recently been replenished, and no doubt the smoke issuing from this hole, unobserved by the ruffians, had been that seen by us in the afternoon. Two men lay on the ground, sleeping heavily and snoring loudly; while a third sat warming his hands over the blaze, his back turned to the entrance, and evidently quite unsuspecting.

I made up my mind at once, and strode into the cave without any attempt at concealment, for I felt that I had the game in my hands now. The fellow heard me coming, of course. 'Hullo, Bill!' he grunted without looking round. 'Had enough watching? I told yer there was nothing up. Hev a sup of this and turn in.' And he stretched out his hand to a bottle, to which he had evidently been paying close attention. 'Take a sup afore yer lie down,' he reiterated; and then, as he turned his head and saw me: 'Why, what the?— Here— wake up, Ned! Wake up, Chicken!' he cried, and springing to his feet, he plucked his revolver from his belt.

'Throw up your hands!' I shouted, covering him.

For answer he rushed at me, firing as he came. His bullet grazed my cheek, and I felt a sharp stinging pain, as if a red-hot wire had been drawn across it. In another moment we should have been in grips, when I pulled the trigger. The ball took him squarely between the eyes, and he fell in a heap at my feet. Not a second elapsed before I had my pistol pointed at the others.

'Throw up your hands!' I cried. 'Throw 'em up!' I repeated savagely, as one fellow's hand stole to his belt. 'Up with 'em, or I fire.'

They dared not resist, for I had the drop on them, and they knew it.

'Now, throw your barkers on the ground and stand up.' They did so. 'Now your knives. Right. Kick them over here.' And at last they stood there, as hangdog a couple of ruffians as you would wish to see, but defenceless.

'We're done this time, Chicken,' said Ned with an oath.

'Yes,' I said, 'you are; so you'd best be quiet. Are there any more of you about?'

'No,' growled the Chicken.

'Where's Flower, then?' I asked.

'Where you won't find him,' said Ned.

'You keep a civil tongue in your head,' I retorted.—'Ned, you pick up that bit of rope and tie the Chicken's hands behind his back, and if you don't get it done before I count ten, I'll blow your ugly head off.— Quick, now!'

With a savage snarl Ned obeyed; and as he tied the last knot, I slipped a pair of handcuffs over his wrists before he had time to realise what I was about, whipped a turn of the rope around his waist; and then, as the two of them broke into a torrent of fearful curses, I searched the cave thoroughly without finding anything for my pains.

'Shut up!' I said, taking the slack end of the rope in my hand. 'Keep your breath till you get to Sydney. You'll want it all then. And now, march!'

'Where to?' growled the front fellow.

'Down the gully. You lead me to the face of the hill.— And mark me, if you attempt to play any tricks, you'll get a mighty short shrift. On you go.'

They started in sullen silence, and once on the ledge outside, walked to the left, where, hidden in the shadow of the great boulder, was a narrow track.

'There ain't no way down as I knows on,' said the Chicken looking back.

'Then lead up to the top,' I answered, 'and we'll get down by the neck.'

They went on, forcing their way through the shrubs and undergrowth, and clambering over rocks and fallen trees with a good deal of difficulty in their helpless condition, while I followed behind like a slave-driver, only with something much more convincing than a whip in my hand. Just as we got to the top of the gully there was a sudden loud coo-ee close by.

'Foster at last,' I thought. 'Coo-ee!' I shouted in return, and then, 'Hurry up, boys! I've got 'em.'

There was a cry of astonishment, and my men came running up together, all pressing round to shake me by the hand.

'Well, I'm blowed!' said Foster. 'How did you manage it? We had given you up for lost, as, after we struck the edge of the gully, we all agreed you must have fallen over.'

'Well, and so I did,' I answered cheerfully; 'and that's the way I managed it.' And I told them my story.

'By gum!' said Foster again when I had finished, 'if your luck isn't phenomenal!'

'But, Tom,' I interrupted, 'what made you give the signal?'

'I heard something,' he replied; 'but it was only a rock wallaby on the go.'

'Ah! I thought as much,' said I, laughing. 'Well, I forgive you any way, for unless you had hooted, I might never have had that lucky tumble into the gully.'

'But did you find anything?' asked Longmore.

'Nothing,' I answered. 'I expect the hoard is somewhere else, and Flower and the others are alongside it.—Isn't that so, Chicken?'

But the Chicken preserved a disdainful silence.

As we were talking, we were standing within the circle of trees which gives the hill its name, and Peterson was leaning against the dead tree, standing on one of its giant roots. As he was filling his pipe, he dropped his pouch, and uttered an exclamation of surprise as he stooped to pick it up.

'What's wrong?' we all inquired.

'Why, here's another of them,' he answered, and held up a small nugget between his finger and thumb.

'Alia!' I said; 'we are on a hot scent, boys. Search among the roots.'

They did so without any result, while to all interrogation the two prisoners remained obstinately silent.

'The tree is hollow,' said Longmore at last; 'but there is no opening at the base. Perhaps higher up?'

'By Jove! you've struck it, Jack,' I cried. 'I wondered all along what they wanted with all that rope. However, put the bracelets on the Chicken, and let us have the line here.'

Foster very soon accomplished this, and with the rope in my hand I turned to Peterson. 'You are the lightest, Frank. Take a cast over the first fork and shin up.'

After a few unsuccessful attempts, we got the rope over the branch, and a slip-knot having been made, the loop was drawn taut. Peterson then took off his boots and swarmed up the rope, occasionally resting his feet against the trunk, in the native fashion, and presently he was in the fork.

'Here you are, sergeant,' he cried. 'There's no mistake about it this time.'

He was tugging away at something with all his might, and at last, from a wide hole in the straight trunk above his head, he wrenched out what looked like a bundle of old rags.

'Stand from under!' he shouted, and cast the thing at our feet, swinging himself to the ground a moment later. It was an old flannel shirt, tightly rolled up, and with the sleeves knotted round it for security. I untied them, and as the ends fell apart, the moonbeams poured a flood of radiance upon a great heap of nuggets and gold-dust.

'Hurrah!' shouted my men; while Peterson exclaimed: 'That's good enough for one haul, I should think.'

'Rather,' I said. 'There must be about a hundred ounces here.—But this can't be all: the "lucky five" had more than that by a good deal.'

'It's all you'll get,' put in Ned, with an oath. 'The rest of the swag is where you will never touch it.'

'We'll not take your word for that, my man,' I replied. Nor did we; but, all the same, the most thorough search by daylight discovered nothing more; and at last we gave it up, and

jogged off with our prisoners, well content with the result of our expedition so far as it went.

Ned and the Chicken stood their trial, and went to their deaths without opening their lips about their fellows; and it was many a long day before we ran down Flower, though we got him at last.

THE ITALY OF AMERICA.

At Point Conception, a promontory two hundred miles south of San Francisco, the western coast of America suddenly abandons its southerly course, and turns eastward. After continuing a hundred miles in this new direction, it again turns and resumes its original trend. The two hundred and fifty miles of coast-line between Point Conception and San Diego, a town and harbour on the borders of Mexico, form an oblique angle, in front of which a number of small islands are dotted down, which give the waters of South California something of the character of an inland sea. At a distance from the coast varying from fifty to a hundred miles there runs a range—or rather a series of ranges—of mountains, forming part of the great Sierra Nevada system. The principal of these ranges is that named San Bernardino, in which the Grayback peak reaches an altitude of eleven thousand feet. At the back of the ranges lie the deserts of Colorado and Arizona. This district, thus sheltered and enclosed, has a climate of its own. 'Except a tidal wave from Japan,' says Mr Dudley Warner, 'nothing would seem to be able to affect or disturb it.' And in his charming book entitled *Our Italy* he lays before his countrymen its various characteristics and advantages.

As the Americans are famous for their knowledge of meteorology, it is interesting to learn the causes to which the peculiarities of this particular climate are attributed. The land, it appears, gradually shelves upwards from the coast to the mountains, and then drops abruptly for six thousand feet to the level of the Colorado desert. This latter, being treeless and without water, is very hot in the day and very cold in the night-time. At sunset, therefore, a column of hot air ascends from the plain, and being prevented from travelling eastwards by a similar column from the neighbouring Arizona desert, makes its way westward to the Pacific. Here it cools, and, by condensing, causes a vacuum. In this way a new current is engendered, which travels eastward from the ocean, sweeps up the rising ground to the mountains, and then plunges down into the plains below. These alternating winds are but rarely changed, and it is to their prevalence that the characteristic feature of the climate of Southern California, its equability, is due. So marked is this characteristic, that the average monthly means of temperature taken at San Diego over a period of sixteen years gives a range extending only from fifty-three degrees five minutes in January to sixty-nine degrees in August. A still more remarkable return is this: in a single year the average temperature at three in the afternoon for the months of July, August, September, and October only varied by a single minute; September showing an average of sixty-

nine degrees five minutes as against sixty-nine degrees six minutes in the remaining three months.

It is not surprising that Mr Warner in seeking to recommend this district to his fellow-countrymen should call it 'our Italy,' since the affection of Americans for 'the poet of the nations'—as Mrs Browning calls Italy—is so warm. 'It is a Mediterranean,' he says, 'without marshes and without malaria, with cooler summers and warmer winters. It is an Italy whose mountains and valleys give almost every variety of elevation and temperature.' He points out that in such places as Santa Barbara, on the coast, and Los Angeles, fifteen miles inland, both the natural beauty and the climate of the Bay of Naples and the Riviera may be enjoyed. In advising his countrymen to try South California as a wintering place, he gently quizzes the cultivated New Englander; it is comforting to find that in so doing he uses terms which Englishmen are in the habit of supposing to belong exclusively to their own much abused climate. 'A man from the Eastern States is,' he says, 'accustomed to extremes. Such a person when he goes for his holiday may expect too much. He wants a violent change. If he quits the snow, the slush, the leaden skies, the alternate sleet and cold rain of New England, he would like the tropical heat, the languor, the colour of Martinique. He will not find them here. He sees the orange ripening in its dark foliage, the long lines of the eucalyptus, the feathery pepper-tree, the magnolia, the English walnut, the black live-oak, the fan-palm in all the vigour of June: everywhere beds of flowers of every hue and of every country blazing in the bright sunlight—the heliotrope, the geranium, the rare hothouse roses overrunning the hedges of cypress, and the scarlet passion vine climbing the roof-tree of the cottages. It is a fraud,' he says, 'all this visible display of summer, and of an almost tropical summer at that: it is really a cold country. It is incongruous that he should be looking at a date palm in his overcoat, and he is puzzled that a thermometrical heat that should enervate him elsewhere stimulates him here.'

Of course, Southern California cannot rival Italy in associations. The only touch of romance this American Italy can claim is derived from its early Spanish occupants, and is preserved in the few Spanish buildings which remain and in the softness of its names—Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Bernardino, and the rest. The Spanish adventurers visited the country in the sixteenth century; one of them, Vasques de Coronado, gave his name to one group of the sheltering islands already mentioned. But the work of civilisation, the planting of vines and olives, was due to the missions which the Franciscan monks established among the Indians in 1769. The American did not arrive until 1840. Subsequently, as the possibilities of the place began to be known, a period of 'chance development'—as Mr Warner calls it—set in, a period in which the imagination was heated by the novelty of such varied and rapid productiveness. The 'frenzy' of 1886-87 was followed by the inevitable collapse; but in 1890 a movement of steady progress set in, and this is the condition of the country at the present time. The acreage of vines and oranges, of grain and corn, is rapidly

increasing. Nor are the towns behind the country districts. Parks and gardens are laid out, schools and colleges are founded, and first-rate hotels have been built.

But the South Californian coast is not only a Mediterranean of winter sunshine and blue waters, but a 'commercial' Mediterranean as well. All the fruits which Europe from time immemorial has gathered in the Mediterranean countries—raisins, walnuts, almonds, figs, oranges, lemons, and the rest of them—can be grown in this pleasant land. In respect of such supplies, America is to become independent of Europe.

In spite of this genuine progress there is still some 'tall talking.' This Mr Warner discovered when he was driven round Los Angeles. After the party had seen places that 'in their wealth of flowers and semi-tropical grandeur would rouse the enthusiasm of the most jaded traveller,' the driver was asked if there were any finer in the city. He replied: 'Finer—hundreds of them;' and then added meditatively and regretfully: 'I should not dare to show you the rest.'

The mountain scenery of Southern California is even more wonderful than its floral wealth. It includes the Yosemite Dome and Waterfalls, and the Grand Cañon of the Colorado. The Yosemite is familiar enough to the ordinary globe-trotter. The nature of the Grand Cañon is less known. In describing it Mr Warner says: 'We had expected a cañon; what we saw was not a cañon or a chasm or a gorge, but a vast area which is a break in a plateau.' The foreground of this space appeared to be filled by 'gigantic architectural constructions,' Amphitheatres, walls of masonry, fortresses, and temples of mountain size were some of the forms which these masses of rock presented to the eye. The whole was wonderfully coloured, blending in the sunlight into 'one transcendent suffusion of splendour.' The effect produced by this spectacle was different according as the nature of the spectator varied. In some cases, an awe-struck astonishment; in others, a sort of hysterical emotion, was produced. In his own case, Mr Warner experienced a confusion of vision which prevented him for some time from forming any mental estimate of what lay before his eyes. Such an effect is due in part to the suddenness with which the scene bursts upon the traveller.

THE MEADOW-GRASS.

THE grass is bending, quivering in the light
Of a hot July sun, and where the gray
And plummy flowerets of the ripening hay
Are thin as silken threads, up springs the white
Ox-eye, a butterfly in hovering flight.
But where the taller grasses are at play
With buttercups, that like a golden spray
Toss in their midst, the lean unhappy height
Of sorrel towers, a something burnt and red,
On which the feet of the quick lightning fell
When Heaven had thrown it from its thunder-bed.
Yet hark! The mower rings a sharpening knell
Upon his scythe—to-day we flower, we wed,
We learn—to-morrow we sleep well.

C. A. DAWSON.

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PLOVERS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

In these whirling days, few people find time to stop and consider the ways and habits of the many interesting creatures that surround them. A sprinkling of enthusiastic naturalists, the more thoughtful among sportsmen, and perchance one in a hundred of the tourists who throng river and mountain and loch during their brief vacations—these are the only folk who have eyes and ears for the thousand-and-one interesting traits even of the avi-fauna of their own land. And yet, as every true lover of nature knows, there is a world of pleasure to be got out of a little quiet observation even in the fields, or hedgerows, or moors within reach of our great cities. At the present moment, for instance, in the meadows between Hampstead and Hendon, within five miles of seething London, the Green Plover, the Kestrel, and other interesting birds are constantly accessible to the observant eye.

The Plovers, an interesting and widely distributed group of birds, have some peculiar habits which distinguish them from all their feathered fellows. And of these habits one of the best known and commonest is their trick of simulating lameness and displaying extraordinary antics in order to draw off the passer-by from the vicinity of their nests and young. The common Green Plover or Lapwing is an excellent exponent of these antics—none better, indeed, in the whole family. This handsome bird, the Peewit of the English, Pees-weep of the Scotch, Dix-huit of the French, enjoys an immense geographical distribution, and is to be found not only all over Europe, but also in North Africa, and in Asia as far even as far-off China. Besides its trick of diverting attention from its eggs and offspring, this plover has another singular habit, shared with other members of the plover family, a habit of teasing and crying at—almost of threatening—human beings. In the grim and dangerous days when the Covenanters met in conventicle upon the

desolate hill-sides and lonely mosses of their country, this plover is said to have not seldom guided by its presence the soldiery in search of these stubborn worshippers. And for this reason the Covenanters and their descendants long nourished a peculiar hatred of the bird. So late did this antipathy exist, that Sir Walter Scott in his time remembered the Lowland shepherds destroying the nest of the green plover whenever found.

Personally, I can sympathise to some extent with this ancient detestation, for the reason that, in the far interior of South Central Africa, I have met with a plover of equally annoying habit. Wandering along the banks of the Botletli River, in the Ngami country, in search of wild-fowl, I have been so pestered and annoyed by a species known as the Spur-winged Plover, that at last, in a rage, I have raised my gun and shot one or two of my tormentors. These birds seem to have a strange dislike for the human form. They have excessively sharp, ringing voices—from which they take their native name, 'Setula T'Sipi,' or 'iron hammer;' and especially if one carries a gun, they greet the hunter with the most noisy and incessant cries, scolding perpetually, and swooping and dashing in quite a combative manner often close to one's head. These scolding tactics are by no means peculiar to the nesting season. Naturally, they disturb the fowl of the vicinity, as seems to be their object, and the gunner, as I have said, sometimes driven to desperation, at last turns upon the feathered plagues and wastes a charge or two of shot upon them. This plover, sometimes called the 'Blacksmith Plover' from the metallic clink of its voice, is a handsome species, garbed wholly in black and white; the curious sharp spur upon the point or shoulder of each wing distinguishing it readily from all its family, and hence its other name of Spurwing. It is seldom found far from water.

There is another South African plover, the wreathed plover, or well-known 'Kiewitje' (the diminutive of 'Kiewit,' a name manifestly adopted, like our English 'peewit,' from the cry of the

bird) of the Dutch Boers, which shares in a lesser degree in the noisy habits of the Spurwing. This beautiful bird is found throughout the length and breadth of South and South Central Africa, and its shrill, mournful cry is one of the best remembered night-sounds of the wilderness. The spurwing is usually found in small flocks, seldom exceeding half-a-dozen members; the kiewitje often flies in bands of from twenty to forty, and the sight of a human being is pretty certain to call up a chorus of sharp cries from the noisy creatures. They do not, however, pursue the traveller with so inveterate a hatred as the spur-winged plover, and indeed are often to be found in constant attendance round the hut or farmhouse of the colonist. This habit is probably merely a selfish one, as the presence of flocks and herds and of grain increases the sources of food-supply. For this reason also the kiewitje is no doubt so frequently found in the neighbourhood of old cattle kraals. On the other hand, it is as often as not found in the heart of the desert, far remote from water. This plover, from its 'lapwing' flight, its chiding cry, and malingering habit (in nesting-time), much resembles its European congener, the green plover.

That cautious and suspicious bird, the Gray Plover, a scarce plover in Britain nowadays, is another well-known inhabitant of Southern Africa, where, however, its plumage is always of a much lighter hue than in Europe.

A plover of North America, the Killdeer, is another of the family which has a harsh and chiding voice. This plover is very abundant on the prairies, where it seems very well to represent the peewit of England and the kiewitje of South Africa, and upon the approach of human beings at once proceeds to lift up its voice in a querulous and impatient wail.

The Dotterel (so called because of its supposed stupidity), or Dotterel Plover, although once pretty common in Britain, is now but an occasional visitant. Of old, there was a curious legend—very generally accepted among country-folk—that this bird faithfully imitated the movements of the fowler, and so usually ended by becoming snared in the nets. So widely accepted was this idea, that Drayton in his *Polyolbion* has several lines descriptive of the dotterel's silly ways. And Bacon says of it: 'In catching of dotterels we see how the foolish bird playeth the ape in gestures.' The idea probably arose from the plover-like habit of feinting and tumbling in the air close to the fowler's head, in which way, possibly, an occasional bird ensnared itself.

The Ringed Plover or Ringed Dotterel, a well-known British shore bird of small but extremely handsome form and marking, is also noticeable for its clever use of stratagems to divert the passer-by from its nest; its sharp note of alarm and suspicion being characteristically plover-like.

One of the most useful members of the great family of plovers is Nordmann's Pratincole, a species belonging to the sub-family of Glareolinæ or Pratincoles. This bird, a great favourite among South African farmers, seems to exist solely for one object, that of destroying or helping to destroy the devastating swarms of locusts. It is well known in Cape Colony and the interior as the Small Locust-bird. When these birds appear, it is looked upon as a pretty sure sign of approach-

ing locust flights; and when the locusts pass over the country, darkening the air as they fly, devouring every eatable piece of vegetation as they descend, and bringing temporary ruin over immense tracts of ground, the locust-birds attend them literally in tens of thousands, killing and devouring their prey in incredible numbers. Their attack is always made upon a settled plan; and a vast ring of insects having been enclosed and devoured, the insatiable birds press on again for the main swarm, never ceasing in their attentions till night falls upon the scene. The digestive powers of these useful pratincoles are marvellously rapid, and their bills are particularly well adapted for their work. As the locust is captured, the wings are neatly severed, and fall to the ground; and it has been stated by a competent observer, that, in the case of a vigorous attack by these birds upon a large swarm, the 'passer-by sees a continual shower of locusts' wings falling to the ground.' These most excellent birds are seldom or never destroyed, and so well do they seem to understand their immunity, that they view the near approach of man with almost absolute indifference. Great as is the havoc wrought by locusts in South Africa, in varying cycles, their ravages would be immeasurably magnified but for the unwearying exertions of the feathered armies of the locust-bird. The upper colouring of these birds is ashy-brown with a greenish tint, the wing feathers are black; the throat is creamy white, the breast ashy. A gorget or collar separates the neck and breast. The stomach is snowy white; the legs, eyelids, and cere are red. In length, the bird averages a little under a foot. The tail and wings are sharply pointed.

Another singular South African plover is the tiny Treble-collared Plover, the Sea-cow Bird of interior hunters. This diminutive little creature—only about six inches long—is neatly arrayed in brown upon the upper parts, black and white underneath; upon the throat appearing the three distinctive collars, first of black, then of white, then of black again. Sea-cow, or in Boer Dutch, 'Zee-koe,' is the colonial name for the hippopotamus; and the treble-collared plover takes its colonial designation (Sea-cow Bird) from its frequent habit of attending the unwieldy Behemoth. Running about the back and head of that amphibian, picking off insects and other odds and ends, this little plover seems perfectly at home, while the sea-cow apparently accepts its offices in good part. This friendship between wild and often fierce quadrupeds and small birds is of common occurrence in Africa and other countries; the rhinoceros, the buffalo, and the Burchell's zebra, among others, all having their peculiar feathered attendants. The sea-cow bird—unless when actually in attendance upon its big friend—betrays none of the jealousy or restlessness at the sight of mankind so often noticeable in other members of the family; and I have had no trouble in approaching quite closely to the birds as they fed fearlessly in the shallows and upon the mud-flats of African 'vleis' and rivers. The Spur-winged Plover, before mentioned, is itself a well-known attendant upon the crocodile, entering its mouth, as it lies with its jaws wide open, and cleansing it of leeches and other parasites. It seems to be now well recognised that

the Trochilos of Herodotus—who first chronicled this friendship between bird and crocodile—was no other than the Spur-winged Plover.

Besides the gray plover, the Norfolk Plover or Thick-knee, the Kentish Plover, the Common Turnstone, and the Ringed Plover (previously mentioned)—all birds of Great Britain—are found in Southern Africa. The well-known Golden Plover of England has been also cited by Dr Hartlaub as a denizen of South Africa. Its occurrence seems, however, to have been exceedingly rare, and, personally, I have never set eyes upon a specimen between the Cape and the Lake Ngami country. This bird, by-the-bye, takes its scientific name—*Charadrius Pluvialis*, the 'rainy plover'—from its wild, restless habits just before the approach of heavy rains and storms. There seems little doubt upon this point. The very name plover is derived from the old French word *plovier*—modern French *pluvier*—which manifestly had something to do with a rainy origin. Whether, because some members of the family were supposed to foretell, by their disturbed, restless cries and habits, the approach of storms, it is hard at this distance of time to say. Curiously enough, the German name for Plover is *Regen-pfeifer* ('rain-whistler'); so that the rainy connection of the bird would seem to be of wide geographical distribution.

As I have endeavoured to show, many of the plovers have habits which distinguish them from other feathered races. In Britain, unfortunately, year by year sees the gradual decline of the rarer species, in common with other ancient and notable birds of these islands. In the golden plover, we have, however, still a very numerous representative; while the peewit, despite the enormous consumption of its eggs, seems likely long to survive the assaults of the nest-hunters.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXIV.—GEORGE BY LAND AND SEA.

As the world wags, it was very excusable in Mrs Suffield to think a good deal more of her niece as the possessor of three or four thousand a year than as the schoolmistress earning a hundred and fifty. It was mainly on account of her urgency, therefore, that Isabel agreed that she and her father should spend their holiday at the same place as the Suffields; but it was wholly due to Isabel's own obstinacy that she resolved to take lodgings apart from her uncle and aunt: she believed that it would be better for her father not to see so much of his sister as would be necessary if he were her guest; and, moreover, he would be lost without his faithful henchman Alexander, and so Alexander must go with them. The next day, therefore, saw Isabel and her father thus established in a quiet house in Douglas in the Isle of Man, two doors from another quiet house in which dwelt the Suffields.

It was Mrs Suffield who had chosen Douglas for their holiday sojourn; and she had chosen it for two reasons—apart from the fact that the Isle of Man is the Paradise of Lancashire folk:

Lord Clitheroe was going to cruise in his yacht in the Irish Sea with Douglas for a centre or base; and her son George—who was so busy that he could not take a stretch of holiday—could easily manage to rush over to Douglas at each 'week-end.' The thought that Isabel and her son would thus, probably, be thrown a good deal together was now rather an incitement than a deterrent to her action. It cannot be said that she had formed any express plans to compass their marriage; she merely had the firm and honest conviction that Isabel was now a very fit match for her son, and that, on the whole, it would be a pity if Uncle Harry's money went out of the family.

George arrived in Douglas at the first week-end with unexpected magnificence. He also, like Lord Clitheroe, came in his yacht—which, he told his father, he had bought a bargain—but, as became a young cotton-lord, his yacht was propelled by steam, while the young aristocrat's was moved in the ancient way. The whole company—save Mr Maynor and his henchman—was assembled on the pier to receive him; and as soon as he stepped ashore he entered into a friendly argument with Lord Clitheroe regarding the speed of their respective vessels.

'Isn't she a beauty?' said he, regarding with admiration the rakish lines of his craft.

'Ye-es,' drawled Clitheroe. 'But I prefer a sailer to a steamer.'

'For speed?' said George—'for comfort?—or what?'

'For everything,' answered Clitheroe carelessly.

'Well, now,' said George, 'we've crossed from Liverpool in less than three hours with the tide against us too!'

'Ah,' said Clitheroe, 'have you? I crossed once in the *Sea-mew* there in two hours forty-three minutes from anchorage to anchorage with a good breeze on the quarter.'

'Oh,' said George, looking for a moment as if he had a mind to be incredulous. Then, repenting of that, he said: 'That's the *Sea-mew* lying out there—is it? She's a pretty thing. I tell you what, Clitheroe,' added he suddenly, 'if the weather holds, we'll both take a trip round the island to-morrow and see which gets back here first.'

'Good,' said Clitheroe; 'I'm game.'

And so they walked off the pier, Mr Suffield leading the way with his hand on his son's shoulder, and Lord Clitheroe following with Euphemia.

'Your cousin,' said Clitheroe to Euphemia, 'is a remarkably clever girl.'

'Isn't she?' said Phemy proudly. 'And she's a dear girl too!'

'I know a dearer,' murmured Clitheroe.

'Oh no, you don't,' said Phemy with a pretty pout. 'You only say that because you think I like it.'

'Now,' said Clitheroe, shaking his head down at her, 'that's not fair. You know I never say anything to you but what I mean and believe. But your cousin looks very handsome and distinguished: she's exceptional in that way, and with the fortune she has now, she should make a great match.'

'What,' asked Phemy with a meaning look, 'would you call a great match?'

'Dukes,' said he, 'are not common. But the Duke of Bilberry is single.'

'Is he not,' said she, 'very old?'

'No,' answered he; 'he is somewhere between fifty and sixty. But dukes, like politicians, take long to mature. For instance, I am over thirty, but I am regarded as a mere boy in politics.'

'So,' said she impudently, 'I daresay you are. But a duke won't do for Bell: she expects a prince.'

'A prince—does she? I don't think there are any princes in the market; no; no—what is the word?—quotations in princes. Besides, a German prince is not nearly so much worth while as an English duke.'

'I didn't say a German prince: I mean a fairy prince, you goose. Bell is not so easily pleased as me.'

And in spite of her bad grammar, Clitheroe smiled down on her with an indulgent tenderness.

Meanwhile, Suffield was marching along with his hand trustfully and affectionately on his son's shoulder, when a hideous foreigner, floridly dressed, saluted George with a profound bow.

'Who's that, lad?' asked his father. 'He is as ill-looking a scoundrel as I ever set eyes on.'

'You should not judge a tree by its bark, dad,' said George. 'That is Gorgonio, a Levantine or a Persian or Assyrian, or something of that sort; but he is a capital broker—knows all the turns of the cotton game.'

'Hast done business with him?'

'A little,' answered George.

'Hast dropped the firm's old brokers, then?' asked his father, with some concern. 'I don't like leaving old friends, lad.'

'No,' said George; 'I've not dropped them; but I don't give them all the business. They sent me some very bad cotton, and then didn't like my objecting to it.'

And thus they went on to their lodgings, leaving Lord Clitheroe at his hotel on the way. But before they left the Parade, George asked Isabel and the others if they would excuse him if he let them go on without him: he had caught sight of a man with whom he would like to have a word. So he left them, and hung behind to intercept Mr Gorgonio if he returned—as he expected he would—along the Parade. Presently Mr Gorgonio came and again saluted him.

'I guessed from your smile,' said George, 'that you had something to tell me. Am I right?'

'Quite right, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio in a thick, somewhat cavernous or sepulchral voice. 'I had news this morning, and I intended to wire you on Monday when I go back to business in Liverpool. It is splendid news, which I have got from a gentleman in Savannah which I trust very much indeed. But come into my hotel, which is here, and I will show you his letter.'

'Is it about prices, or quantity?' asked George.

'What, Mr Suffiel, do you think?' said Gorgonio. 'Quantity, Mr Suffiel!—quantity! But will not quantity touch prices? I think so!'

When they sat down in a quiet corner of the coffee-room of the hotel, Gorgonio produced from his pocket-book an American letter, which he handed to George. The gist of it was that, contrary to general expectation, the cotton crop would prove to be not an average but a very

poor one, and that, therefore, those who meant to buy should buy at once before the fact was widely spread. There were reasons given and figures, which looked important and tangled, and which accordingly George took pretty much on trust. The announcement impressed him. In silence he handed back the letter, and in silence—but with a sharp eye—Gorgonio received it.

'I suppose,' said George at length, 'your correspondent knows what he is talking about?'

'Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'there is no man which knows better. The price to-day for September delivery was,' whispered he, leaning over the table and tapping on it with his nail, 'only 5½d. Ah! what a beautiful, what a splendid corner I could make!—more better than Morris Ranger's!—if I had but a little bit of money!' He glanced keenly at George, whose eyes were flitting thoughtfully about the opposite wall. 'But no! I have not the money!'

'Will you wire to your office to-morrow morning,' said George with resolution, 'to buy as many Septembers as possible at 5½d.?''

'Wire?' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'Never! Never! In half an hour!—in ten minutes!—after the wire has been delivered at my office, every one knows it, and every one runs on the Flaga to buy Septembers, and the price go up! Never!—never wire! We will wait till Monday, Mr Suffiel. I do not think it will be any difference. Maybe'—and Mr Gorgonio very knowingly put his finger to his nose—'the price will be lower than five-a-half.'

'On Monday, then, first thing,' said George, rising and giving his hand to Gorgonio. 'And I will come along to you after I have docked my yacht.'

'On Monday then, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio.—'His yacht!' murmured he, looking after George. 'Never mind, Gorgonio. Some day you also will have a yacht.'

George hurried off to his parents' lodgings, and, when all went out to enjoy the cool of the day after dinner, he and Isabel chanced to walk together. Isabel had felt that George looked coldly on her, and now she gathered the reason. She spoke first of the small legacy which Uncle Harry had left to Daniel Trichinopoly, his 'faithful black servant,' and that led her to speak of something else.

'By the way,' said she, 'Mr Ainsworth wrote to you—did he not?—a little while ago about a curious kind of adventure he had with Daniel in a strange place. What have you done about it?—anything?'

'I acknowledged the receipt of Mr Ainsworth's communication,' answered George.

'That all?' said Isabel. 'Did you not think there was anything worth taking notice of in the story he told you? I thought there was.'

'You knew it, then?'

'I knew it. Mr Ainsworth told me when he came back from the place; I had asked him to bring my father from there. Did you really read his letter?'

'Yes,' said George, with a manifest blush; 'I ran through it. It seemed to me he was just setting down the ravings of a maniac. Most absurd. Perhaps it was Daniel, perhaps it wasn't; though of course Daniel was in London at the time: he had gone up to travel with

Uncle Harry. In any case, I suppose the talk of a man in an opium sleep is not worth attention. A man has visions, and he tries to describe them : that's all.'

'George,' said Isabel very seriously, 'what is the matter with you? You used to like Alan Ainsworth, and to admire him and his work. Now you don't; and when he writes what he means to be a friendly letter, you throw it in the fire—no; it is summer-time: you tear it up into little pieces and throw it into your waste-paper basket.'

'I did not tear it up at once,' said George, rather sulkily. 'But I didn't ask for his letter: it was meddlesome in him to write it.'

'George,' repeated Isabel, 'you don't like Alan. Why?'

'I don't like him!' said George. 'Above all, I don't like your calling him "Alan" !'

'Don't shout, George!' said Isabel.

'And I don't like,' continued he, evidently feeling that he had broached the subject and caught its full flow—'I don't like his being about with you and your father so much. You may not perceive it, but in the sly way those literary fellows know how to work, he has been making love to you! It's not fair, Bell!'

'Don't be absurd, George,' said Isabel, now very serious indeed. 'Mr Ainsworth has been a very good friend to me in London. He has helped me with my father in a way I can never be grateful enough for. He is alone in London, and I asked him to come and see me and my father—I asked him!—and we have talked and been friendly. And that is all. Really,' added she, after a moment's silence and reflection, 'I don't know why I humble myself to give you this long explanation.'

'You know well enough why you do it, Bell,' said George; 'because you know that, if I have spoken as I have done, and said disagreeable things about Ainsworth, it is only because I love you, and nobody but you!'

'Hush!' said Isabel. 'Lord Clitheroe and Phemy are behind us. And I believe they are laughing at us: they seem so tickled with something.'

On the next day—which was Saturday—the race took place between the rival yachts. It was not a public event. The vessels stole away together—the *Swiftsure* and the *Sea-mew*—and turned, the one to the north and the other to the south, without any persons but those on board being aware of their purpose. Lord Clitheroe was skipper of his own craft; while George, who had not yet acquired a certificate of navigation, had to have a sailing-master. A breeze from the west was blowing, and George determined to use what sail they could as well as steam.

'But is that quite fair?' asked Isabel.

'We did not bargain to use steam only,' answered George. 'Clitheroe knows we can carry sail, and he must know, therefore, we would not be such fools as not to do all we can to win.'

'Quite so,' said his father.—'Oh yes, Isabel; I think George is right. If Clitheroe did not expect it, it would be different.'

So George was now hauling on a sheet, now examining the log-line to see how many knots they were making, and now shovelling coal out

of the bunkers handy for the stoker to throw into the furnace.

Only over luncheon did George rest. He was in good spirits, and inclined to be light-minded about Isabel's fortune. He asked her what she was going to do with it; and she answered that she had several plans for getting rid of her large yearly income, but none was quite matured: she was more reserved with George on these matters than she had been with Ainsworth: she thought herself it was strange that she was not at all tempted to take George into her confidence.

'You should put your money into the business, Bell,' said George (and he seemed to mean it). 'I could give you fifteen or twenty per cent. for it, and then you would have at least ten thousand a year, instead of three or four.'

'But,' said she, looking somewhat surprised and alarmed, 'I don't want ten thousand a year; I find the responsibility of three or four quite enough.'

'No, no, George,' said Mr Suffield. 'Let Bell's brass alone. We won't put it in the business. Harry had it very well and safely invested, and we'll let well alone; besides, Bell can't for so long reinvest anything without the consent of her executor and trustee, and I'm that person.—Just pass me the claret, lad.'

The two yachts passed and hailed each other off the ancient town and castle of Peel.

'Oh, doesn't she,' exclaimed Isabel, looking after the *Sea-mew*, 'look lovely and living—like a great sea-bird with her white wings spread!'

'She sails well,' said George, 'and she has a good wind: she'll take a great deal of beating; and he turned away to shovel more coal into the furnace.'

That night, the race being won by George by some fifteen minutes—when George steamed into Douglas harbour the white wings of the *Sea-mew* were just visible off Laxey—the whole company dined in the rooms of the Suffields; and afterwards Mr Suffield observed to his wife: 'I think I must wake up our George: he is not nearly so attentive to Isabel as he ought to be in all reason.'

'Don't meddle and spoil, my dear,' said his wife. 'You are a dear good man; but between a lad and a lass you don't see any farther than the end of the nose on your face. You had much better leave George alone.'

IN OUR CHURCHYARDS.

IN the green grassy Churchyards of our old parish churches in rural districts, there are several objects of interest over and above the monuments to the memory of the dead. In some of these sacred spots are venerable preaching-crosses, and crumbling old stone seats for the accommodation of those who listened to the preachers; in others, lichgates and lich campaniles; in a few more, isolated towers for the bells; in others, wells, curious stiles, sundials; and, in some parts of the kingdom, contrivances for the funeral or dead-light, or the tall round towers our French neighbours call the 'lanterns of the dead'; and, here and there, solitary specimens of man's work in curious forms not to be placed in either of these

categories. There is, probably, no churchyard in which examples of all these relics are to be found grouped together; but there is a very large number in which one or more of them may be noted.

It is thought every churchyard in old times had a cross in it of more or less sculptural beauty. And as several ancient churches in the southern counties have external seats built against them, with evident reference to the situation of these crosses, we may assume services were occasionally performed at them, or sermons preached from them, and these stone benches were intended to be occupied by the listeners. There are seats, for instance, against the south walls of both Glastonbury Church and Spraxton Church, in Somerset: and the crosses in both churchyards are towards the south-east side of both edifices; and at Bicknoller, in the same county, the seat is on the eastern side of the church, and the cross faces it. But these seats are not always part of the fabric. In Drayton churchyard there are circular stone seats round two fine yew-trees, that may have been used for this purpose. The crosses are generally raised on a base composed of a few wide steps; and ripe with their years and centuries of sunshine and storms, are extremely interesting and suggestive in their appearance. Herefordshire and Gloucestershire are especially rich in these relics. They are, however, to be seen occasionally in other counties. Here is Welford Church, in Berkshire, very ripe and hoary as to its round tower—on which an octagonal spire was superimposed when it was about five hundred years old, three centuries ago—and very impressive generally, and especially in the matter of the delicate and rich tracery in the windows; and on the south side of it we may see, towering over the pale tombstones, a tall cross. There are no great wide steps to this example; but, as a rule, we may conclude the preacher stood upon the tiers of masonry forming the base, with his audience surrounding him. We know the sermons were marvels of oratory, and occupied two and three hours in the delivery in Tudor as well as Stuart times; and we may assure ourselves the listeners weighed every word as it was borne to them through the summer sunshine. There is a tall cross nearly perfect, raised on four circular steps, in Stoughton churchyard, in Leicestershire. In Lincolnshire, there are two good examples, at Bradley and Tattershall. In the churchyard at Lanivet, in Cornwall, are two crosses, one of which is eleven feet high and the other a foot higher.

The lichgate (that is, corpse-gate, from Saxon *lic*, a dead body) is another feature of much interest. This is more frequent in Devonshire and Wales than in other parts of the kingdom, though most counties have some examples. In Scotland there are also a few still remaining, more or less dilapidated. The lichgate is a covered stone gateway of dimensions that admit of mourners resting under the shelter of the roof before carrying the dead to their last resting-place. Sometimes the roof is placed with the gable over the entrance; and sometimes with the slanting side in that position, and the gables at the ends; and some lichgates are furnished

with gates that revolve on a pivot, though more frequently with those that open and shut in the ordinary manner. The most complete examples possess a lichpath, lichseats, a lichstone on which to rest the mourners' burden, and a lichcross. Both stone and cross are frequently found in Cornish churchyards. In the pathetically simple old Welsh churchyards, full of slate memorials lying flat over the graves with fringes of the 'spears of the grass' round them, the lichgate with its moss-grown roof, worn-away seats, and narrow pathway, is an especially picturesque object. There is one leading into the churchyard at Gyffylliog, in Denbighshire, with the slant side of its sloping slate roof facing the road in a bower of chestnut trees. It is built of stone, and has a step down into the churchyard at the inner side of it. There is another in a deserted little church on the sea-margin, near Pensarn, in Merionethshire, turned gable-ways to the approach to it across the grassy marshes, with a wind-bleached wooden door to it like that of a country cottage. A third, at Llanbedr, close by, less affected by 'the sweet reproof of storms,' is more inviting, with only a light wicket in it to impede the view of the venerable little church in its setting of graves and monuments. Besides these corpse-gates, as they are sometimes called, there are, chiefly in Norfolk, lich campaniles, or low-walled erections in which bells are hung almost close to the ground, as in the churchyard at Southborough. They are often roofed with thatch. Occasionally, too, the real lichgate is furnished with a bell turret. In some parishes this gate is called a lichstile, and in others a churchstile, which has been corrupted to churstele.

In some churchyards, standing at the distance of several feet from the church are isolated towers for the church bells, high and of a majestic stateliness, or made of almost unhewn timbers in a simple framework. They may be after-thoughts; or a wave of rivalry in the matter of bells and bell-ringing may have passed over the land, and the structures to which these towers are appendages may have been considered not sufficiently strong to sustain the strain of great weights in movement; but there they stand with mysterious reticence and with most impressive outline, with their bells 'calling, calling.' One example built of timber, at Brookland, in Kent, is placed about six feet to the north of the nave, and rises in three stages, pyramidically, looking over the 'brave bleak land' serenely. Those in Herefordshire and Norfolk are of more magnificence. They are not to be confused with the six detached towers in Cornwall built on hills, to indicate the situation of the churches to which they belong in the valleys below. The example in Ledbury churchyard is a very fine one, of a stately sturdiness and comeliness. Others in the same county are more primitive in their outlines, and stand in the deep grass, among the rounded graves, with interesting simplicity.

Passing on to the 'lunterns of the dead,' it may be mentioned there are a few examples in France that help to throw a broad light on this subject. In the districts where cromlechs and other Celtic remains abound, there are, in a few churchyards, tall narrow straight towers, of much smaller dimensions than those intended for bells, being about five times the height of a man, more or

less, which have openings at their summits through which a light, drawn up by a cord over a pulley, would throw gleams around. These lantern-towers or hollow pillars, like the preaching-crosses, are placed on platforms composed of stone steps; and they are likewise furnished with a slight projection of a shelf-like make that has evidently been more than a convenient resting-place for the lamp whilst being trimmed. In one perfect example, there is an extra step in front of it, as though it was intended to serve as a small altar. The little opening, through which the lamp or light was passed into the interior, is at a sufficient height from the ground to enable any one in charge of it to get at it easily. The top of the lantern is generally finished with a cross. The presence of these relics in the regions rich with Celtic remains seems to associate their origin with some custom of great antiquity, though those remaining do not appear to be of earlier workmanship than that of the twelfth century. We may have remains of others in this country that have been mutilated or altered beyond recognition. In one of the French examples to which allusion has been made, the platform consists of four tiers of round steps, whilst the tower is of a square plan with the angles recessed; another is a round tower on a square base; and a third is a square tower on a square base. It has been suggested that they may have been intended to hold wax tapers, to give additional solemnity to funeral ceremonies; but the fact that the openings at their summits direct the rays of light to a distance, rather than to the ground immediately around them, does not give countenance to this view. They occur chiefly in churchyards adjoining the great lines of communication, or in very frequented places; consequently, it is likely they were intended to light up the land of graves, and divest it of some of its terrors, for the sake of those passing by; as well as to maintain an impression of care and regard for those who were buried in it.

Wells in churchyards are now extremely rare, though, on account of water having always been a requisite for church purposes, many sacred edifices must have been supplied with it by their means. They were sunk in the first instance, probably for the convenience of the builders, and then improved and made permanent. The cloisters of our large monasteries were thus supplied with water. And, on the Continent, wells are sometimes also met with in crypts. St Andrew's Well, near the east end of Wells Cathedral, is a fine spring of more than usual abundance, and, after overflowing, falls into the grand old moat, and becomes one of the distinguishing characteristics of the ancient city.

Sun-dials are most frequently found placed over the entrance-way of porches, though, occasionally, the mutilated shaft of a cross has been made into one in a more central position of the churchyard. There are a few examples of Saxon antiquity, some that the yellow-haired, blue-eyed Angles placed where we see them now, but the bulk of them belong to times when dialling had reached a more advanced stage.

Church stiles, with their steps up from the ground, their barrier to be stepped over at the top of them, often a stone slab fixed on end, and their steps down again on the other side into the

churchyard, are more common. They do not always take this form, being also often scarcely more than bars in some places of various ingenious contrivance. Whittingham churchyard, on the Alne, may be mentioned as a representative specimen. It has two of these stone stiles, one at the eastern angle and the other at the western, as though an old-time footpath running through the ground was thus protected. The river winds through the village, which is pleasant with trees, fountains, and a peel-tower. There are at both ends of the churchyard, placed at gaps in the wall, a few high narrow steps; and in the gaps stone slabs are fixed, edgewise; and the steep steps are so arranged as to afford good footing whilst crossing these stones, and to form a second set of steps by which to descend to the level of the pathway on the other side. The church has a Saxon tower and Saxon angle-stones at the west end of the nave; and it had a Norman arcade of four arches, only taken down within remembrance. It has much more work still standing of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and these stiles are still the means, in these Victorian days, by which the honest country-folk enter the sacred precincts that were reared so long ago, and have been so much to so many generations.

In Ryton churchyard is a prehistoric work. This is a large tumulus of, apparently, ancient British origin. Among other miscellaneous objects to be seen in some instances, and scarcely noticed, are fragments of ancient fonts, which, when removed to make room for new ones, have been left lying among the gravestones in the churchyard. A stone altar slab that has been discarded has also been detected by a diligent observer. As in most other matters, the more knowledge we bring to bear upon the subject, the more we find in it.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER II.

ON the following day, Dr Carl von Eberstein rose from his couch more firmly fixed than ever in his purpose, despite the alarming dreams which had so harassed him during the past night. He determined, as a preliminary measure, to confide his precious secret, and his resolution to fathom it, to his bosom friend and co-Professor, Herr Emilinus Werther, who was also an Oriental scholar, and had dabbled considerably in Egyptology. As he proceeded with his toilet, he revolved in his mind the various arguments he intended bringing to bear on the subject, for Herr Werther was of rather a stubborn and obstinate nature, and would be very sure to combat fiercely—and probably with a strong seasoning of ridicule—the idea of the authenticity of such a document in the nineteenth century; and would most likely declare the whole thing to be a hoax, perpetrated by some of the mischievous and laughter-loving students of the university. These reflections, however, did not cause Von Eberstein to waver in his purpose, although the mere cogitation thereon caused him many a secret twinge. Summoning up his courage, he armed himself with his document, the translation thereof, and an enormous umbrella, and sallied forth to call on his friend.

On his arrival, and on his announcing that he had come on a matter of serious import, to which he wished his friend to give his undivided attention, Herr Werther at once ordered two large 'schoppen' of beer, placed the jar of canaster on the table, filled his pipe, took a preliminary swig at his jug, and bade Von Eberstein proceed.

As the latter unfolded his whole discovery, from the finding of the manuscript in the mummy to his deciphering thereof, the Professor became gradually excited; and when Von Eberstein announced his unalterable determination to go in search of the spot described in the document, and his intention to fathom its meaning, and find out what there was to be found, the Professor waxed enthusiastic, and, dashing his smoking-cap on the ground, vowed that he also would partake in this adventure. But on Von Eberstein's pointing out that both of them could not be spared at once, and that the right of discovery rested with him, the Professor gradually, though rather sulkily, calmed down, and acquiesced in the reasonableness of the argument.

For some hours the two sat talking, now calmly, now excitedly, over the find; but they both agreed on the one point, which was, that Von Eberstein should at once apply for leave, and start at the earliest possible moment; and that the whole matter should remain a secret locked up in their own breasts. The Professor also stipulated that at intervals his colleague should forward him news of himself and his progress towards his goal. Then they separated; the one to obtain his leave from the authorities; the latter to puzzle over a copy which he had taken of the precious manuscript.

That night the Professor received a brief note: 'DEAR WERTHER—I have succeeded in getting my leave, and am off to-morrow morning. Come over and see me to-night.—Yours, v. E.'

The Professor obeyed the summons; and the two sat smoking and talking until well into the small-hours, when they parted with a hearty shake of the hand, and 'Good-luck to you, Carl!' from the elder man.

What were Von Eberstein's thoughts as he sat alone in his room gazing round at his packed portmanteaus? What visions of treasures to be found, of secrets to be unravelled, of— He lost himself in wild and visionary imaginings! But eventually common-sense regained its sway. Nature asserted herself, and he went to bed to sleep soundly and dreamlessly. The next morning he was *en route* for Egypt, the land of the Sacred Ibis, the Nile, and the Pharaohs.

Some weeks later, Von Eberstein found himself one of a rather mixed party who were assembled in a 'dahabieh' on their way to Philæ and the First Cataract. There was an American young lady of about twenty-three, travelling by herself, after that delightfully independent fashion our cousins across the water love. There was a very solid clergyman and his wife, who had 'done' the Holy Land, and were now enjoying a little pagan relaxation among the Pharaohs. A young English swell—no need to describe *him*; two elderly maiden sisters of a certain age; a hideously ugly English 'nouveau riche'; and our hero. A nice square little party of eight. As yet, the only ones who had quarrelled were the clergyman

and his wife, the latter having roundly taxed her spouse with 'flirting and making eyes at that disreputable American girl who travels by herself!' Alas, poor priest! I'm afraid there was a 'soupçon' of truth in the accusation, else why did you blush so furiously and look so extremely awkward. Miss Emerson is only laughing at you. This lively young lady, by the way, had tried her charms and wiles on our young Professor, and was secretly much annoyed at his insensibility. He had other and more serious things to think of than the colour of a lady's eyes, or the tints in her golden-brown hair.

The river-craft sped on with a fair wind, and within the time appointed by the Rais, the party arrived at Philæ. Here they broke up and separated, each on his or her own particular quest, to hunt for curios, or to daub sketches of the scenery and ruins. The Professor, however, had laid his plans. He spoke the language, and therefore found no difficulty in obtaining an interview with the most potent of head-men in the vicinity. A judicious bribe ensured him the best men the latter could procure; and that night the little party, armed with cords, spades, axes, and all requisites for their purpose, set out for the temple of Abon-Symbal. The Professor led the way, and, fixing on the spot indicated in the document, bade his workmen dig. A very few minutes sufficed to lay bare a large slab of stone. This was rapidly removed, and lo! before them yawned the black mouth of a chasm of unknown depth. A few burning tufts of dry grass and some crackers were thrown down to dissipate any poisonous gases there might be, and then a lantern was lowered: the depth proved to be about forty feet. Rapidly a rough but strong windlass-like apparatus was rigged up, and a native descended. On his calling out that all was well, two others followed him, and the Professor came last, the sheik—who had suspected some new find, possibly of value, and had therefore come with the others—remaining behind. The Professor drew this individual aside, and said: 'Should there be any treasure here, it is yours: I want none of it. I have come to examine a mummy which I believe to be that of a king. Therefore, watch your men. My own people know that I have come here to open the place, and will be here shortly themselves, so beware of any foul-play.'

The sheik protested he was honest—as indeed he proved to be—and Professor Carl von Eberstein was lowered into the pit, his heart beating furiously at the thought that he was at last within arm's-length of his desired goal. Arrived at the bottom, where he found the labourers awaiting him, he glanced round. There were three sarcophagi. Promptly selecting the farthest from the entrance, as specified in the manuscript, he set the men to work, and very shortly they had loosened the lid of the sarcophagus. A few minutes' more labour, and it was lifted clean off and slipped to the ground.

'Lift out the mummy!' ordered Von Eberstein.

They obeyed.

'And now hold the light for me to see.' The lantern was held on high, and the Professor proceeded rapidly and with a skilled hand to remove the wrappings in which the mummy was swathed.

His obvious excitement was noted by the natives, who exchanged glances and a few low, muttered words. As the Professor neared the end of his task, he felt a hard knob under his fingers on the breast of the embalmed corpse. A few more turns, and he held it in his grasp. With hands trembling with emotion, he unrolled the tiny packet, and there, in his open palm, lay a small, perfectly-formed bronze beetle—the sacred scarab of the Egyptians. With uncontrollable emotion, he replaced it in its wrappings, deposited it carefully in a breast-pocket, and then turned to ascend to upper earth once more. But now the natives, who had been whispering to each other, and who evidently imagined that he had discovered some rare jewel—for they had not seen what it was that he had gazed at in his hand so rapturously—slipped between him and the rope.

'The effendi must show us what he has there before he leaves this place: it is the custom of the country.'

'I shall do no such thing. Stand aside!'

'Then we must use force.'

'You must, you rascals?' and he whipped out a revolver, which he held to the head of the nearest man, who dropped on his knees, thoroughly cowed and imploring pardon. 'Back, back, to the farthest end of the tomb, or I shoot!'

Disheartened and terrified, the three rascals obeyed.

'Ho! sheik!' he called.

'Sir?' came the answer, as a dusky face observed the opening.

'Haul up. Quickly now!' And, still waving his revolver towards the affrighted and cowering group, our hero emerged into open air. 'I have seen what I want to; behold! this scarab is all I have taken as the token of remembrance of a great king. Now, if you will send one man with me, I will depart, and you can do as you will down there; I have only opened one sarcophagus.—And hark ye, sheik! Those men down there are rascals. And also listen: I have permission to open this tomb, but you have none. Therefore, you should be quick in what you do.'

The sheik promptly told off a guide for Von Eberstein, and then disappeared down the pit, while our hero strode away on his return journey. To him it seemed as though he trod on air. The night-breeze was pure and clear; a distant prowling jackal gave forth its dismal cry; but in his then state of mind it sounded to him like music. His thoughts went wandering back to the old high-priest whose body he had so summarily desecrated, and whose treasure he had so unceremoniously possessed himself of. He wondered what its attributes and powers might be, and how he should discover and unravel them. Vague dreams of the genii of old, and their talismans, flitted through his brain. The ancient manuscript had not lied. After thousands of years of silence, the dead had given up its secret to him, and had pointed the way. He had followed its directions, and they had led him without fault or pause to the exact spot where he was told the treasure—the sacred beetle—lay; and there had he found it, on the breast of the dead man. The weirdness of this uncanny and precise revelation, which had been laid bare before

his eyes after so many fleeting generations had come and gone, struck him with a strange idea: was it really the nineteenth century, and was he himself really Professor Carl von Eberstein? Or had he gone back to the old ages?

The sound of his Arab guide humming a tune assured him of the actuality of the present, and he strode along, still wondering and puzzling his brains as to the potentialities of his prize, until the masts of the 'dahabieh' rising in the distance, and standing out clear-cut against the faint light of the false dawn which tinged the sky, brought him to himself. His guide paused and pointed. With a few words of thanks, and the yet more welcome gift of several silver coins, he stepped lightly aboard; while the Arab ran back like a deer to his comrades, in order not to lose his share of the spoil. Our hero moved softly into his cabin so as not to awake the sleepers; and, throwing off his clothes, but placing his prize, securely fastened in its wrappings, in a tiny metal box, he fell asleep, clutching his precious find to his breast.

MENDELSSOHN IN SCOTLAND.

MENDELSSOHN made his first visit to England in April 1829. Towards the end of the season he put in execution a long-cherished scheme of making a tour in Scotland. He was then only twenty years old, and his letters home at that period are full of the freshness and buoyancy of youth, more indicative of the schoolboy than the man; in happy contrast to his later life, when oppressed by care and overwork. The Waverley novels, there can be little doubt, were the chief cause of Mendelssohn's visit to Scotland. The series had just been completed, and he had read them all. It may easily be imagined that they exerted a powerful influence on a cultured mind like his, and made him desirous of seeing for himself scenes of mountain and flood, such as he had only hitherto read of. He wished also to meet the great Wizard of the North face to face; 'chiefly to escape a scolding from you, dear mother, if I return without having seen the lion,' he wrote. It is more, however, to Mendelssohn's friend, Carl Klingemann, who was then Secretary to the Hanoverian Embassy in London, that we owe what we know of this excursion; but at the best our knowledge only consists of disjointed and fragmentary incidents related in letters to the family at Berlin.

Mendelssohn and Klingemann, teeming with boyish spirits, set off from London by stagecoach on their travels—both cannot enough express their admiration for this peculiarly English institution, then in its palmiest days—and arrived at the gray Metropolis of the North one Sunday towards the end of July. The very first thing they did, which, certainly proved their boyish energy, was to climb Arthur's Seat. After describing the prospect from the top in glowing terms, Mendelssohn adds: 'Why need I describe it? When God himself takes to panorama-painting, it turns out strangely beautiful. Few of my

Switzerland reminiscences can compare to this; everything here looks so stern and robust, half enveloped in haze or smoke or fog.' Farther on, he says in reference to Edinburgh: 'It is beautiful here! In the evening, a cool breeze is wafted from the sea, and then all objects appear clearly and sharply defined against the gray sky.' He had a bathe while in Edinburgh, but does not name the spot; all he says about it is that his swim in the deep Scotch ocean was pleasant, and that it tasted very briny. The last evening was spent in a visit to Holyrood Palace, 'where Queen Mary lived and loved. The chapel close to it is now roofless, grass and ivy grow there, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything around is broken and mouldering, and the bright sky shines in. I believe I found to-day in that old chapel the beginning of my Scotch symphony.'

If Mendelssohn was charmed with Edinburgh, he was no less charmed with its people, for he quotes of them: 'How kind the people are in Edinburgh, and how generous is the good God! The Scotch ladies also deserve notice; and if Mahmud follows father's advice and turns Christian, I shall in his place become a Turk and settle in this neighbourhood.'

The Highland tour was planned from Edinburgh. It was to be viâ Stirling, Perth, Dunkeld, to Blair-Athole; then by foot over the hills to Inveraray, to Glencoe, the isle of Staffa, and the isle of Islay, where they were to stay several days; then they were to proceed up the Clyde to Glasgow, then to Ben Lomond, Loch Earn, Ben Vorlich, Loch Katrine, and home by Cumberland. But the best-laid schemes do not always succeed, and neither did this; at least the original plan was not carried out, for they were unable to accomplish all they had proposed.

Mendelssohn had hoped to meet Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh, but being disappointed, he resolved to seek the lion in his den. He and his friend accordingly drove all the way to Abbotsford; and Klingemann gives a most absurd account of their encounter with the great man. But to it Mendelssohn adds: 'This is all Klingemann's invention. We found Sir Walter in the act of leaving Abbotsford, stared at him like fools, drove eighty miles and lost a day for the sake of at best one half-hour of superficial conversation. Melrose compensated us but little; we were out of humour with great men, with ourselves, with the world, with everything. It was a bad day.' Mendelssohn, as may be seen, was in a bad temper.

We find them next, under date August 3d, at Blair-Athole, where it was a 'most dismal, melancholy, rainy day.' The day before had, by way of variety, been lovely. In the morning they drove in an open carriage, and then walked twenty-one miles. 'We passed from rock to rock, many waterfalls, beautiful valleys, with rivers; dark woods, and heath with the red

heather in blossom.' Mendelssohn sketched, and Klingemann hit upon the divine plan of making rhymes at every spot where he made a sketch. On the evening of the 3d, they reached Bridge of Tummel, but the weather was still bad. 'A wild affair! The storm howls, rushes, and whistles; doors are banging and window shutters are bursting open. Whether the watery noise is from the rain or from the foaming stream, there's no telling, as both rage together.' They had put up at a typical Highland inn. Their room was large and empty, the wet trickled down the walls, and the floor was so thin that they could hear the occupants of the room below singing drunken songs and laughing. This was all very melancholy; and it is questionable if they found much consolation in hearing 'the little boys with their kilts and bare knees and gay coloured bonnets, the waiter in his tartan, old people with pig-tails, talk helter-skelter in their unintelligible Gaelic.'

Next morning they left Bridge of Tummel, but took the bad weather with them. Klingemann describes the journey in somewhat uncomplimentary language. Up hill and down hill, finding it easier to walk than sit in their 'cart'—what kind of vehicle Klingemann meant is not very clear, possibly he meant a dogcart—even although they had to stalk through moors and heather and all kinds of 'passes.' Here Klingemann indulges in a weak-minded joke: 'Nature here is so amply provided with them [passes], that Government does not ask for any.' They saw smoky huts stuck on cliffs, women looking through the window-holes, and now and then herds of cattle, with their attendant Rob Roys, blocking the way. At last, to their relief and delight, they reached civilisation—Fort-William, where they encountered the very newest piece of culture, a steamboat; and they found themselves among many people, enjoying the sea and the sunshine, good cheer, and society.

They proceeded by sea from Fort-William to Tobermory, where, after their wanderings, they found rest for their weary feet. By contrast, it seemed a charming place. Klingemann says that from his earliest days he had confounded the Hebrides with the Hesperides; and if they did not find the oranges on the trees, they found them in the whisky-toddy. It may be noted, by the way, that both had by this time acquired a taste for the national beverage.

On the morning of the 8th, Mendelssohn and Klingemann, along with many others, embarked on the wide Atlantic in order to visit Staffa and Iona. Shortly after starting, the barometer sank and the wind rose, and the 'ship-household kept its breakfast almost to itself.' Like troops under a withering fire, the passengers fell rapidly; and the sea, which is no respecter of persons, laid low the great Mendelssohn himself: he was most unpoetically and desperately sea-sick. As Klingemann remarks, he was on better terms with the sea as a musician than as an individual with a stomach. On reaching Staffa they put out in small boats to see the famous cave. 'A greener

roar of waves surely never rushed into a stranger cavern—its many pillars making it look like the inside of an immense organ, black and resounding, and absolutely without purpose, and quite alone, the wide gray sea within and without.' This is Klingemann's comment. There is, unfortunately, no record of what Mendelssohn felt on the occasion; perhaps he was too sea-sick to feel anything beside.

They next landed at Iona. Its ruins, its loneliness, its desolation, its graves of ancient Scottish kings, and still more ancient pirate-princes, impressed them perhaps more than Staffa did, for it was not the desolation of nature alone, but the desolation of departed man as well. Staffa and Iona seem to have been the culminating point of Mendelssohn's admiration for the Hebrides. Indeed, he says that they affected him in an extraordinary fashion. The impressions conveyed to his mind resulted in the famous 'The Hebrides' overture, which was completed the following year at Berlin. It is said that after his return home his sisters asked him to tell them something about the Hebrides. 'It cannot be told, only played,' he said, and forthwith seated himself at the piano and played the theme which afterwards grew into the overture.

As the travellers turned their faces towards Tobermory again, Mendelssohn's sea-sickness gradually left him, and he was able to bid defiance to the sea-monsters of the Atlantic, and even to maintain that the 'wet' was rain, and not mist, as Klingemann insisted. They reached Tobermory at seven o'clock in the evening, although they ought to have been at Oban by that time. The captain cast anchor in some corner or other, and they elected to pass the night in the cabin. There were no beds, and they had to make the best they could of the floors. 'Herrings are lodged in spacious halls compared to us,' says Klingemann, and they often chanced to make unknown boots their pillows. 'It was a wild night's revel, without the merry cup, and with rain and wind for the boisterous songsters.' They landed next morning, Sunday, at Oban, still in the rain; and not being desirous of hearing a Gaelic sermon, which, together with the weather, might have been too much for them, they drove on to Inveraray. During the drive, the sun came out and warmed their hearts, and helped them to a more cheerful frame of mind. At Inveraray they found an excellent inn and good quarters; and the smiles of the host's beautiful daughter, with fried fresh herrings and coffee for breakfast, put them at peace with all mankind.

A longing for letters now drove them to Glasgow; they travelled alternately by road and steamboat, via Loch Eck, to the mouth of the Clyde, which mode of progress excited their admiration, as it prevented the journey from getting monotonous. They sailed up the Clyde to Glasgow. This part of the journey also pleased them, firstly, and perhaps mainly, because there were scarcely any waves; from this it may be inferred that the waves of the wild Atlantic had been altogether too much for Mendelssohn; he, like a good many more or less notable people, found more pleasure in looking at them than being on them. The scenery, too, as they sailed up the river struck a sympathetic chord. The

pretty watering-places, the soft corn-fields, and a view of the clear wide distance, greeted them like old friends, after long roaming among the silent mountains.

The 10th of August found Mendelssohn and Klingemann in Glasgow; and although they did not exactly see and conquer, like Cæsar, they saw and admired—very likely through rose-coloured spectacles, for they rested in luxurious idleness in the best hotel in the city. The remembrance of past disasters and bad weather faded away; but it was surely ill-natured on Klingemann's part to say that the Highlands brew nothing but whisky and bad weather.

On the 11th they made their last excursion, to Loch Lomond and the 'rest of the scenery which ought to be published and packed up as supplements to Sir Walter Scott's complete works;' but there is no record of Mendelssohn's impressions in these parts. On Loch Lomond they met with an adventure which might have cut short the days of the musician. Klingemann and he were out on the loch in a rowing-boat in the twilight, when, without the least warning, a squall swooped down on them from the mountains. The boat began to toss about in an alarming fashion, and Mendelssohn prepared to swim for it; but, as he says, with their usual good luck they got safely through. They had to spend the evening in the company of three or four noisy young Englishmen; and ultimately they had to make their way to their bedroom, which was in the next house, with cloaks and umbrellas. The next day they started on their southward journey, passing through Glasgow on their way to Wales.

Mendelssohn's experiences and impressions of the Highlands may be summed up in his own words: 'This, then, is the end of our Highland journey. We have been happy together, have led a merry life, and roved about the country as gaily as if the storm and rain had not existed, but they did exist. We had weather to make the trees and rocks crash. To describe the wretchedness and the comfortless, inhospitable solitude of the country, time and space do not allow; we wandered ten days without meeting a single traveller; what are marked on the map as towns, or at least villages, are a few sheds, huddled together, with one hole for door, window, and chimney, for the entrance and exit of men, beasts, light, and smoke, in which to all questions you get a dry "No," in which brandy is the only beverage known, without church, without street, without gardens, the rooms pitch-dark in broad daylight, children and fowls lying in the same straw, many huts without roofs, many unfinished, with crumbling walls, many ruins of burnt houses; and even these inhabited spots are but sparingly scattered over the country. Now and then you find beautiful parks, but deserted; and broad lakes, but without boats; the roads a solitude. Fancy in all that the rich glowing sunshine, which paints the heath in a thousand divinely warm colours, and then the clouds chasing hither and thither! It is no wonder that the Highlands have been called melancholy. But two fellows have wandered merrily about them, laughed at every opportunity, rhymed and sketched together, growled at one another and at the world when they happened to be vexed

or did not find anything to eat, devoured everything eatable when they did find it, and slept twelve hours every night: these two were we, who will not forget it as long as we live.'

THE POLICEMAN'S STORY.

I AM a Sergeant of Police. Thomas Summers is my name, and fifty-four my official number in the Marlshire County Constabulary. When I joined the Force I was a big, awkward-looking, country Johnny, as strong as a horse, and twice as healthy. Drill soon set me up, and the uniform set me off, so that when I returned to my native village on leave after three years' town duty, the folks hardly knew me. I was as well and as strong as ever, but a lot better-looking—at least so my old mother told me, and of course the hay-seed was pretty well combed out of my hair.

When I went back to Darbury, the town where I was stationed, they changed my beat. Up to then I had always been told off, not for what you'd call exactly low parts of the town, but for streets of little houses, rented by clerks and the better sort of working-men. Very easy beats they were, mostly, though not profitable in the matter of tips; but I was that innocent in those days I hardly thought of tips; and when a chap once gave me sixpence for helping him in at the window when his wife was away, and he'd forgotten the latchkey, I was almost ashamed to take it. The nights were quiet; burglars had more sense than to try it on in houses where they'd have had to take the parlour clock, the canary, all the chimney ornaments, and the master's greatcoat to make up the worth of a five-pound note; and in the daytime, except for boys throwing stones, there wasn't much doing.

When they put me up among the big houses near the Park, it was different. There were gardens to watch, if it was only for tramps sleeping in the outhouses; families away at the seaside leaving me half-a-crown to keep a particular eye on the premises till they came home; pedlars, beggars, and suspicious characters about all day. A chap couldn't go to sleep and do his duty by that beat, I can tell you.

There were compensations, though, and not only in the way of tips. There was more company; servants in all the houses, and parties up to all hours, especially in the winter. Even a cabman, who's out of temper because his fare has been persuaded to stop just half an hour longer, is better than nobody at all to talk to on a cold night, when you're about tired, and wishing the relief would come round, though you know he's not due for a good two hours.

As for the servants, I soon got to know most of them, and a very nice, pleasant, friendly lot of girls they were; but for long enough I never liked one better than another. At last, however,

there came a girl to Mr Town-councillor Johnson's, and she—— But as my story is about her, I may as well begin it with the time I first met her.

She came out through the Councillor's front gate with a dog, a fox-terrier puppy about six inches long, and he began barking and worrying round my boots in a way very creditable to such a young one.

'Excuse me, miss,' I said, just by way of introducing myself; 'that dog's not muzzled.'

'Oh! he won't really bite you, sir,' she replied, laughing.

'Perhaps not,' said I, looking as stern as I could; 'but it's my duty to take him to the station;' and I made a grab at the little beggar as if I really meant it.

'Oh!' she cried, 'surely you wouldn't be so cruel?'

I had been running my eye over her all the time, not exactly professionally, of course; but a police officer, if he knows his duty, gets into the way of reckoning people up pretty quick, and I saw the joke had gone far enough.

'Well, not this time, miss, I won't,' I replied, 'seeing that you're fresh from the country, and perhaps didn't know there was a muzzling order in force here.'

'My!' she exclaimed. 'However did you know I was from the country?' It was written all over her as plain as could be, but it wouldn't have been professional to tell her so.

'What we don't know, isn't worth learning, miss,' I replied, trying to look as wise as a detective in a play. 'Next time you bring that young gentleman out for an airing, put his certificate of birth in your pocket. The order don't apply to dogs under six months old.—Good-morning.'

'Good-morning, sir,' says she, smiling, and dropping a bit of an old-fashioned curtsy, that put me in mind of the girls in our village school; and without another word we parted. We had walked together perhaps fifty yards. I kept straight on, following my beat, and she went round the corner to where there was a pillar-box to post a letter she'd held in her hand all the time. I suppose I fell in love with her there and then, because I kept thinking about her all day, and felt uncommonly glad my mate on the beat was a married man. She was a pretty girl, seemingly about twenty, medium height, fair hair and complexion, dark-blue eyes, pleasant features, figure inclined to plumpness, and was dressed—— But, as this isn't a description of a party who's wanted, how she was dressed doesn't matter.

I saw her nearly every day after that; he's a poor policeman who can't time himself to come round to a particular house when a girl's shaking her mats or doing something that will bring her in sight of the road; but I never managed to exchange more than a smile with her for more than a week. At last, one evening when I was off duty, I met her as she was going down the town.

'It's a nice evening, miss,' I said as she passed me.

She gave a little scream, looked round as if wondering which way to run, and then stared

at me with a please-don't-hurt-me look in her eyes, which died away as she recognised me through my plain clothes.

'Oh! Mr Policeman,' she said, 'I didn't know you at first, and you gave me quite a turn.'

'I'm sorry, Miss—what shall I have the pleasure of calling you?' I asked, thinking it was about time I knew her name.

'Wybrow,' she replied. 'I'm Mary Wybrow. And you?'

'Tom Summers, at your service, Miss Wybrow,' I responded, laying one hand on my heart, and bowing while I lifted my hat with the other. 'And how do you like Darbury?'

'Very well, Mr Summers,' said she. 'That is, what I've seen of it. The people seem kind and good-hearted.'

I wasn't vain enough to take this last remark altogether to myself; but as I was one of the people, it was encouraging. 'It's very good of you to say so,' I said; and then we walked on quietly for a bit.

'I hope I'm not taking you out of your way, Mr Summers?' she remarked just as the silence was getting awkward.

'Your way is mine, if you'll allow it, Miss Wybrow,' I replied.

She didn't say anything, but blushed and looked down, which I took to mean yes, and walked on by her side accordingly.

I need not set down what we said on that walk, or on plenty of others that followed it. She let me keep company with her; and the longer I kept it, the more certain I felt we were just suited to each other; but when I'd made up my mind to ask her plainly what she thought about it, something happened. I was passing Johnson's gate, going dead slow as usual, on the chance of a sight of Mary, when one of her fellow-servants came tearing out in a big hurry and ran smack into me.

'Here, young woman,' I said, catching hold of her arm, 'consider yourself in custody for furious driving.'

'You're wanted in the house,' she replied, having no time to laugh, seemingly. 'There's some things stolen.'

I didn't say anything. When a man's called in on a duty of that sort, the less he says and the more he hears, the better.

'Lots of things,' she ran on. 'The young ladies' jewellery, and I don't know what else.'

We got to the door before she'd time to give me any more particulars; and in the dining-room I found Councillor and Mrs Johnson, their three daughters, my Mary, and the other housemaid—the one who fetched me in was the cook—all looking very solemn.

'Summers,' said the Councillor, who was a bluff and hearty but quick-tempered man, 'members of my family have missed property for some time. My servants have offered to have their boxes searched, and I thought it best to have it done in your presence. I do not accuse or even suspect anybody, you understand.'

'Quite so, sir,' I replied; and we all went up-stairs.

Mrs Johnson and her eldest daughter turned out the boxes, first the cook's, and then the upper housemaid's, and then my Mary's. There was nothing found that shouldn't have been there

till they came to Mary's, and there, wrapped up in a petticoat, were three studs—diamonds, they looked like, but I heard afterwards they weren't real stones.

'Oh Mary,' said Miss Johnson, holding them out on the palm of her hand, 'how could you?'

Mary said nothing, but went as red as fire.

'Where are the other things you have taken, girl?' asked old Johnson sternly.

'I have taken nothing, sir,' said Mary respectfully but firmly.

'Nonsense,' said Johnson impatiently. 'What's the good of saying that, with those studs staring you in the face? Make a clean breast of it, and we'll see what can be done. If you won't, I must hand you over to Summers here.'

'I know nothing about them, sir,' said Mary quietly. She was as pale now as she had been red the moment before. 'I can't think how they came there.'

'You had better say no more,' said Johnson angrily.—'Summers, do your duty.'

I stepped forward and touched Mary on the shoulder. 'Consider yourself in custody,' I stammered out, thinking as I did so how lightly I'd used those very words not half an hour before.

'Oh Tom, save me!' said she, turning round and clinging to me.

'Yes, yes, honey,' I whispered, putting my arm round her. 'Don't lose heart. It will be all right.'

'Summers,' said the Councillor, staring at us, 'what's the meaning of this?'

'Well, sir, Mary and I have been keeping company for some time, and this has come rather sudden,' I explained. 'Don't you be afraid I'll not do my duty, sir, in spite of my private feelings; but—but'—Then I came to a dead stop, not being able to put into words all that was in my mind. I didn't believe my Mary had taken the things, not likely; but, as they had been found in her box, I wasn't sorry her master was going to charge her. It would be bad for her, of course, for a bit; but for getting at the bottom of a thing, give me police-court proceedings, and no hole-and-corner private-inquiry work with he-said and she-said and tittle-tattle taken as sworn evidence.

I had kept a pretty sharp eye on all parties while the search was being made, and I'd got an idea into my head. It was a wild one, and a very little thing had put it there, but there it was, and I meant to see what I could make of it.

'Bless me! Summers,' said old Johnson, 'I had no idea of this. It must be most distressing to you. But come down-stairs again and let us talk things over.' We went down; and he and his wife and Mary and I went into a room by ourselves, for, as he said, there was no need of the others.

'Now, Mary,' said the Councillor, 'once more, what have you to say?'

'Nothing, sir,' persisted Mary. 'I can't understand how those studs came into my box; I never saw them before.'

'Very well,' said he, frowning. 'If you will have it, you must. Summers shall take you to the station in a cab.'

'Beg your pardon, sir,' I put in, 'but I think

we'd better walk. There will be less notice taken of us.'

I wanted more time to talk to her than a cab would have given us, and of course I meant to take care we didn't look like policeman and prisoner on the way.

'As you like, or as she likes, Summers,' said the Councillor.

'A cab, please, Tom,' whispered Mary; but I shook my head, and, though she looked surprised, she said no more. Mrs Johnson fetched her hat and jacket, and we started, having arranged that old Johnson should follow to charge her after he'd made out a list of the missing articles.

'Now Mary, my dear,' I said as soon as we were outside the gate, 'who did it, do you think?'

'I can't guess, Tom,' she replied. 'I only know I didn't.'

'No, dear,' I said. 'I know that, of course. But have you no notion? Are you friendly with the other servants? Have you noticed either of them extra flush of money lately?'

'They have both been very kind to me, Tom,' said she. 'And I know nothing about their money.'

We had to pass the pillar-box where Mary had posted the letter the first day I saw her, and the sight of it brought that letter to my mind, and just for a second my heart went down into my boots.

'Mary,' I said, 'what did you write to Mr Levy about?'

'Mr Levy, Tom?' she repeated, as if the name was quite strange to her. 'I don't know any one called Levy.'

'Wasn't that your own letter you posted the first time I saw you?' I asked.

For a bit she couldn't remember the letter at all, as of course the first sight of me hadn't gone as straight to her heart as the first sight of her had gone to mine; but after I had reminded her of the joke about the little dog, she called it to mind.

'No,' she said. 'Now I remember one of the young ladies gave me that letter to post. But how do you know how it was addressed, and what does it matter?'

'Bless your dear heart,' I replied, fit to jump over the moon with joy, 'I read the address as you held it in your hand; and as for what it matters, right about turn and back to the house, my love, and you'll soon see.'

Then she broke down, and began to cry; but there was no one about, so I let her have her cry out, comforting her as best I could by telling her to keep her heart up, for, if I was on the right tack, they would all be begging her pardon in an hour's time.

When we got back, I asked if I could see Mr Johnson alone, and the first thing he said was that he supposed she had changed her mind and confessed.

'No, sir; it's not that,' I said. 'Do you know that soon after Mary entered your service, one of the members of your family gave her a letter to post, addressed to Levy, the pawnbroker in High Street?'

'No,' said he; 'I didn't know it. But what has that to do with the case in hand, Summers?'

He must have seen what it might have to do

with it as he asked the question, for he went as white as a sheet.

'Well, sir,' I said, 'I don't want to insinuate anything against anybody; but don't you think it would be better to ask a few questions down at Levy's before you go too far to draw back?'

'Perhaps it would,' he said, after he'd sat thinking for about five minutes. 'Can I trust you to ask them, Summers?'

'Certainly you can, sir,' I replied. 'But don't you think you had better go yourself?'

'No,' he said; 'I don't want to hurt your feelings, Summers; but Mary's story about the letter may be false; and even if—if it should turn out that a member of my family has—has had dealings with Levy, justice demands that you and others who heard the girl accused should also know that the accusation is withdrawn. I have no wish to hide anything from you.'

He promised to make it right with the inspector about me leaving the beat, gave me the list he had made out; and off I went, as sure as could be I was right, because the little thing I'd noticed when they searched the boxes was that Miss Johnson was the only one in the room who didn't look surprised when the studs were found.

Old Levy is an honest pawnbroker enough, and his tale was quite straightforward. He'd had dealings with Miss Johnson for months, and she had pawned every one of the things on my list except the studs which were found in Mary's box. She had written to him because she had sprained her ankle a bit at lawn-tennis, and couldn't keep an appointment she'd made, though she wanted five pounds most particularly. He'd sent the money, he told me, and got the security the next time he saw her. He gave me her letter; so I advised him to keep a still tongue in his head—which, being a pawnbroker, he knew how to do—and went back to break the thing gently to old Johnson.

When I showed him the letter, how he did take on, as well he might, having a daughter who could do such a nasty, mean, dirty trick as trying to ruin my poor girl. Taking her sisters' and her mother's jewellery was nothing, compared to trying to hide it in the way she did.

It was hushed up, of course; and what the girl wanted the money for, I never knew. Old Johnson did the right thing when Mary and I were married, which was pretty soon, as she didn't care to stay on after what had happened.

As that's all my story, I'm afraid there isn't much moral to it, except that it proves what I said before—namely, that, when you are falsely accused, the sooner you go before a magistrate the better. How do I make that out? Why, this way. If the case had gone into court, Levy would have come forward as soon as he received the police notice of the missing property; and so, though things would have been more unpleasant for Miss Johnson, Mary would have been right enough. How could she have been cleared without going into court, I should like to know, if she hadn't happened to have a policeman with all his wits about him for a sweetheart? And suppose my mate had been on duty the morning she was given in charge, what then? Why, of course she must have gone before the bench, and they would have discharged her without a stain

on her character. So I think I have good grounds for maintaining that if there is a place where innocence will out, it's a police court, though I'm glad for Mary's sake that I was able to save her from giving a practical proof of the truth of my argument.

FERNLAND.

IN the whole round of the Vegetable Kingdom there are no more beautiful forms of life than Ferns. These lovely children of the shade charm us alike by their graceful forms and exquisite colours. They are universal favourites, and though flowerless, yield us perennial pleasure. The places, too, that they love to beautify with their nodding, delicately cut fronds, are among the most entrancing on our earth's surface. Where the air is musical with the sound of running waters; where the spray of the mountain tarn flashes in the sunbeams; where the shadows of the forest are the deepest, and the soil is the rich mould formed by the leaves of many autumns; on the rock-bound coast where the seagull builds her nest and the eagle has her eyrie—there ferns make their homes.

Ferns ('Filices') stand at the head of the flowerless plant-world which includes the fungi, creeping lichens, equisetæ or horse-tails, and seaweeds. These flowerless plants—Cryptogams, as they are botanically named—are the descendants of the great Carboniferous Flora, of which ferns formed a very important part. It is an interesting fact that of the eight great divisions into which modern botanists divide the Fern family, four were in existence during the Carboniferous period; and of other three, fossilised specimens have been found. Therefore, when we look on a large and representative collection of ferns, we see a fair picture, in miniature, of the great cryptogamic forests, whose remains, in the form of coal, are so valuable to the present age.

The ferns found throughout the world up to the present time have been divided by botanists into about three thousand species. The varieties, or forms varying from the specific type, but not sufficiently to justify placing them in separate species, are, however, innumerable. This tendency to vary is one of the most peculiar characteristics of ferns, and will be referred to further on.

The geographical distribution of ferns is a very interesting study. No other order of plants is so widely distributed. They are met with from the equator to well within the Arctic and Antarctic Circles, and only disappear when we reach the sterile regions of the frigid zones. Some make their homes at the sea-level, others at an altitude of sixteen thousand feet. Some grow in shade so dense that almost no other forms of vegetation exist beside them; others grow in the full glare of the sun. They are found in the crevices of rocks, walls, bridges, and buildings where there is no apparent soil for their sustenance; on the banks of streams with their roots immersed in water, and in bog-lands.

Their sizes and modes of growth are also very varied. Some become trees with fronds twenty feet long; others have fronds measuring only

half an inch. Some creep along the ground and over the faces of rocks; others climb the stems of trees and out on the branches, clothing the trees with their bright foliage like ivy. Some have fronds thick and leathery in substance; others are so delicately thin as to be almost transparent. Some, such as the common harts-tongue, have fronds without divisions; others, such as '*Adiantum gracillimum*,' are cut into hundreds of segments.

The variety of colour in fern fronds is greater than is generally supposed. The shades of green range from the palest to the deepest. Some fronds have three colours. '*Pteris tricolor*,' for example, has midribs of dark red, bordered with white merging into green. Other kinds are beautifully variegated with white, yellowish green, and red. The loveliest colours are found in the young fronds. Some of these soon after opening are of a deep crimson colour, gradually changing as they grow older into the normal green of the variety. Others are bright red, pink of various shades, ruby, brown, blue, and bronzy green.

Ferns attain their greatest size and fullest luxuriance in the tropics. The humid heat and dense shade of the great tropical forests produce a congenial home for them; and they are often found there with stems fifty, sixty, and even one hundred feet high. These huge tree-like ferns belong, as a rule, to one of three genera, the '*Dicksonias*,' '*Alsophilas*,' and '*Cyatheas*.' Specimens of '*Cyathea medularis*' have been found in New Zealand with their stems rising to one hundred feet, and crowned with grand masses of feathery fronds. When they attain such dimensions, ferns become prominent and striking objects in the landscape.

To the tropics belong, also, the lovely and unique fern forms which are popularly known as silver and gold leaved ferns, and which are great favourites in this country for greenhouse decoration. The fronds of these kinds, as a rule, on the under sides are coated with a fine farinose powder which assumes different colours according to the variety. Sometimes the powder is bright golden or pale yellow, white, cream, brown, or blue.

However, tropical ferns must always be of secondary importance to us who live in Britain. The most interesting and useful section to us is that which comprises the species indigenous to our country, and a few foreign species which have been found to be hardy in our climate. In Hardy Fernland we possess inexhaustible stores of beautiful forms. An examination of the splendid collection of hardy ferns in the ferneries of the Royal Gardens at Kew, which contain the largest number, in one group, of our native species, shows that they equal in decorative value their exotic brethren, while possessing the advantages of being perfectly hardy, and consequently more easily cultivated.

There are about fifty distinct species of ferns indigenous to Britain. This seems a small number; but these fifty species are found to produce, both in their wild haunts and when grown under cultivation, an almost infinite number of beautiful variations. No other family of plants shows this tendency to vary to such a surprising extent, and to it we owe many of

our most beautiful kinds. When we examine a good collection of ferns, this characteristic is easily seen. If we take, for instance, the well-known hartstongue (*Scolopendrium vulgare*), we find that there is almost no limit to its eccentricities. One of the foremost authorities on cultivated ferns (Mr J. Birkenhead, of Sale), in a recent lecture thus refers to the astonishing variableness of the hartstongue: 'By imagining every degree of serration, laceration, and cutting up of the frond; every degree of unevenness, from the slightly wavy to the deeply gophered; every degree of roughness of surface, from the perfectly smooth to that like a toad's back; every degree of cresting, from the simple fork to the most complicated tuft; every degree of branching, from one division to that in which the plant is a mass of branches difficult to separate into fronds; fronds drawn out and fronds abruptly terminated; narrow fronds and broad ones; fronds with horns below, others with horns above, others, again, with pockets; fronds bearing bulbils at the edges, and others with young plants on their surfaces; fronds deformed, every one being different from every other on the same plant—in fact, imagine every variation in form beautiful and ugly, and an idea may be obtained of the appearance presented by the thousands of varieties of *Scolopendrium vulgare*.'

The graceful lady-fern (*Athyrium filix-fœmina*), which is so common in our moist woods and shady lanes, is another species which produces many variations from its normal form. The variety named '*Plumosum elegans*' has fronds of pale green cut into minute segments; '*Plumosum multifidum*' has heavy tassels added to the tips of its plume-like fronds; '*Calothrix*' has glossy fronds so minutely divided that when looked at from a short distance it appears like a green mist; *Victorie*, first found wild in Scotland in 1861, and sometimes called the '*Queen of Lady-ferns*,' has fronds two feet long heavily crested at their apices, with narrow segments crossing each other like lattice-work. Other varieties have long, narrow, slender fronds; others, again, have them broad and leaf-like. Our native shield ferns (*Polystichums*) have also given us many beautiful and curious varieties.

The work of raising new varieties, or of searching for them in their wild haunts, has become to many fern-lovers a fascinating one; and the progress already made in this direction has been so marked and gratifying, that we may confidently look for the addition of other gems to our collections.

In connection with the subject of variableness in ferns, it is interesting to note that our noblest and largest indigenous species, the royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), has been found, so far, to produce only one or two abnormal forms. But this will hardly be regretted by any one who has seen this truly majestic fern in its favourite habitats.

The majority of British ferns are deciduous in their wild haunts, the first severe frosts of winter blighting their tender fronds. But this is amply compensated for by the rich tints many of them assume in their dying hours. The common bracken (*Pteris aquilina*) is a fine example of this change in colour. Its leaves assume in early

winter every shade of ochre, sienna, and even lake, changing as they die into deep brown. Our artists have paid a high tribute to the beauty of this noble native of British Fernland by introducing it into the foregrounds of some of their loveliest woodland scenes.

When grown under careful cultivation, however, a large number of our native ferns become evergreen—that is, they throw up young fronds before the old ones are faded.

To those who have shaded spots in their gardens, and especially to those whose gardens are situated in smoky districts, we commend the culture of a few hardy ferns. They will grow luxuriantly in an atmosphere and in light in which most flowering plants would languish and die. We often see in towns and cities attenuated specimens of the geranium, fuchsia, and other similar plants, making their surroundings more depressing by their sickly growth. These, with much advantage to their owners, might be discarded, and their places occupied by a selection of our indigenous ferns, which would brighten the spots at every season.

In the ornamentation of public parks and gardens, also, our native ferns should be much more largely used than they now are. In these places, except in very favourable positions, it is almost impossible to get flowering plants to grow in a satisfactory way, and the little success which is attained is got by means of an altogether disproportionate amount of care and expense.

Fernland has no bright flowers to show us, yet there is no class of plants that gives us more continuous pleasure. Roses, orchids, begonias, and other plants which produce flowers with brilliant colours, delight us only during their blooming seasons. At other times they cannot be said to be attractive. But ferns are always beautiful, and in a condition to give us lovely fronds to heighten the charms of the flowers that are in bloom.

NOCTURNE.

NIGHT broodeth still o'er land and sea,
And silently
The silver moon her quiet radiance sheds,
Upon the bosom of the deep
Her quivering beams are rocked to sleep,
Until the Night with joyous Morning weds.

Across the yellow reach of sand,
On either hand
Creep the slow waters softly murmuring;
The moonlight falls in glittering bars
Upon their breast, the watching stars
Gaze downward on the wave-crests, wondering.

A tangled mesh of seaweed floats
Among the boats
That idly rock upon the sleeping tide,
And farther, where the flood is deep,
The salmon-meshes ebb and sweep
Among the darkling shadows far and wide.

LYDIA M. WOOD.

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THE FIRST STEAMER TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC.

IN many quarters the idea seems still to prevail—and we gave expression to it quite recently in an article on 'Some Early Steamships' (page 155)—that the first steamer to cross the Atlantic was the 'Savannah,' which in 1819 made the voyage from the port of the same name in Georgia to Liverpool in twenty-five days. The 'Savannah,' however, was not a steamship, and was under sail more than two-thirds of the way across. She was a full-rigged packet-ship, and had on her deck a small steam-engine, by means of which motion was given to the craft in smooth water when the wind failed. The log is full of such entries as: 'At 8 A.M. tacked ship to the westward;' 'Took in the mizzen and foretop-gallant sails;' 'Got the steam up, and it came on to blow fresh—we took wheels in on deck in thirty minutes;' 'Stopped wheels to clean the clinkers out of the furnace;' 'Started wheels,' and so on.

In 1838—as stated in the article on 'Early Steamships' already referred to—the 'Sirius' and the 'Great Western' successfully made the journey from England to America; but five years before that date, Canadian enterprise accomplished the feat of bridging the Atlantic Ocean with a little vessel propelled wholly by steam. This was the 'Royal William,' whose beautiful model was exhibited at the British Naval Exhibition in London, where she attracted the attention and curiosity of the first seamen in the empire. The 'Royal William'—named in honour of the reigning sovereign—was built in the city of Quebec by a Scotchman, James Goudie, who had served his time and learned his art at Greenock. The keel was laid in the autumn of 1830; and her builder, then in his twenty-second year, writes: 'As I had the drawings and the form of the ship, at the time a novelty in construction, it devolved upon me to lay off and expand the draft to its full dimensions on the floor of the loft, where I made several alterations in the lines as improvements.

The steamship being duly commenced, the work progressed rapidly; and in May following, was duly launched, and before a large concourse of people was christened the "Royal William." She was then taken to Montreal to have her engines, where I continued to superintend the finishing of the cabins and deck-work. When completed, she had her trial trip, which proved quite satisfactory. Being late in the season before being completed, she only made a few trips to Halifax.'

The launching of this steamer was a great event in Quebec. The Governor-general, Lord Aylmer, and his wife were present, the latter giving the vessel her name. Military bands supplied the music, and the shipping in the harbour was gay with bunting. The city itself wore a holiday look. The 'Royal William,' propelled by steam alone, traded between Quebec and Halifax. While at the last-named place, she attracted the notice of Mr Samuel Cunard, afterwards Sir Samuel, the founder of the great trans-continental line which bears his name. It is said that the 'Royal William' convinced him that steam was the coming force for ocean navigation. He asked many questions about her, took down the answers in his note-book, and subsequently became a large stock-holder in the craft.

The cholera of 1832 paralysed business in Canada, and trade was at a stand-still for a time. Like other enterprises at this date, the 'Royal William' experienced reverses, and she was doomed to be sold at sheriff's sale. Some Quebec gentlemen bought her in, and resolved to send her to England to be sold. In 1823 the eventful voyage to Britain was made successfully, and without mishap of any kind. The 'Royal William's' proportions were as follows: Builder's measurement, 1370 tons; steamboat measurement, as per Act of Parliament, 830 tons; length of keel, 146 feet; length of deck from head to taffrail, 176 feet; breadth of beam inside the paddle-boxes, 29 feet 4 inches; outside, 43 feet 10 inches; depth of hold, 17 feet 9 inches. On

the 4th of August 1833, commanded by Captain John McDougall, she left Quebec, via Pictou, Nova Scotia, for London, under steam, at five o'clock in the morning. She made the passage in twenty-five days. Her supply of coal was 254 chaldrons, or over 330 tons. Her captain wrote: 'She is justly entitled to be considered the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic by steam, having steamed the whole way across.'

About the end of September 1833, the 'Royal William' was disposed of for ten thousand pounds sterling, and chartered to the Portuguese Government to take out troops for Dom Pedro's service. Portugal was asked to purchase her for the navy; but the admiral of the fleet, not thinking well of the scheme, declined to entertain the proposition. Captain McDougall was master of the steamer all this time. He returned with her to London with invalids and disbanded Portuguese soldiers, and laid her up off Deptford Victualling Office. In July, orders came to fit out the 'Royal William' to run between Oporto and Lisbon. One trip was made between these ports, and also a trip to Cadiz for specie for the Portuguese Government.

On his return to Lisbon, Captain McDougall was ordered to sell the steamer to the Spanish Government, through Don Evanston Castor da Perez, then the Spanish ambassador to the court of Lisbon. The transaction was completed on the 10th of September 1834, when the 'Royal William' became the 'Ysabel Segunda,' and the first war-steamer the Spaniards ever possessed. She was ordered to the north coast of Spain against Don Carlos. Captain McDougall accepted the rank and pay of a Commander, and, by special proviso, was guaranteed six hundred pounds sterling per annum, and the contract to supply the squadron with provisions from Lisbon. The 'Ysabel Segunda' proceeded to the north coast; and about the latter part of 1834, she returned to Gravesend, to be delivered up to the British Government, to be converted into a war-steamer at the Imperial Dockyard. The crew and officers were transferred to the 'Royal Tar,' chartered and armed as a war-steamer, with six long thirty-two pounders, and named the 'Reyna Gobernadora,' the name intended for the 'City of Edinburgh' steamer, which was chartered to form part of the squadron. When completed, she relieved the 'Royal Tar,' and took her name.

In his interesting letter, from which these facts are drawn, to Robert Christie, the Canadian historian, Captain McDougall thus completes the story of the pioneer Atlantic steamer: 'The "Ysabel Segunda," when completed at Sheerness Dockyard, took out General Alava, the Spanish ambassador, and General Evans and most of his staff officers, to Saint Andero, and afterwards to St Sebastian, having hoisted the Commodore's broad pennant again at Saint Andero; and was afterwards employed in cruising between that port and Fuente Arabia, and acting in concert with the Legion against Don Carlos until the time of their service expired in 1837. She was then sent to Portsmouth with a part of those discharged from the service, and from thence she was taken to London, and detained in the City Canal by Commodore Henry until the claims

of the officers and crew on the Spanish Government were settled, which was ultimately accomplished by bills, and the officers and crew discharged from the Spanish service about the latter end of 1837, and "Ysabel Segunda" delivered up to the Spanish ambassador, and after having her engines repaired, returned to Spain, and was soon afterwards sent to Bordeaux, in France, to have the hull repaired. But on being surveyed, it was found that the timbers were so much decayed, that it was decided to build a new vessel to receive the engines, which was built there, and called by the same name, and now [1853] forms one of the royal steam-navy of Spain, while her predecessor was converted into a hulk at Bordeaux.'

This, in brief, is the history of the steamer which played so important a rôle in the maritime annals of Canada, England, and Spain. Her model is safely stored in the rooms of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, where it is an object of profound veneration. At the request of the Government, a copy of the model has been made, and will form part of the Canadian exhibit to the World's Fair at Chicago this year.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXV.—ISABEL'S PROGRESS.

'FORTUNATE,' says the old wise man, 'is the country that has no annals;' but fortunate is *not* the story that has no incident. 'Emotion in action' must be the maxim of the story-teller, even as it is of the dramatist; emotion, therefore, that is unexpressed in action is scarcely tangible enough material for the novelist or dramatist to deal with; it is fitter for the treatment of the rhapsodist or philosopher. Yet there are periods in otherwise active lives that are charged merely with ordinary feeling and desire, with growing knowledge and experience: what is he who undertakes to tell the story of these lives to make of such periods? He finds it hard to write about them, except in such a way as makes the reader inclined to skip them; and yet they are of the greatest importance: they are like the pools or quiet stretches of water in the course of a stream, which reflect heaven and seem as deep as the foundations of the earth, and which give volume and force to the next sweep and rush and swirl of current.

Isabel had now entered upon one of these periods. The six weeks or so of holiday which she allowed herself passed quickly and pleasantly with baths in the sea, walks to Kirk Braddan and over Douglas Head, drives over high, breezy moorland to Sulby Glen, Peel, Ramsey, Port St Mary, and Port Erin; and sea-trips now in the *Sea-mew* and now in the *Swiftsure*; for George came regularly on the Friday afternoon in his yacht, and returned on the Monday morning. He was persistent in his desire and demand for races with Lord Clitheroe's yacht, and was loud in his resolve to put new and powerful engines in his own, to make it the swiftest thing that moved in water. Isabel was compelled to be interested in him and his doings, and, considering his pre-

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tensions towards her, to study him with intention. She found him boyish, if not boisterous, in manner, like a lad escaped for a holiday; with a strong appreciation of the substantial fare of life, of all things that can be bought with cash or a cheque; with fine physical health, and a sturdy confidence in his own judgment; affectionate, but scarcely deferential, to his father, whom he plainly considered somewhat old-fashioned, and whom he called 'dud.' Thus George appeared to Isabel, and she was not sure whether she liked the presentment; on the whole, she thought she did not, and she frequently found herself, before she was aware, making George stand in her mind beside Alan Ainsworth. She wondered if George had just developed those qualities and characteristics which now marked him, or if he had always had them and she merely had not noticed them; but if he had shown them, must she not have noticed them? She concluded that the high position of importance and responsibility to which his father had recently raised him had brought out more strongly qualities which had always been his. But, it must be said, George did not force the study of himself upon her. He talked with her, laughed with her, and was generally attentive to her, but he did not notoriously seek her company; and, after the one small outburst which I have recorded, he did not say anything to her that was charged with special feeling—all which piqued her somewhat; for she was a woman, and no woman—not even a sensible and clear-seeing girl like Isabel—likes a man who pretends to be overwhelmingly in love with her to behave as if he were indifferent, however indifferent she herself may be.

Thus pleasantly and quickly passed the days and weeks till the middle of September, when the whole party said farewell to the Isle of Man. It was only at the last moment of adieu that George showed he still had a memory.

'When,' said he, 'shall we meet again, Bell? Shall I come to town at Christmas, or will you come north? A year,' he added, 'will be a terribly long time'—with clear allusion to the year and a day which were to date them the previous Whitsuntide.

The Suffields, as well as Isabel and her father, returned to London; for there was to be an autumn session of Parliament, and a kind of half or veiled season of society. The session did not actually begin till the second week of October, until which time Lord Clitheroe went shooting. It was a kind of open secret that with the re-assembling of Parliament his engagement to Euphemia should be formally recognised, and there was something of a flutter in the family accordingly.

What with these matters and her own arrangements for settling down to the enjoyment of her wealth in proper form, Isabel was fully occupied for two or three weeks after her return to London. She went back to her old lodgings in the Marylebone Road for a little while—she declined, though invited, to go to Rutland Gate with her father—until she had found a flat and bought enough furniture to enter upon its occupation. Her final 'good-bye' to Mrs Wiffin was affecting. Isabel kissed her and thanked her for all her solicitude in the past.

'Oh, my dear,' said Mrs Wiffin, crying a little,

'you might have been my own daughter, I liked you so well. And thankful I am that nothing but good luck has come to you under my roof. But, oh, the world is full of snares and viles, and I hope that now you won't get into any of them, if it ain't presumptuous in me to say so. And you'll come and see me sometimes.'

Isabel had found for herself a delightful flat—or, at least, a flat which she intended to make delightful—in a block in Cromwell Road. The more substantial and necessary furniture she had, of course, to acquire at once to render it merely habitable; but such things as would make it a pleasant place to live in she set herself to seek out, to select and buy by degrees. It was, and continued to be for months, a minor harmonic joy of her daily existence to journey into strange regions of London and visit the unlikely shops in her quest for treasures of one kind and another. She found, for instance, a fine Japanese Buddha in bronze in a marine dealer's in the East End; a finely carved Chinese table in ebony and ivory in an old curiosity shop in Lambeth; and a beautiful Teniers in a picture-shop in Hammer-smith. Nor did she disdain to look at the more pretentious and dearer wares of the shops of Regent Street, Piccadilly, and Bond Street. She took her father with her on these expeditions, on the pretence of putting herself under his protection; and he was immensely pleased with his responsibility, although, invariably, when active care or decision had to be shown, as in crossing a street or calling a cab, it was his daughter that was to the fore.

At the same time she was not forgetting her scheme for the benefit of Aged Governesses. She did not begin with the display of a prospectus and a subscription list: she intended that the institution should be all her own; she even thought that for the present she would dispense with the aid of her proposed Committee of Gentlemen; for she was shy of discussing her plans with any one, and she wished to be, if she could contrive it, merely a kind of beneficent daughter to a few of those who had grown old, gray, and lonely in the thankless occupation to which she herself had given the spring of her days. The formality of the ordinary charitable institution, with its painfully regular habits and rules, with its generally barrack-like existence, she abhorred; such arrangements she resolved she would not have for her Aged: they would make them feel too much as if they themselves were now put to school; they would, she was sure, be resented in secret, and she knew that dislike of what you should appear grateful for tends to create a hideous, hypocritical temper. Therefore, her regulations would be loose and elastic; her Aged should feel comfortable and at home; and to that end—and also because her income would not bear the expense of a large institution—she took a modest and cheerful house in Chelsea, sufficient to accommodate some ten persons, and no more. She intended that her *protégées* should do the light work of the household themselves—it would do them good to be occupied a little in that way; and she believed—judging by herself—that they would like to be so occupied—and therefore she introduced no great establishment of servants. She herself would be the governing head of the household; and her resident deputy was to be Miss

Brown, the Aged governess who had been the friend of her youth in the Yorkshire school to which her aunt had sent her.

She carried her arrangements through so unhesitatingly that by the beginning of November she had five Aged vestals, including Miss Brown, established in the Chelsea house; and since her own abode was also now in a fairly presentable condition, and since her friends and relations had been for some time asking her when she was going to begin to receive visitors, she determined to give a 'house-warming' on the day dedicated to the memory of Guy Fawkes.

Her dining-room was not large enough to entertain a numerous company. The party at dinner made only an octave, but it was a harmonious octave: Isabel and her father—Alexander had respectfully declined the invitation: feasts and large gatherings, he said, did not agree with his constitution, and, moreover, he had no raiment splendid enough to do her honour—her uncle and aunt, Phemy and Lord Clitheroe, Ainsworth and Miss Brown; Miss Brown's charges, the Aged vestals, were coming in later in their best ancient bibs and tuckers.

'You might have asked a young woman, my dear,' whispered Mrs Sutfield to her niece, 'to meet Mr Ainsworth—Miss Bruno, the novelist, for instance. Miss Brown may be nice and intellectual, but she is scarcely the person to set a young man down with.'

'I didn't think of that!' said Isabel. Could it be, she wondered, that Mr Ainsworth might desire and take pleasure in the society of a young woman?—a young woman other than herself, that is? It smote her with a strange pang that he might.

Yet Mr Ainsworth found great pleasure in sitting next to Miss Brown, who was one of those old maids that make us wonder at the perversity and stupidity of men in choosing mates. She had probably never been asked in marriage; yet it would have been difficult for a man to find a woman who would have been a wiser, tenderer, or more cheerful companion through life. She had never been handsome: she was little, thin, and dry, but there was about her a suggestion of past pleasantness of face and figure such as resides in a Normandy pippin. She had intellect and vivacity, and such an array of learning, and withal so much modesty in the display of it, as put Ainsworth to shame. She knew the works of French authors through and through—it was she who had given Isabel her taste for the literature of France—and she had known Frederic Lemaître—who had taught her elocution—and the great Dumas. She told Ainsworth strange and vivacious stories of these two worthies, to his immense delight and benefit. She discussed French plays with him, and Ainsworth was moved to confide to her the secret that he was trying to write a play. Then she ventured to express to him decided and well-matured opinions of how a play was to be made, and advised him to study Sardou for construction and Labiche for good-nature.

'What a perfect treasure—a *thesaurus*!—your Miss Brown is!' exclaimed Ainsworth to Isabel, when they had all returned to the drawing-room. 'She ought to be editing a Review instead of supervising your Aged!'

'Yes,' said Isabel mischievously, 'she knows all about plays too—doesn't she?—and can advise about the making of them.'

'Yes; she can!' said Ainsworth with a fine blush.

'And she is so charming and versatile,' added Isabel, 'that she can win the confidence of an ambitious dramatist at their first meeting!'

Ainsworth considered her closely a moment: 'Did she tell you?'

'Tell me what?'

'That I had confided to her that I am writing a play?'

'Oh no. I heard you tell her. And,' said she, with an involuntary touch of pique, 'I thought it a little odd that I should not have heard of it before. I—used to hear all you were doing,' she was about to add, but she refrained.

'I meant to keep the matter secret,' said he. 'But indeed it is not much of a secret: I am only trying: I shall very likely fail.'

She was silent; and he was silent—though he looked at her as if he would speak. He had it in his mind to confess that he had made a secret of the writing of the play, because he meant it as a means of raising him to her level: he was resolved to win her, but he would only ask her to put her hand in his when he was in a position equal, or almost equal, to hers; and for a writing man to attain such a position in these days he believed the stage was the only gangway. But he did not say that; he said something else instead.

'You remember,' said he with a tender smile, 'those strange lines I heard your father murmur when I went to bring him from that opium-place?—"Raynor of gold and jewels; Raynor of silver and pearls!"—I often think of them, and wonder if your father had a vision of your coming wealth—saw that you were going to be a Rancee. "Raynor?" In your case it ought to be "*Reine d'or*." I think we must call you *Reine d'or*—queen of gold.'

'That comes,' said Isabel, 'of talking so much about French things with Miss Brown. But,' she added, taking his persillage with unusual seriousness, 'why are you always talking of my gold?—why does my wealth dwell so in your mind? Is that not a little vulgar? Forgive my saying so. But has my poor wealth made any difference in me? Am I not the same to my friends as I have always been? I wish to be! I hope I am!'

'You are, you are, Miss Raynor!' assuaged Ainsworth. 'You are always generous and frank and good! It is vulgar, of course, to consider wealth too much; but—I cannot help thinking of it. Forgive me. I need your forgiveness and your indulgence!'

'Try,' said she, seriously, 'to think I am as I was; and let us say no more about it.'

They were then driven apart by the influx of after-dinner guests, among whom were the Aged in their best raiment. That was a proud evening for them; for not only were they there on an equal footing with such people as they had been wont to serve and to cringe a little to—wealthy people, and people of title, like Lord Clitheroe and his mother Lady Padilham—but they actually saw in the flesh some artists and authors of whom they had hitherto only heard. Their crowning triumph, however, was when one of themselves—

the versatile Miss Brown—at the request of their hostess and protectress, rose and recited in the most laughably dramatic manner—she had been taught by an eminent French actor—a French 'piece' ('Le Curé de Cucugnan' of M. Alphonse Daudet)—recited it with so beautiful a French accent that those who understood French applauded with extreme enthusiasm; and those who did not understand applauded as much as those who did, so that they might not be considered slack in good manners nor backward in education.

They came, and they went; and at midnight Isabel sat again alone in her drawing-room—her father had gone to his room an hour before. Her house had been warmed by the friendly breath of thirty or forty relations, friends, and acquaintances; she might now reckon herself established as a person of some consequence; but, as she looked round the room, and thought who had sat here and who there, and how flat and unsatisfactory it had all been, she found herself recalling with especial delight those summer evenings not so very long ago when Ainsworth would drop into her Marylebone lodgings and straightway plunge into talk of great books and great things—talk into the rush and swirl of which she also would be caught, while Alexander would sit by with the air of a philosopher whose knowledge of the matters being discussed was too deep for words. Those days were gone, and they were better than these!

THE SENSE OF SIGHT IN ANIMALS.

IN discussing the senses of animals, Sight brings us to a difficult part of our subject, because, as even plants are sensitive to light, it is not always easy to know whether the lower animals simply have a similar sensitiveness, or are actually able to see: probably many can only distinguish light from darkness; such may be the function of the eye-spots which occur in quite low organisms.

True vision—the forming of an image on the retina or by mosaic vision—most likely only occurs in the higher forms of creation. There are quite eyeless creatures, for example, earth-worms, which yet in some way are aware not only of light, but even of light of different colours, preferring red to blue. Probably the whole surface of their skin is sensitive. This curious skin-sensitiveness is still further proved by some facts given in a recent book entitled *The Colours of Animals*, where Mr Poulton describes some experiments he has made, extending over several years, on the variable colouring of insects. One year he experimented on no fewer than seven hundred larvae of one kind of butterfly alone (the peacock, which appears to be one of the most sensitive), placing them in different coloured surroundings. These larvae produced pupæ of almost every colour, from black to light gray and very golden, passing on into white, the colours corresponding very closely to that of their immediate surroundings. Even when the larvae were blinded, and the surroundings subsequently changed, the colour changed correspondingly—thus proving that vision is not necessary, but that the whole surface of the skin

must be sensitive, not only to light, but to changes of colour. Mr Poulton is still continuing these experiments, and communicated some further results he has obtained to the Edinburgh meeting of the British Association in 1892.

Molluscs have eyes: some in their tentacles, some between the feelers, or on a stalk at the side or the back; but with most, as with the snail, the eye merely appears to distinguish light from darkness; the cuttle-fish, however, is an exception—it has a highly developed eye, and probably good vision. Another mollusc, the onchidium, a kind of slug, is also more advanced than most others of its kind; for it has two kinds of eyes, one kind like that of other molluscs, and the other like man's; the latter are very numerous (from twelve to one hundred) all over the back. The nautilus has a very exceptional eye; there is, in fact, no similar eye known in Nature: it is simplicity itself, although the nautilus in other ways is a highly developed mollusc. It has none of the parts of an eye with which we are familiar, but is simply a small round space, the surface of which is just like the skin around, only that there is a minute pin-hole in it. Through this hole the sea-water enters and fills the globe of the eye, bathing the retina, over which are spread the fibres of the optic nerve. Possibly this was the original, primitive form of the eye; but in all other molluscs the cavity is closed and more or less filled by a lens.

Many of the lower creatures possess the remarkable power of renewing lost members, and even sensory organs: for example, if the eyes of the garden snail be cut off, they are soon reproduced quite as perfect in structure as they originally were. They also appear to be renewable an indefinite number of times; for on one unfortunate snail this experiment was repeated twenty times, and the eyes were renewed as often, the last eye being as good as the first! The snail's eyes are on its hinder and longer horn or tentacle; but it appears unable to see any object farther away than a quarter of an inch. It is said that a glow-worm can distinguish large letters at a distance of ten or more feet; and even fine lines only two hundredths of an inch apart when they are not more than half an inch distant.

Amongst crustacea there is a great difference in the organ of sight: it ranges from a simple eye-spot in some species up to two compound eyes on a movable eye-stalk (as in the crab and lobster) with complete optical apparatus. Some have both simple and compound eyes—which we shall describe more in detail directly—but usually only the latter, and if the former are also present, there are only two or three. Shore and land crabs are quite equal to most insects in their rapidity of perception. In some minute crustacea, the eyes are so large that the little creatures appear to be all eye.

The sight of insects has been made a special study, and there is no doubt that all can see, with the exception of a few living in subterranean caves, or burrows, who have lost this power. Most insects have two kinds of eyes: the large compound eye—one on each side of the head; and the ocelli or simple eyes, of which there are generally three, placed in a triangle between the other two. As a rule, the ocelli merely consist

of a lens, behind which is a gelatinous liquid, composed of transparent cells, and behind this the retina, in which are a number of the so-called 'rods.' The compound eyes are more complex: the surface is generally divided into hexagons, each of which is called a facet, and usually forms a lens; or we may call the compound eyes six-sided eye-masses; beneath each facet is a cone, the farther end of which is surrounded by cells, in which is a nerve-rod in connection with the fibres of the optic nerve. Whether this organ forms one aggregate eye, or whether each facet is an eye, is not known. The latter, however, seems improbable, for a queen-bee has nearly five thousand of these facets, a worker-bee six thousand, and a drone eight thousand; the house-fly about the same; while moths have eleven or twelve thousand; butterflies seventeen thousand; and some beetles as many as twenty-five thousand facets. If each cone behind these numerous facets makes a separate image, it is very difficult to understand how so many separate images can be combined. It is more probable that insects see by light passing through the facets on to the cones at the back, and so to the nerve-fibres; each cone receiving only a very small portion; hence insects' vision would be a mosaic—a series of minute pictures, larger and wider, the larger the eye, smaller and more distinct when the facets are small and numerous. This theory, though still disputed, seems now almost established by the recent researches of Exner and Watase.

However this may be, it is probable that the ocellus only distinguishes light from darkness, while the compound eye forms images; for the ocellus may be covered over without affecting the insect's movements, whereas, when the compound eyes are covered, the insect behaves as if in the dark, hitting against objects and flying against walls, &c. For nocturnal insects, it is a great advantage to have so many images superposed, while the pigment being mobile, may act as a screen to cut off too much light. If the compound eye of an insect is removed and freed from the pigment or colouring matter, objects may be seen through it from behind; but the field of vision is very small.

A scorpion, though it can boast of six eyes, has very imperfect vision: if approached noiselessly, it can easily be captured, and seems quite unaware of the presence of flies or other prey until they move.

The facets in the compound eye of an ant vary in number from nothing up to twelve hundred. The ocelli vary too; there are never more than three, sometimes only one, and in some workers none at all. Mr Bates, in his *Naturalist on the Amazon*, mentions one kind of ant found there, called the Saüba ant, which, besides having the usual three classes—the males, females, and workers (leaf-carriers, &c.)—that other ants have, has also three kinds of workers, one set living wholly underground, and only to be seen by disturbing the nest. They then emerge in alarm from their burrows, and are seen to have very large heads, not smooth like other workers, but covered with hairs; and in the middle of the forehead is a twin ocellus or simple eye, the usual compound eyes being at the sides of the head. This curious frontal eye is not known in any other kind of

ant, and the appearance of these strange creatures reminds one, says Mr Bates, of the Cyclopes of Homeric fame. One species of ant has not the usual compound eye, the organ of sight simply consisting of one lens. Another nearly blind species, living in dark places and tunnels, has deep-set eyes; another none, though the eye-sockets are visible; another, again, has neither eyes nor sockets: these latter live and move wholly under covered roads or tunnels of their own building.

A small organ in our brains—the size of a hazel nut, and called from its shape the pineal gland—is considered by some to have once been a rudimentary eye! This rudimentary eye is found in all vertebrates and in some fossils; it probably was once a real third organ of vision; so apparently the vertebrates had once a central eye. By-and-by we shall be finding that all these wonderful old myths had a foundation in fact.

Curiously enough, many insects have a visual field of half a sphere, owing to the convex form of the eye, so that they can see objects partly behind and at the side as well as in front of them; so can a chameleon. It is, however, very difficult to say what and how much insects see; probably they can only see objects that are very near, the distance of about a millimetre, or one-twenty-fifth of an inch, being that at which they can see best. To a wasp, the distance of twenty feet corresponds to what one hundred and sixty feet would be to a man. The colour-sense of insects we shall refer to subsequently.

Spiders, which must no longer be called insects, have six or eight ocelli, arranged in a pattern on the top of their heads, but they have no compound eye at all, and are very short-sighted; probably they cannot see at a greater distance than four inches. They are easily deceived by artificial flies; will try their utmost to eat cork or india-rubber when it is placed on the web, and can even be repeatedly deceived in this way without learning wisdom. In another case, after a female spider had laid its eggs and rolled them into a ball, this ball was moved just two inches away, and the unhappy spider was not only unable to find it, but spent nearly two hours looking for it. She scarcely seemed able to see it even at the distance of half an inch. Nor do they know their own bags of eggs from other bags. They will continue carrying these bags about even when all the eggs have been removed and replaced by a piece of lead! Yet some spiders at all events can see their prey and can distinguish colours; and either by sight or some other means can find and will readily drink drops of water scattered about. In one species the eyes of the male are near the top of a long, slender footstalk—perhaps to aid in the search for females; but practically, their sense of sight is almost absent, and, as we have seen, they are decidedly stupid.

Many reptiles depend for their food upon the accuracy of their sight; if a chameleon is watched while catching insects, its unerring aim cannot but be noticed, though its range of vision is probably limited. A chameleon has, however, the curious property of being able to move its two eyes independently of each other, so that one can be looking up and the other down, or one behind

and the other in front. At the same time, its eyelids also form a second pupil, as it were, to the eye; so that it has curious properties, although it has been disrespectfully likened to a boiled pea with an ink-spot.

The eyes of deep-sea fish are very varied: some have neither eyes nor sight; others have greatly enlarged eyeballs, so as to catch the least glimpse of light. Their eyes tend either to disappear or to be unusually efficient; but since no trace of sunlight can penetrate to any great depth, and it is probably quite dark beyond a depth of some two hundred fathoms, of what use can eyes be? Fish have been captured at a depth of nearly three thousand fathoms, where there must be not only absolute stillness, but also total darkness—except for the fact that some of these deep-sea creatures are phosphorescent, and therefore luminous. This fact was first ascertained in the *Challenger* expedition. Since then, Mr Alcock of the Indian Marine Survey has found that some deep-sea crustaceans have a similar power, one large prawn quite lighting up a bucketful of water in which it was placed. Fish with large eyes have therefore a better chance of finding food (and mates); but they cannot wholly depend upon sight, since some have quite abandoned all attempts to see. Some, again, have luminous organs on their head or body or tail, which are under their control, so that they can actually throw light at pleasure on their prey or extinguish it in times of danger. Thus the Angler, amongst others, attracts its prey by means of these coloured lures or phosphorescent lights. It has been well said that these 'vast profundities of the deep have become a sort of almshouse or asylum, whereunto antiquated forms have retired, and amid the changeless environment, have dwelt for ages unaltered.'

As is well known, the eyes of flat-fish—plaice, soles, &c.—are both on one side of the head. This is not, however, the case when these fish are born; originally, like the majority of us, they have an eye on each side of the head; but when they give up swimming about, and lie in hiding on one side at the bottom of the sea, the eye on the under side would be useless; it therefore gradually travels round the head till it is near the other eye, on the coloured side, which is directed toward the light. On the whole, fish have very large eyes, but not very keen sight, although they can perceive their prey or danger; one very odd-looking tropical fish, that walks on its front fins, is much above the average in the way of sight: this is doubtless necessary for its existence, since insects form its prey. Many fish, however, have an accurate vision for objects near at hand, as may be seen in the way they discover shrimps or other food when almost buried; but few appear able to see objects at a greater distance than four feet in the water, and about three feet upwards. A man standing fifteen feet away can be seen by some; but, owing to the refractive power of water, he would doubtless be greatly magnified. The pupils of a fish's eye do not, as a rule, alter in size with the changes in intensity of the light; and in many, a change in the size of the eyelids marks the changes of the seasons; in some, the eyelids become so fat in the spawning season as almost to hide the eye! Some sharks and a few of the lower mammals have a third

eyelid or nictitating membrane, principally of use to clean the eyeball.

Birds have very acute vision; perhaps the most acute of any creature, and the sense is also more widely diffused over the retina than is the case with man; consequently, a bird can see sideways as well as objects in front of it. A bird sees—showing great uneasiness in consequence—a hawk long before it is visible to man; so, too, fowls and pigeons find minute scraps of food, distinguishing them from what appear to us exactly similar pieces of earth or gravel. Young chickens are also able to find their own food—knowing its position and how distant it is—as soon as they are hatched; whereas a child only very gradually learns either to see or to understand the distance of objects. Several birds—apparently the young of all those that nest on the ground—can see quite well directly they come out of the shell; but the young of birds that nest in trees or on rocks are born blind, and have to be fed.

Burrowing rodents, such as rats and squirrels, as we might expect, and also insectivores (moles, &c.), have a very rudimentary organ of sight. The walrus has not good sight either; at all events, out of the water it seems unable to see a man even when he is just in front of it, though it has keen enough hearing, and could smell him one thousand feet away, if to windward. When startled, the walrus rotates its eyes without moving its head, which gives it a very odd expression. Monkeys, as we should expect, have sight more like our own, and readily distinguish colour. In one instance, sugar-candy of various colours was provided for them; they invariably chose green first—perhaps because it was more like their usual herbaceous food—and then white; no other colours were touched till these were all eaten.

It is, however, hardly necessary to speak of the sense of sight in the higher animals, as it is so much like our own, except to notice that few of them depend so much upon this sense as we do. This is very observable with cats and dogs, who, though they have keen sight, yet rely far more upon their senses of hearing and of smell. In most mammals and the higher vertebrates, as with ourselves, the eye consists of parts admitting light and concentrating it on an expansion of the optic nerve which lines the back of the eyeball; sometimes one layer of tissue is modified into a coloured and light-reflecting surface.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER III.

THE following morning—or, rather, I should say, that morning—Dr Carl von Eberstein appeared at the breakfast table with a very worn and haggard face indeed. 'Looks as if he'd been on the spree for a week!' murmured the Masher to Mrs Parson. But, to his discomfiture, that lady eyed the youth from head to foot with a scornful glance, and said in reply: 'I daresay you know all about how a gentleman looks when he has been, as you so elegantly term it, "on the spree for a week." I call it a most interesting pallor, which improves his always good-looking countenance.' (Her husband stared at her, a potato harpooned on his fork, making various blind and ineffectual

shots at his mouth with it.) 'A-hem! Dr von Eberstein, I trust your zeal for midnight exploration has not ended in giving you a cold?' This drew all eyes on our hero, who blushed and looked uncomfortable.

'Oh no, madam; I am quite well, I thank you; only a little tired.' And he applied himself afresh to his breakfast.

'Dear me! now I come to look at him, *what* a nice face Dr Eberstein has,' murmured Miss Priscilla Jenkins to her sister, Miss Hester.

'If you hadn't been half blind,' answered that lady snappishly—for she had a short temper—'you'd have seen that long ago. *I* did.'

'Well, sister, you needn't bite my nose off, if you did.'

'Just as well I shouldn't,' replied the snappish one; 'it's short enough already.'

Poor Miss Priscilla was in an agony lest the Doctor should have overheard this little rebuke; but she could not help looking up from her plate now and again and thinking to herself: 'Dear me! where *could* my eyes have been? He is certainly wonderfully handsome.' And then she blushed for shame at her thoughts.

Strangely enough, the very same idea was passing through the fair Miss Emerson's mind. It is never wise to speculate on the thoughts of ladies, for they are such incomprehensible creatures, that it is quite impossible to guess in what groove their ideas may be running. The young lady, with a most demure and saintly look on her face, has just finished sewing up the sleeves of her brother's friend's smoking-jacket, or has probably carefully deposited a sharp-pointed pebble in the young man's slipper, and is now dreaming of more mischief. It is as impossible to guess what the feminine cogitations are as it is to catch a butterfly with a railway engine. Miss Emerson, therefore, though, to all seeming, intent on roast fowl, was saying to herself: 'Now, that is the sort of man I should like to marry, if I ever do commit myself so far. So tall and well built; such an open, honest countenance; and oh! what lovely eyes!'

'Dear me! what had come to all the ladies? All the men were aware that the Doctor had never been singled out in this fashion before. But the climax was reached when Mrs Parson, who had usually spoken of our hero as a member of 'one of those horrid German universities where they do nothing but smoke and guzzle beer from morning to night!'—when she actually, with a smile on her countenance, to which it had been a stranger for many a long day, said in dulcet tones as the party rose from the table: 'My dear Doctor, *would* you lend me your arm for a little stroll on the bank? I should so like to ask you your opinion on some of these dear delightful antiquities we see daily.'

Every one stared, the Parson most of all. The Masher turned aside to hide a grin; and the luckless and bewildered young man addressed answered hurriedly: 'With much pleasure, madam.' And the two departed, leaving the Parson staring in vacant amaze after his wife.

The other ladies fluttered into their cabins headonbless, various sensations in their minds; with t, short, ugly Mr Cotton muttered to the a twi: 'Anged if hi see anythin' so wonderful eyes b chap! A long-legged, German lout like fronta!

that! Wot's come over all these women-folk hof a sudden—hey?'

But the Masher was watching the Parson's face, on which were legibly imprinted virtuous horror, amazement, and indignation at the extraordinary behaviour of the wife of his bosom.

Mr Cotton retired into the cabin which he jointly occupied with the Doctor, dismissed the subject from his mind, and scanned the money article of the latest 'Times.' The Masher went on deck for a smoke; and the Parson was left, staring round the cabin in vacant bewilderment.

'To describe what that unfortunate Von Eberstein went through during his conferences with Mrs Parson,' said Colonel Merritt to me when relating this truly veracious story, 'is impossible. He tried to tell me; but what with his wrath and genuine astonishment at her conduct, and the roars of laughter with which I received his confidence, he couldn't explain himself. It was the richest joke I ever heard!'

When the Professor came on board again, the Parson, who from the deck had watched their approach in horrified silence as he saw Mrs Parson hanging affectionately on the Professor's arm, and looking up tenderly into his eyes—the Parson stepped forward, bestowed a laughty scowl on the unfortunate young man, and, addressing his wife, said: 'My dear, please come down-stairs; I wish to speak to you.' She waved a farewell to her late escort and vanished, leaving poor Von Eberstein rooted to the deck.

'Now, my friend,' said he, turning to the Masher, who was simply roaring with laughter, 'will you kindly tell me what is the meaning of all this, if you can?'

'If I can!' responded the Ornament. 'Why, my dear fellow, she's gone mashed on you! Why, I don't know; but it seems to me, from what I saw at breakfast, that *all* the ladies are in the same box. Ask yourself: *I* don't know why!' And he wiped his eyes, having for once enjoyed a good laugh.

The Professor stood silent for a few moments; then he strolled forward, filled and lit his pipe, and began anew to examine his trophy, which he carried in his waistcoat pocket.

Meanwhile, there was gnashing of teeth in the Parson's cabin. Let us draw a veil over it, for charity's sake.

Dr von Eberstein had not been seated in the bows of the boat for more than ten minutes, when a soft step made him look up. There stood Miss Priscilla Jenkins, with a most maidenly smirk on her faded lips. 'Dr Eberstein,' she said in a lackadaisical voice, 'do you know I do really feel so ill; I wonder what is the matter with me? It is a kind of faintness. I should be so obliged if you would prescribe for me.'

'By all means, Miss Jenkins,' replied the kind-hearted and unsuspecting Doctor, taking her wrist in his. As he did so, he happened to look up, and he espied the Masher, watching him with a broad grin and shaking his finger at him. He dropped the wrist like a hot potato. 'I think if you go and lie down for a while the feeling you complain of may pass off. I will see you again at dinner.'

'Oh, thank you so much!' replied the guile-

less maiden, and she tripped away, leaving Von Eberstein in a cold perspiration of mingled fright and indignation.

'What—what is the meaning of all this?' he exclaimed. At this moment the head of Miss Hester Jenkins appeared at the companion. She glanced round, and then began to approach him. 'This is too much!' exclaimed the unhappy man, who sprang up and hastened towards the plank which led ashore, meaning to seek safety in flight. To effect this, however, he had to pass the lady, which he was doing with a bow, when she stopped him:

'Oh, Dr von Eberstein, I wished to ask you'—

'Another time, my dear madam; I am really in haste. I find I shall miss the chance of seeing a most interesting antiquity if I do not hurry.'

'But just a moment'—

'Positively, I shall be too late if I wait. An revoir, madam;' and he sprang ashore and hurried off. As he did so, he turned, and saw a face pressed against one of the cabin windows, evidently watching him. It was Miss Emerson's!

Miss Jenkins looked after him, feeling inclined to be angry, but presently her features relaxed. 'It is impossible to be angry with such eyes,' she murmured; and she retired to her cabin.

When the Professor returned that evening, he found himself, to his great annoyance, overwhelmed with the same embarrassing attentions, and he didn't like it. But he didn't at all mind when he looked up from his plate and saw Miss Emerson's pretty brown eyes bent upon him with an unmistakable expression of interest lurking in them, and lowered in confusion when they met his glance of admiration. That was quite another thing, and the sensation was decidedly pleasant.

They were now on their homeward journey, and would disembark the following day. The Professor was glad of it. He had become sick and weary of the gross and fulsome adulation the ladies of the party seemed inclined to bestow on him. He had devoted himself assiduously to Miss Emerson, at first to escape from the other women, but afterwards with a genuine feeling of respect and admiration, which had quickly ripened into love. And, on her part, Miss Emerson seemed inclined to reciprocate the sentiment. On this last evening, when they had gone to dress for dinner, Von Eberstein had abstractedly hung up his waistcoat without taking out his precious box. As he left the cabin, Mr Cotton hurried in to make his toilet. He had often seen the Professor take something out of his waistcoat pocket and pore over it, and with the curiosity of a little mind, had longed to know what it was. But though he had often examined the pocket, he had found nothing. There hung the identical waistcoat.

'It's last night,' said he; 'blowed hif I don't hexamine it hagain.' He did—and found the box! Hastily he opened it. 'Nothin' but one o' them cussed stinkin' beetles!' said he, in disgust. 'Wonder how a feller can carry such things about with 'im!' But here he heard the dinner coming. In his haste, he shoved the box into his own pocket and ran out to take his place.

That night, to the astonishment of the men, and also the delight of the Doctor, who was thereby freed from the usual attentions, the three elder ladies made a deliberate set at Mr Cotton. They complimented him on his improved looks; they teased him gently; they exercised all their fascinations upon the delighted man, who pulled up his collar, shot his cuffs, and literally bathed himself in feminine smiles. The Parson, who had given up his wife in despair, and was congratulating himself that the trip was just over, and she would come to her senses when 'that German fellow' was gone, was thunder-struck at this new movement of hers, and could only stare round the table, dumb and open-mouthed. 'The depravity of *her* flirting—she! a rector's wife! And at her age! Oh, pooh! it's impossible!' But it wasn't! There she was, before his face, making eyes at this low, underbred little man—ugly too! and, wonder of wonders, the Misses Jenkins following suit.

He had not a syllable to say for himself. The others all enjoyed themselves in their own way. The Professor made desperate love to Miss Emerson, who seemed to like it; the Masher surveyed the scene from the profundity of his shirt-collar, and chuckled delightedly at the changes which, dolphin-like, passed over the Parson's face; and the three ladies plied the enraptured Mr Cotton with compliments and flowery phrases, which so delighted him that he misplaced and dropped more aspirates than ever. And over all, the Reverend brooded like a thunder-cloud, gloomy and threatening.

And thus passed their last evening on board.

TWO DAYS IN CAPE CORSE.

THE innkeeper of Corte had called me at four A.M. that I might catch the morning train for Bastia. He was a Florentine, inordinately proud of the names in his visitors' book, and with the meanest cuisine in the world; and he had in vain tried to argue me into an ascent of Monte Rotondo, which would entail my return to his hotel for another day or two. But I was in no humour for Monte Rotondo. To begin with, it was the month of May; and the season was late. There was a terrible amount of snow on the mountain. One knew this by induction; for the lower peaks, not much more than a third as high as Monte Rotondo, still glistened with their white mantles.

There were other reasons why I turned my back on Monte Rotondo and proposed to hurry to Bastia. Perhaps not the least of them was the desire to leave as quickly as possible an island which, from all accounts, was still, in the year 1890, nearly as full of bandits as a boar. It seemed incredible; yet there can be no doubt that Corsica was and is retrograding in certain respects. And although the Corsican bandit does not lay himself out for the capture of travelling foreigners, who could say how soon he might find the temptation irresistible? The man who shoots one human being after another in vendetta with as little repugnance as you or I would shoot a partridge, may be expected after a time to become callous about other of the Commandments. And I for one felt unambitious of such adventures as might be the lot of the Englishman in bonds to bandits

among the bleak mountain-tops of the green isle of Corsica.

Though too early in the year for the high peaks, it was by no means too early for that interesting yet very little visited promontory to the north of Corsica which protrudes itself from the main island like the spike of a sword-fish. Moreover, the Cape Corsicans, as the inhabitants of this headland are called, have a reputation for thrift and sobriety which makes them despised by their more lazy and happy-go-lucky brethren of the interior. The inference was that they retained less of that taste for bloodshed which certainly characterises the average Corsican now, as in past times. It seemed unlikely, therefore, that I should here be thought worth seizing and holding for a ransom which my friends at home might think a preposterously high estimate of the value of my life.

The weather had been dull to the last degree during the previous week. Storm after storm from the south-west—the fiercest quarter for Corsica—had broken upon the land, and tumbled the waves of the Mediterranean into Ajaccio's lovely bay so as to make even the Ajaccioti a little impatient and disposed to marvel. It was equally wild in Corte. The high white and black houses of this quaint old fortress-town were all blotched with damp and mould. The rivers Restonica and Tavignano, which meet under its castle rock, rushed surgingly towards their goal on the eastern shore. And only now and again, at sunset and sunrise, was there any break in the black clouds over the mountains which in the west and south frame Pasquale Paoli's town so engagingly.

Under these conditions of the atmosphere, I travelled towards Bastia on a chilly May morning, hoping for better things, upon the strength of a divinely rosy flush which had glowed upon Rotondo's snow at the hour of our departure. For companions I had an old gentleman with a gun, and a young hearty priest with thick curly hair and an ingenuous expression. The priest talked without ceasing; and the old gentleman fingered his gun and uttered the laconic phrases, 'Eh! già! Ah! Ebbene! Sacro Dio!' one after the other; as much, it appeared, in extreme weariness of his companion's loquacity as for the sake of any encouragement it might give him to continue to talk. Anon, however, at a wayside station the priest departed, and, to the amazement of my Protestant eyes, was straightway received into the arms of two stout country-women who awaited him on the platform. They took him in their arms one after the other, his bag and his bundle, his umbrella, rosary, and prayer-book, and embraced him, with many a sounding salute upon the cheek, until, with some difficulty and haste, he fought himself free of them, and stood at arm's-length, blushing like a poppy. I daresay they were his mother and an aunt or foster-mother.

At Bastia the sky was blue, and the sun shone gaily upon the multitude of white tombs which, after the Corsican fashion, dot the hill-sides like bijou country residences. It appeared that the bad weather was left behind. And so, indisposed to lose time, straightway I went from the railway to the *Hôtel de France*, and thence, having breakfasted with appetite upon the excellent trout of

the island and the fair wine, I walked with my knapsack to the diligence office for the Cape Corse townlets, and in a trice had engaged the *coupe*. In less than an hour after entering the old capital of the island, I was being eddied along through the dust of the high-road in the worst, most dilapidated, and most tedious of public conveyances in which it had yet been my misfortune to travel. A large widow with an asthma sat by my side for a few minutes. She was a genial conversational soul, and we were soon upon such an intimacy that I received an invitation to visit her upon my return to Bastia, and was informed of the amount of the savings of her son, who chanced to be in the postal service of the Argentine Republic at Buenos Ayres. When the widow went, I was alone in the lumbering car for hours, with all the dust of the highway for company.

The journey by diligence began at 10.30 A.M. and lasted until 8 P.M. Morsiglia was to be my resting-place; and so I did not leave the diligence until Morsiglia was reached. In the meantime, I had learned the physiognomy of Cape Corse by heart, save that of the mountains, which pervade it in the middle like a vertebra. The road is cut out of the rocky cliffs of the coast-line, and white villages nestling by the calm blue sea were passed one after another. Now and again, however, the prospects were of a broader kind. We came to spacious glens and valleys which broke upon the shore from the inland mountains. Through the midst of the cornfields and vineyards, olive woods and chestnut forests of these lateral rifts, attractive brooks of fresh water purled their way to the Mediterranean.

Some very happy days may be spent with the rod and gun in Corsica; and none will be remembered more brightly than those devoted to Cape Corse. The entire promontory is hardly twenty miles long by an average breadth of six or seven miles. Yet it has scenery and attractions of many kinds within its compass: mountains five thousand feet high; townlets and villages on the hill-sides and in the valleys; fruit famous for its excellence; wine unmatched elsewhere in Corsica; wild-boar and partridge among its thick perfumed herby scrub; fish in its pellucid streams, and the sea, which is never far away; and the most vivacious of Corsica's cities at its point of juncture with the body of the island.

We rested awhile at the Marina of the town of Luri—five miles up a valley and built on the mountain sides—and the Marina of Rogliano. Then we climbed with terrible tardiness into the mountains to reach Rogliano itself, the chief town of the cape. It is gloriously situated at the head of an amphitheatre of mountains, with a deep valley beneath it opening towards the sea, and teeming with woods and gardens. The town was in gala dress: triumphal arches and mottoes of welcome everywhere; and the people themselves in their sleekest black, and the dumsels in silk. The new Prefect of Corsica had in the course of his tour of the island arrived at Rogliano and been received by the notables and feasted. You would think that people living in the midst of such beauty must of necessity have beautiful natures—be generous, gentle, and unselfish. It is not quite so, however; for Rogliano furnishes

its due and more of the rogues charged with murder and other heinous crimes at the assizes of Bastia.

From Rogliano, the drive was by one rounded upland hill-side after another towards the west coast of the cape. We passed the lighthouse of the extremity to the right. The road made prodigious detours with the curves of the deeply-dimpled slopes. It was a treeless region. The shrubs, however, were thick everywhere; and sweet was the perfume of them as the evening dew distilled their essences.

Thus we ambled by Ersu, the northernmost village, which we saw hundreds of feet beneath us; and Centuri, to which we descended for the convenience of a distinguished native and his sister, who were gracious enough to invite me into their house, and make mention of free accommodation for the night. But to this civil offer I was proof, though it was tendered in all sincerity; and so, amid a profusion of bows and good wishes—the latter from the lady, I rejoice to say, and bestowed in the most cordial manner—I resumed my seat, and we clambered back to the high-road for the last stage of the day.

It was full time the journey was over. The sun, fiery as a tomato, had gone below the horizon line of the sea. The headlands of the coast, north and south, were paling fast. With remarkable suddenness, the air had chilled, and taken a clammy turn that was not very agreeable. I was dead-tired, what with the extraordinary length of my day—beginning as it did at sunrise—the dire jolts of the last ten hours, the aching of my battered bones, and the comparative lightness of my stomach. And so I rejoiced when in the uncertain gloaming the conductor pointed to some houses in front, with a brace of crenellated citadels of the time of Genoa in their midst, and introduced me to the outskirts of Morsiglia. It was well he gave me this information when he did. For no sooner had we come to a heavy stand-still in front of the post-office in the little market-place, than a score or two of the populace beset the poor man with demands for this thing and that, which he had been bidden to buy or get for them in Bastia or *en route*. It was a scene to turn the head of a mathematician. Some blamed him roundly for neglect; others rated him for misinterpretation of their demands. And there was such a riotous chatter from the more contented ones, who examined their parcels before the public eye and the stars, that none would have heeded me unless I had set myself explicitly to shout them all. I smoked another cigarette, and watched them all with interest, until the storm had subsided. Only then did I request directions to the wayside inn of a humble kind which I had been told might be found in Morsiglia.

My bill for bed and board in this little village 'at the back of the world' was two francs and a half. It may be imagined, therefore, that it receives few visitors. Indeed, as a matter of fact it has no inn. The little boy who was bidden to guide me to the house led me through the village and out on to the hill-side until we came to a single white dwelling all shuttered and barred for the night. This was the residence of the road inspector of the district, who, it appeared, played the part of hotel-keeper. On this occasion,

however, he and his wife were both abed; and it was only after considerable parleying that I induced their son to receive me. He gave me a supper of eggs and cheese and indifferent wine, and showed me to a guest-room that would not have been amiss in the *Hotel Metropole*.

The next day opened magnificently, with a cloudless sky and a glare on the sea which proclaimed the sun. The road inspector was up and curious to see his guest. So cordial was he when I professed myself well content with the poverty of his welcome, that he volunteered to be my guide for a journey afoot across the mountains back to Luri, whence I could take the return diligence to Bastia. It was a *festa* day, and thus he was at liberty to take his pleasure. 'Moreover,' he observed, with kindly emphasis, 'understand that I do not do it for money. I go with you as a friend.'

A cup of coffee and a raw egg were princely nutriment upon which to begin one of the most delightful walks I have ever made. It was a joy to breathe the balmy air, a mixture of the scent of many an herb, orange blossoms, the tang of the salt sea, and the morning freshness. We strode along the high-road, therefore, with happiness exuding at every pore, my friend averring that the exercise was pure pleasure to him. We soon left Morsiglia behind; it was lost at the bend of the first headland. But there was compensation in the glorious panorama of Corsica's central peaks, the snow of which seemed to tread the blue of the heavens. The coast-line of the north was also visible right along to Calvi, the ancient little town which boldly claims Columbus for a son. The pale gray of the various capes edged the southern sea to the horizon line.

We kept to the high-road for a few miles, and then, with the Tower of Seneca in front of us, struck steeply upon the herby hills. The Tower of Seneca is a stout ruin upon a mountain top, where tradition says Nero's tutor passed his years of exile in Corsica. It is in this part of the Cape that the sportsman may hope to have a fair day's shooting. The brushwood is, however, so dense that there is small temptation for any but the most robust of hunters to continue long on the track of the Cape Corsican boar. As for the horses, which one may hire here for two or three francs a day, they would be perfectly useless anywhere except on the high-roads and byways.

One wonders to see how these hills of the cape are left wholly to Nature. It is due partly to the native indolence of the Corsicans, who despise manual labour, and partly to the comparatively sparse population. 'Hands are lacking,' said my friend the road inspector, with an instructive heave of the shoulder. Besides, the soil is very thin, and the substratum of limestone, hornblende, and granite is not very attractive to the agriculturist. Thus the outer hill-slopes of the Cape are generally destitute of dwellings and gardens, whereas the valleys and defiles are well peopled.

From the watershed at the base of Seneca's Tower we looked at length again upon the valley of Luri, which is reckoned the most enchanting spot of the Cape. The day before, I had seen it from its base on the eastern side. Now I was at its summit in the west; and the white houses of its different hamlets—all called Luri—set in the midst of chestnut woods in their fairest greenery,

were at my feet. The blackbirds and linnets in the trees were in vigorous song as we descended at a smart pace through these beautiful little woods. Our pace, indeed, was such that the pangs of thirst begun to be troublesome, in spite, too, of the shade of the chestnuts. But my guide would not allow me to have recourse to the brooks which fell from high springs on both sides of us. 'Water,' he said sagely, 'is a poor drink, and not very wholesome.' Moreover, I was to taste the Muscat of Luri, a wine of repute.

Down, therefore, to the first convenient house, entering it over the dunghap contiguous to the front door. It was a poverty-stricken hovel, though so white and tolerably assuming outside. A pitcher and a chair were almost the only articles of furniture in its reception room, the ceiling of which was black with smoke, and the floor populous with fleas. But the Muscat was speedily brought forth. It had been pressed by the naked feet of the tawny woman who offered it to us, and was worth but a penny or so the litre. I have drunk better wine, but none that seemed more delicious. The good dispenser of it was mightily pleased it was appreciated; and it was only after much argument that she could be persuaded to take half a franc as an acknowledgment of its excellence. They are not mercenary in Cape Corse; and as often as not a money offer is rejected—with some spirit.

Luri is quite a considerable village, with two hotels, some swelling municipal buildings, and rather a large church, containing nothing worth seeing. The citizens were pacing solemnly up and down their streets under the faded arches with which they in their turn had greeted the Prefect; and attired in their festival clothes. They flung us civil inquiries as we passed them on our way down the valley, with orange groves and vineyards on both sides of the road. This is especially a famous region for citrons, the trees of which were as odorous as the oranges.

It was yet only eleven o'clock when we arrived at the Marina of Luri, and the rendezvous for the Bastia diligences. Our walk of about fourteen miles had been as brisk as it was lovely. Certainly, it will not be easy to forget.

Let me, in conclusion, give my readers the bill of fare of a meal at a franc and a half which awaited us at the little inn of the Marina. It will sufficiently show that Cape Corse is unsophisticated, and quite a land for the tourist who is out at elbows. There was wine *ad libitum*, of course. The meal began with *hors-d'œuvre* of Corsican sausage, radishes, and olives. Soup à la *bouillabaisse* followed. Lamb cutlets, a Corsican stew of beef, potatoes, and artichokes, cheese, pastry, and coffee, with uncooked broad beans for dessert, were the concluding stages of an eccentric but excellent feast. Nor was the company less excellent. My guide and I sat with various peasants of the district, who were as polite as courtiers; and a certain gentleman and lady, Cape Corsican to the bone; and we were all waited upon by a handsome maid, who was as civil with her smiles as were my companions in speech.

An hour later I gave my friend the road inspector a strong shake of the hand and mounted by the driver of the diligence. The worthy man waved his hat to me until I was tired of contort-

ing myself to look back at him. He had consented to accept a trio of francs, after all; but I verily believe it was rather to satisfy me than for the good of his own pocket.

Cape Corse is a district to revisit. I venture to recommend it to the traveller in Corsica. Hurried as was my own view of it, it sufficed to put me on the best of terms with the land and its people.

PROVIDENCE COTTAGE.

AN EPISODE.

By G. B. BURNIN.

"PROVIDENCE Cottage," Mrs Pringle, ma'am, it shall be,' said Captain Sol Buddle firmly, as he passed his huge cup for another cup of tea, and wiped his forehead with a red bandana handkerchief.

'Well, Captain,' said Mrs Pringle, in tones of amiable acquiescence, 'you being a scholar, and having book-learning moreover, it isn't for me to gainsay you.'

'Mrs Pringle, ma'am,' said the Captain, emphatically rapping his spectacle case on the table, 'your sentiments do you honour. When a man comes to my time of life'—

Mrs Pringle made a little deprecatory movement of her pretty fat hand.

The Captain smiled, well pleased. 'Ah, Mrs Pringle, ma'am, that's the poetry oozing out of you; you're chockfull of it. I say when a man comes to my time of life'—

'Only forty-five, Captain Buddle,' softly suggested Mrs Pringle.

The Captain bowed courteously. 'Not being used to the society of amiable ladies like yourself, Mrs Pringle, I don't quite know how to undecieve you as to my years.'

He paused, a piece of buttered toast in his hand, and looked round Mrs Pringle's cosy sitting-room, warm with the heat of a glowing sea-coal fire. Also, his thoughts went back to the society of various nautical ladies he had known whose manners lacked the repose which distinguished Mrs Pringle's.

Mrs Pringle also paused, teapot in hand, to cast a pensive glance at the gallant sailor opposite.

Outside, tumultuous waves beat noisily against the shingly shore, as if insisting that Captain Sol Buddle should be delivered up to them; inside, the only sound which broke the stillness was a pensive mew from Mrs Pringle's Persian cat. The Captain paused again, took up the cat, and thoughtfully poured out some milk for it. 'My cat on board the "Morning Star" would never take his milk without a spoonful of grog in it,' he said reminiscently; 'but he tried to do too much for his strength: he was always ambitious, that cat was—too ambitious. Laid himself out to eat up all the ship's cockroaches, though he knew they disagreed with him; and there was a funeral soon after—his funeral. He took a lot of cockroaches with him, too—as many as he could hold, poor chap.' Captain Buddle heaved a sigh to the memory of his departed favourite.—'As to my years,' he resumed, 'they'—

The quiet Mrs Pringle, who was not much given to interruptions, did a most unusual thing—she interrupted the Captain again—for the

third time. 'A man is as young as he looks,' she said. 'And you, Captain Buddle, don't look a day over forty-five.'

The Captain again bowed with nautical grace. 'Seeing you've set your mind on it, Mrs Pringle, we'll make it so; though, if any questions are asked, the facts will go against it.'

'No one will be so impertinent,' said Mrs Pringle, as she looked pensively down at her pretty slipper.

The Captain passed his cup for more tea, a beverage to which he had lately taken a great fancy: its novelty appealed to him most strongly. In his seafaring days at this hour—like the departed cat—he had generally partaken of a soothing beverage with rum in it. But the widow had gradually weaned the Captain from such an unlady-like beverage as rum in the daytime, and he found ever fresh delight in tea—tea with cream in it—tea by the bucket—tea containing four lumps of sugar to each supply. At ten o'clock every night, however, the widow's fair hands brewed her lodger what he was facetiously wont to call 'a stiff nor'-wester.' Then, the Captain sat thoughtfully by the fire, living his voyages over again, and full of simple, reverent thankfulness that he had been spared to drift into such a pleasant haven of peace.

Mrs Pringle continued to knit, as the cat drowsily purred on the Captain's knee. The Captain put down his cup and took up the plan of a very snug, two-storeyed cottage, with a veranda running all round it. "Providence Cottage," it shall be, Mrs Pringle; and he looked about for a pipe spill.

Mrs Pringle handed him one with something of a sigh.

'For more than six months,' said the Captain, meditatively drawing a long breath, and carefully using his little finger for a tobacco-stopper—'for more than six months I've been laid up in port, so to speak, and yet in sight and smell of the sea.'

'Yes, you can certainly smell it,' said Mrs Pringle dubiously. 'And when the fishing-boats come in, it's a little bit—eh strong.'

'Well,' said the Captain admiringly, 'a trifle, maybe, for a delicate lady's nose like yours, Mrs Pringle; but there's not an unpleasant flavour about it to a man who's spent his life in communion, so to speak, with such smells. Why, every port has a different smell, and you get to know the lay of the land by it long before you drop anchor.'

'Aren't you tired of the sight of the sea?' somewhat inconsequently asked Mrs Pringle, again filling the Captain's cup, which was blue and white, with 'A Present from Ventnor' on it in bold, clear characters of green. Mrs Pringle lived about a mile beyond Ventnor in a snug little cottage, whose garden ran down to the sea.

'No, ma'am, I ain't,' returned the Captain meditatively. 'Cause why, Mrs Pringle? The sea gets into a man's blood and heart and brain. When he goes down to the sea in ships, likewise fishing-smacks, it's because he's drawn to it, so to speak. He can't help it. The wonders of the deep are always wonders to him, though he's seen them all his days; the harvest of the sea—its dead men's bones, its coral caves, where, saving your presence, those fish-tailed hussies, the mer-

maids, sit waiting for you with deceitful murmurings and delusive songs—is afore him ever in the night-watches; every wind that blows, every whale that spouts, is known to him almost as well as its Creator.'

Mrs Pringle shuddered. 'It's a cruel, treacherous thing,' she said—'a cruel, treacherous thing. I sometimes wake at nights and draw the clothes over my head to shut out the noise. It makes me shudder, and yet I can't leave it.'

'You're right, Mrs Pringle,' said the Captain, drawing his chair a little closer to her—'you're right. It is a cruel, treacherous thing, with its changing winds and hungry, foaming waves, its never-resting, never-ending ebb and flow, its little baby ripples and soft surface a-shining in the sun. And then, when you slide down into it just to feel its soft touch, why, as like as not,' continued the Captain, rather ashamed of his oratorical flight—'why, as like as not, there's a shark waiting to grab and drag you down to Davy Jones's locker.'

Mrs Pringle looked frightened, so the Captain hastened to reassure her. 'It's a wonderful place is the sea, Mrs Pringle, such a lot of spare room in it for rubbish. I should like to take two or three of these contractors who've sent in estimates for Providence Cottage and dump 'em down into Port Royal harbour, so that Port Royal Tom could just open his jaws and contract for them. One would think I was going to build a palace instead of a tidy little six-roomed cottage.'

'Ah, but the masterful way in which you rule and direct them, Captain Buddle!' said Mrs Pringle admiringly. 'You've a natural gift for the ruling of men.'

'Maybe,' said the Captain pleasantly; 'but that's a different thing from the ruling of women, Mrs Pringle. You can't clinch any little difference of opinion with a handspike when you're arguing with lovely woman. You've got to keep your hand on the helm all the time and not let her know it.'

'Yes,' rejoined Mrs Pringle thoughtfully; 'women like a strong, masterful hand that'll guide them; but they won't be driven.'

The Captain shifted himself in his chair. Suddenly it dawned upon him that the matter might be one capable of personal interpretation. He had never tried his hand in that direction. It seemed to him that the howling wind outside, as it blew among the unfinished rafters of Providence Cottage, was jeering at him for his lack of skill in the direction of the fair sex. He stirred his tea and took another lump of sugar.

And the widow, too, thought of many things in her quiet, gentle way as she sat by her side of the fire. Captain Buddle, with his wonderful flow of language and quaint descriptive power, had been a great source of comfort to the amiable Mrs Pringle. And now in a couple of months Providence Cottage would be finished and the Captain cease to remain her lodger. How kind he had been when, that 'land-shark' of a coal-man tried to cheat her out of a sack of coals! The Captain, albeit a man of peace, had knocked the fraudulent coal-man into the middle of the cellar, and refused to allow him to depart until he put his head through the circular opening and humbly apologised. It was something to have

a great, strong, gentle—the Captain was always wonderfully gentle to her—sailor about the premises. Ah, well, she would take her nephew Jack and his pretty bride, Polly Humphreys, to live with her until they had saved enough money to buy a house—no thrifty fisherman at Ventnor ever married before he had bought a house—and try to forget the Captain's pleasant ways. Then she remembered that Jack was a little uncertain in his temper, and that the Captain was, except when unjustifiably roused by fraudulent coal-men, as mild as a lamb.

Suddenly, Captain Buddle rose from his chair and crossed over to Mrs Pringle's side of the room. 'Mrs Pringle, ma'am,' he said, and his flow of language seemed to have returned to him—'Mrs Pringle, ma'am, what would you think of a man who was safe in port if he ventured out to sea again in a new craft—a craft that might be lopsided and cranky, with shifting ballast, given likewise to shipping bilge-water—there was a touch of real pathos in his voice as he drew this touching picture—'and maybe that wouldn't answer her helm?—what would you think of such a man if he was to leave his snug bunk in port and go drifting up and down a-steerin' all over the points of the compass generally?'

'I should think of him whatever you thought of him, Captain Buddle,' said Mrs Pringle. 'It is not for me to set my opinion against that of a sea-faring gentleman like yourself. But if the man you speak of is the man I take him to be, then—'

'Then what, Mrs Pringle, ma'am?' eagerly inquired the Captain.

'He—he would stop in his bunk in port, as you nautical gentlemen say,' returned Mrs Pringle.

The Captain's face glowed with excitement. He took up the plans of Providence Cottage to cast them in the fire. Mrs Pringle gently stayed his hand. 'What are you doing?' she asked.

'Mrs Pringle, ma'am, I'm going to commit these plans to the flames,' said the Captain, 'unless you'll let me give 'em to Jack and Polly.'

'W-what?'

'Yes, Mrs Pringle, ma'am, I am that lubber,' said the Captain, with repressed excitement. 'Why should I go building a house like Providence Cottage, when my Providence is here! This is my port; and if so be you'll allow me to cast anchor and stay here'—

'In command?' queried Mrs Pringle, scarce knowing what she said.

The Captain took her hand. 'No, Mrs Pringle; but as first-officer, with *you* in command, and Providence and the cat to swab decks.'

'Ye-es,' said Mrs Pringle; and the Captain, forgetting the cat, kissed her.

The cat walked out of the room, her tail stiff with indignation.

Outside, the wind howled dismally among the brickwork of the partially completed Providence Cottage. Ten o'clock struck as the widow brought out her family Bible, and Prudence Pemberton, the maid, sat coyly down on the edge of a chair just inside the parlour door.

The Captain opened the Bible reverently. 'Now, we'll have our sailing orders for to-morrow,' he said.

Mrs Pringle laid aside her knitting, looked at

the Captain with tearful eyes, and placed his spectacles on the open Bible, thus tacitly taking command of that goodly mariner, Captain Sol Buddle, who put on the spectacles and somewhat laboriously began to read.

A NEW PHASE OF THE PEARL-SHELL INDUSTRY.

To Mr Saville-Kent, a Queensland Commissioner of Fisheries, is due the credit of a discovery which may revolutionise the Pearl-shell Industry in the Southern Seas. That official has been making experiments with the pearl-oyster for some years, and has lately proved to his own satisfaction and that of his Government, that the valuable mother-of-pearl bivalve can be transplanted and cultivated.

To cultivate the pearl-shell has been the desire of centuries. The oyster has been carried from lagoon to lagoon, from island to island; but though land and water were as good as in its original abode, it perished when transported. Long before white men tried it, the island natives and the aborigines of the Australian mainland worked at the problem. Not only was the fish good to eat and the pearl a lustrous ornament, but out of the shell they made knives and goblets and countless objects of utility and beauty; and consequently its propagation was everywhere desired. It abounded in places difficult of access, in places dangerous of access, and in waters where enemies were numerous; while, where all was favourable, a live oyster was not seen in the memory of man. The intellect even of a barbarian stood puzzled at this. The islander who lived far from an oyster-bed rested his canoe on the bosom of his own waters and gazed into their shining depths. Gardens of flowers in bud and bloom seemed spread beneath him. Corals reddened and purpled and gleamed white, like snow. They were cleft and broken; here and there huddled in mounds; here and there looking like ruined temples and fallen palaces, up through whose gravelly floors rose tree-like columns with branches which the lazy ripples swayed. Fishes with golden gills and fins and silvery backs darted in and out. 'Why,' he would ask, 'must I always go to the far-off Tuamotus for the shining shell, instead of inducing it to make its home here?' And, to deepen the contrast, where shells abounded, there also sharks were found. Other creatures, too, inspiring terror or disgust were frequently encountered in the regions favoured by them.

Hence, since long before the advent of the white man, the natives outside the pearl districts have been labouring on the problem of transportation and cultivation. The earliest records of the South Seas tell that the islanders whom the white man consulted regarded cultivation as almost impossible. The savages pointed to bays and reefs which had been the scene of experiments, and went on paddling their canoes or flying like birds with outspread sails over the waters to distant haunts. As was the belief before civilised history opened, so it is to-day among the general body of the natives; and the solitary individual who now and again experiments anew is looked upon by his fellows with a

compassion which still proves their interest in the question.

White men made many attempts to translate the oysters to a fresh habitat, but with results which have hitherto made them firm supporters of the native opinion.

And yet there is nothing mysterious about Mr Saville-Kent's method of working. He established experimental pearl-shell nurseries at Thursday Island and at a landing-stage in Torres Strait, and has submitted to numberless tests his plans of deportation. The main difference between his mode of transit and that followed by other white men and aborigines is that the Commissioner's divers collect young shells for transportation, and keep them during the journey immersed in continually changed sea-water; whereas under the old practice it was thought sufficient to give them but one supply of water. The years devoted specifically to experimenting are but a small portion of the time the Commissioner has given to the study of the habits of the pearl-oyster. He has been an enthusiast on the subject, and his Government is now satisfied that by his method successful transportation is assured.

The natural result of this is that the foreshores of Northern Queensland have suddenly acquired a commercial value unthought of in the past. The Governor in Council, appreciating the new departure, at once framed a set of ordinances to regulate and control the anticipated traffic. Till the beginning of the current year, pearl-shell fishers were left very much to their own devices. They were mostly a lawless lot. The men of one station were in frequent feud with those of another. The principals strained every nerve to overreach one another, and no practice which succeeded was accounted nefarious. So little honesty was there in their conduct that the pearls had long ceased to be objects of legitimate industry; they had become objects of swindling or plunder. The divers stole them from the shells; the masters stole or violently pillaged them from the divers; and the purveyors of rum and brandy absorbed them from the last holders. The shells alone remained a staple industry. The new regulations contemplate changing all this. The foreshores will be mapped out into small leaseholds, with conditions of residence and improvements attached. The cultivation of the pearl-shell will be pursued as assiduously as its capture. Waters now barren will be stocked, and the only limitation to the area of cultivation will be climate. Raiding and exploitation will be ended, for oysters of certain sizes only will be allowed to be captured. As a general rule, the capture of any shell whose 'nacre,' or pearly lining, measures less than six inches in diameter will be illegal and its exposure for sale penalised. There are dwarf forms of shell which will be excepted from this; but the young ones of even these species will be protected from the indiscriminating beachcomber and his allies.

Mention was made of the theftuous disposition of many engaged in the traffic. There appears to be something in the pearl, as in the diamond, which allures from the path of honesty. The divers are mostly Papuans, Malays, or aboriginal Australians, and a high degree of virtue is not to be expected from them; but it can be safely stated

that the most upright among them will fall in the presence of the smallest pearl. It is true that many pearls get accidentally lost. In opening the shells, the divers let the pearls slip out with the water as often as they catch them. It is currently believed that at the bottom of every station there is a deposit which, when a way of working it is found, will give a fortune to the man who raises it. But, allowing for accidents, the return of pearls is far from what it should be in the estimate made of the season's work; there is abundance of shell of the right sort; but what has happened the enclosures? The only answer to this is that they are surreptitiously made away with. Many beachcombers prohibit their divers to open the shells. They perform the work with their own hands, and the precaution is a wise one. It only partially succeeds, however. The natives have sometimes an instinctive knowledge of a pearl-bearer, and if denied all chance of opening the shell, they will not detach the oyster at all. Mr Saville-Kent suggests in this connection that well-boats should be employed, into which the divers should throw the unopened oysters, and that at the close of the day's fishing, the master should tow his boat to the station and open the shells at his leisure. The suggestion will no doubt be adopted by the lessees; and provided the divers can be weaned from their old habits, the result should be satisfactory. The Australian pearl is already a matter of history. A fisherman on one of the beaches of West Australia picked up a pearl, which he sold for ten pounds, and which came afterwards to be valued at ten thousand pounds. About the middle of last year, a prize of similar value was drawn from the northern waters.

In any case, the Queensland experiment deserves appreciative recognition. If the pearl-oyster can be thus successfully transported and cultivated, numberless tropical bays and lagoons, now of little industrial value, may be planted with these fish and made fields of profitable enterprise.

ON WAIST-GIRDLES.

THE Girdle is an article of dress with a history that is not unimportant or uninteresting. It has in times past been much more highly esteemed than it is now; and was, in fact, among not a few peoples, worn by both males and females. This was so amongst the ancient Hebrews, as well as amongst the Greeks and Romans, who found it well nigh indispensable because of the flowing raiment they wore.

In Rome, a man's investiture of his girdle showed that he was intent on work of some nature. When he took it off and let his tunic fall, it was potent to all that business was over, and that he was free to speak to his friends at his and their leisure. Thus the girdle served a purpose—negative in its character, of course, but a purpose, nevertheless. Its sphere of usefulness did not end here. It was figurative of property. When a man or woman put off his or her girdle, it was a token of renunciation of some right or privilege. The widow of Philip I., Duke of Burgundy, for instance, renounced her right of succession by 'putting off her girdle on the Duke's tomb.' Per contra, the Princes of Ireland in taking the oath of fealty to King John laid

aside their girdles, their *skeans*, and their caps. 'In the ceremony of excommunication,' says a writer, 'the bishop cut or tore away from the culprit the girdle that was about him; and the newly-made husband in Rome took from his wife the maiden girdle of sheep's wool in which she was bound up to the day of her marriage.' Howell quotes as familiar a French proverb, *Il a quitte sa ceinture* (He has given up his girdle), which intimated as much as if he had become bankrupt, or had all his estate forfeited, it being the ancient law of France that when any man, upon some offence, had the penalty of confiscation inflicted upon him, 'he used before the tribunal to give up his girdle, implying thereby that the girdle held everything that belonged to man's estate, as his budget of money and writings, the keys of his house, with his sword, dagger, and gloves.' The fact that the girdle was used as a purse had much to do with its importance in general appreciation. We have an English proverb confirmatory of this appreciation. It said, 'Ungirt, unblest;' and that it was in very common use is clear from the frequency with which the phrase occurs in old out-of-the-way literature.

The girdle was used for other material or actual purposes besides that of a receptacle for money. At it were hung the thousand-and-one odds and ends needed and utilised in every-day affairs. The scrivener had his inkhorn and pen attached to it; the scholar, his book or books; the monk, his crucifix and rosary; the innkeeper, his tallies; and everybody, his knife. So many and so various were the articles attached to it that the flippant began to poke fun. In an old play there is mention of a merchant who had hanging at his girdle a pouch, a spectacle case, a 'punniard,' a pen and inkhorn, and 'a handkercher, with many other trinkets besides, which a merry companion seeing, said it was like a haberdasher's shop of small-wares.' In another early play a lady says to her maid: 'Give me my girdle, and see that all the furniture be at it; look, that cizers, pincers, the penknife, the knife to close letters with, the bodkin, the ear-picker, and the scale, be in the case.' Girdles were in some respects like the chatelaines not long ago so much the rage amongst ladies; but they differed therefrom in being more useful, more comprehensive in regard both to sex and to articles worn, and when completely furnished more costly. It is partly for this last reason that we find girdles bequeathed as precious heir-looms and as valuable presents to keep the giver's memory green after death. They were not infrequently of great intrinsic value. One of King John's girdles was wrought with gold and adorned with gems; and that of the widow of Sir Thomas Hungerford, bequeathed in 1504 to the mother church of Worcester, was of green colour, harnesssed with silver, and richly jewelled.

Not a few wealthy commoners were able to afford the luxury of gold-embellished belts, and were not superior to that pardonable vanity so long as no regulation prohibited them. Those who have studied our social history will not be surprised to learn that enactments were passed restraining them. Edward III. forbade any person under the degree of a knight from wearing girdles gilt or of silver, unless he should

happen to be an esquire of substance valued at more than two hundred pounds, when a reasonable embellishment was tolerated. Henry IV. confirmed this regulation; but it does not seem to have been stringently enforced, for Edward IV. was constrained to impose a penalty of forty pence upon the wives of servants and labourers who should have the impertinence to aspire to be as good as their masters' spouses.

Girdles were an object of superstition, more especially if they had belonged to female saints. Such girdles were popularly believed to possess a certain remarkable power—the power, namely, of protecting women from some of the more serious illnesses that are attendant or consequent upon childbirth. This superstition permeated through all classes of the sex. Queens credited the miraculous virtues of 'Our Lady's Girdle,' and paid large prices for the loan of one. The majority of these girdles were believed to have been the property during her lifetime of St Margaret, the gracious patroness of married women. Mostly every nunnery in England—to say nothing of France—possessed one. There is in an old Irish poem, with the charmingly euphonious title of *Oran eadar Ailte agus Mac-Ronain air dhoibh fearg a ghabhail ri Eionn*, an allusion to the efficacy of an enchanted or sanctified girdle in this same direction; and we are further informed that 'sickness cannot affect those whom their girdle binds.' In Ossian there is mention made to much the same effect. It does not matter that the poems of Ossian as put before the world by Mr Macpherson are not genuine; one of the schoolmaster's commentators states that 'sanctified girdles till very lately were kept in many families in the north of Scotland. They were impressed with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist was accompanied with words and gestures which showed the custom to have come originally from the Druids.'

LOST YOUTH.

SING, till the glad world wake again,
The sweet, glad world of long ago,
Where sunbeams slid athwart the rain,
And wild winds set the seas aglow;
Sing the old songs that held the ways
Enraptured in the vanished days.

Sing, so perchance the swans may glide
O'er their white shadows, as of yore,
And far along the brown hill-side
The purple heather glow once more;
Sing, for the heaven is dim and strange,
And all the earth hath suffered change.

Alas, no song hath now the art
From out the dead past to recall
The joy of ear and eye and heart
That made our lost world's coronal.
The sweetest song man ever sung
Hath not the power to make us young.

D. R.

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ON THE IRON ROAD.

IN all ages, men have pleased themselves by comparing the works of their hands with their Maker's handiwork. Thus, many a long analogy has been drawn between a steam-engine and a man; yet press the analogy between the two careers—a man's and an engine's—as closely as we may, there always remains the vital difference that in the thing of man's creation there resides no indwelling recuperative power to remedy injuries—in other words, there is no life. So in making a comparison between a railway journey and the journey of life, that is found to be but an imperfect analogy, except in this, that the journey once commenced, it must, barring accidents, roll on to its close.

But it is not with far-fetched, strained similitudes we are at present concerned; the road of life may be an Iron Road to most of us; we may fight, or disclaim to fight, for the best places on it; we may yield precedence to age and weakness, or jostle it aside, according to our characters; we may lend a helping hand to the fallen, or turn our backs on them; but on one thing the student of human nature may always confidently rely—that on the iron road, the characteristics of men and women are displayed more unhesitatingly than in any other scene of life. Here, in a third-class compartment, the habitual insular reserve yields to the pressure of numbers, the warmth of contact, the irresistible expectation of sympathy from unknown sources. Who that is in the habit of travelling 'first' ever had his ears tickled by a new word, coined and passed current in his very presence? Yet in our beloved 'third,' this is by no means an uncommon experience. Very recently, we were gratified by hearing a 'woman of the people' thus wind up her description of the manner in which her son 'Bob' had been deluded away from the path of virtue. 'He'd be all right,' she concluded, 'only them other boys *'coyducks* him; so his master sacks him, and sends he home.'

Bless her homely face! How we loved her

as she sat puckering her honest forehead, furrow over furrow, contemplating silently the problem of having the delinquent Bob at home, 'out of place;' and longed to tell her that, all the world over, there were scores of Bobs in the same predicament and from the same cause—namely, 'the *'coyducksing* of them other boys.'

Her interlocutrice was one of that numerous class to whom all lugubrious details are as meat and drink. Her face was of the aquiline type, long and bony, and her talk was of deaths and funerals. To her the world was not so much a stage, as an undertaker's establishment; nothing in her friends' lives became them like their leaving it. She was very particular in describing the end of one old gentleman whose fancy it was to be interred in a scarlet shroud, in which raiment he looked, she affirmed, what we should scarcely have anticipated, 'real elegant.'

We cannot deny that the third, like other classes, occasionally accommodates wayfarers to travel with whom, hour after hour, is not to tread precisely the primrose path of dalliance. However, as bad meats will not nourish the best constitution, neither will good meats digest on a satiated stomach; and the fact that a fellow-traveller is not to our liking may be due as much to our unseasoned palate as to his native idiosyncrasies. His nonsense does not happen to suit our nonsense—that is all, as Lamb said when his farce was hissed. For instance, it depends very much upon our mood whether we are irritated or amused by the slim, carefully-dressed gentleman who enters the compartment a model of propriety, and almost instantly sloughs the cocoon of outward self-restraint and stands revealed as an arch-fidget. First his overcoat must be removed, folded accurately, and deposited in the netting overhead; his hat follows, and a travelling cap is produced. Surely, never before did any head-dress require so many twichings from side to side as this cap. He seats himself only to jump up again immediately, in order to disinter a newspaper from the pocket of the garment he so carefully folded a minute ago. For

full five minutes he is busied pressing the creases out of his paper, every movement covertly followed by the fascinated eyes of his foreboding fellow-travellers. At last he subsides with the columns before his eyes, and his credulous companions heave a sigh of content in concert at his relapse into quietude. Quietude! Not he; he has unfurled his banner not to study its contents, but merely, as it seems, to crackle and flourish it in the faces of his outraged neighbours; and having reduced them to the very verge of expostulation, he proceeds to refold it with as much precision as if his existence depended on the accuracy with which corner meets corner; and this done, he sits upon it, and looks round him with an innocent Jack-Hornerish expression of goodness and self-complacency on his countenance.

To be fidgety in a theatre, a concert, or lecture-room, or when cruelly penned in a pew, is bad; but in these places public opinion is soon brought to bear in a wholesome manner on the offender. If the irascibility of his nerves is such that he cannot duly control himself, he can leave, and the sooner the better; but here, we who are shut up with him are not murderers, except perhaps in intention. We cannot band together to thrust this tarantula out of window; scowls are quite lost upon him; he has reckoned us up, and not for one nor for all will he put a padlock on his restless limbs and ever-wagging tongue. For all this while he has been darting questions, reproofs, demands, at his imperturbable mountain of a wife, who, by the happy law of contrast, has scarcely moved a finger or an eyelid since she entered the carriage with him. She is the lightning conductor round which the lambent flame of his ubiquitous restlessness plays harmlessly. Presently, a meal, that ought to have amused this spendthrift of his diversions for at least twenty minutes, is despatched in less than ten, and is succeeded by a raging thirst which he has no means of allaying. Long before we reach a station, he has risen and clutched the door handle: that he reaches the platform on his feet instead of his head, is due to his executing a staggering *pas seul*, so fantastic that even his phlegmatic wife sanctions our unanimous titter with a slow smile. Yet he has his good points; for a porter appears almost immediately bearing fruit and milk offerings for the lady, who absorbs them with a deliberate ruminating satisfaction that is highly edifying; and which lasts unimpaired during the remainder of their stay with us, and is visible on her countenance as she follows her husband slowly up the platform, he gesticulating like a semaphore to a distant and undiscerning cabman.

Not so irritating, if certainly not so amusing, is the portly gentleman, in shining black broad-cloth, who deposits and retains between his feet a patent-leather valise, as portly, as shining, as black, and in as good condition as himself. Whatever else this traveller may be, he is quite at home. If he had chartered the whole compartment, and the rest of us were occupying our seats on his sufferance, he could not be more so. Wholly regardless of the crushed-up little widow facing him, he spreads his legs on either side of his pet portmanteau, solicitous of its safety, and quite unconscious that by the mere impact of

his massive shoulder he has pinned the gaunt lad beside him to the back of the carriage. Evidently, he is one of Jael's guests, accustomed to eat butter from a lordly dish. Every fold of his balloon cheeks, every crease of his redoubled chins, every furrow of his fleshy forehead, tells of unchecked appetite, unopposed arrogance. His neighbours are no more to him than the chance flies that settle near it are to the black valise. A planet-man without apprehensiveness, and without curiosity.

He retained the Jovian calm of his demeanour unimpaired when a lady bustled hastily into the carriage, uttering the ominous words, 'I don't wish to be fussy; I hate a fuss; but is this the train for Z—?' The question was put tentatively and collectively. With the good-nature characteristic of third-class passengers, two or three volunteered to give her information. From these she selected a sad-eyed gentleman sitting opposite to her, who, by replying to some two or three and thirty interrogatories, eventually succeeded in convincing her that Z— was a terminus, beyond which she could not conveniently be carried by the most maliciously conspiring of companies. Having arrived at this consoling conviction, she proceeded to rearrange her bags, baskets, and other feminine accoutrements; on which, a heavy, lumpy-looking lad who accompanied her, having made a sheepish attempt to assist her, was rewarded with a, 'Don't dash! Edwin; I'm far too tired for dashing!' Nevertheless, she, who could not endure Edwin's 'dash,' made, immediately we arrived at a station, a dart for the window, and having secured a porter, promptly put him through his facings in a series of questions almost identical with those wherewith she had plied her opposite neighbour. Just as the train was moving on, a newspaper lad thrust an illustrated 'daily' into the carriage window and yelled interrogatively, 'Funny Folks?' We were by no means surprised to hear the sad-eyed gentleman opposite murmur in response, 'Yes—very.'

Once, and once only, in the course of a long journey, was this irrepressible dame in any degree abashed. It was in this wise. It so happened that the tickets for Z— are collected at X—, two stations earlier on the line than that famous terminus. Moreover, it chanced that on this occasion the ticket-collector had had his humour crossed by the boisterous behaviour of some college lads in an adjoining compartment. These, returning happy and glorious from some local cricket match, had been exercising their victorious lungs on the popular ditties of the day ever since they had come on board. And the collector's demand for their tickets—safely ensconced in the pocket of a master in a distant carriage—only met with redoubled shouts and some mild chaffing in reply. As he banged the door of their compartment and wrenched ours open, he snarled out, 'I know what they teaches at your college—they teaches Ignorance!'—a sally only received with a roar of applause from the lads. This sardonic official was consequently not in the humour to be questioned with impunity, and to our lady's suspicious query, 'This is not Z—?' he only repeated surlily, 'This is not Z—.'

'There is another station between here and Z—?' she continued hardily.

'There is another station between here and Z——,' was stubbornly reiterated.

'And yet you take the tickets here?' she demanded.

'And yet we take the tickets here,' he echoed, with such bitter intensity of emphasis, that the poor lady sank back with actually something like a blush upon her cheek.

That travelling dissipates prejudices is an old saying; that it teaches us what books or pedants never can—namely, that useful science, knowledge of the world, is more certain; if it disciplines us into bearing our own grievances rather than trespass on the comfort or convenience of a—temporary—neighbour, it does us a greater service than merely carrying us where we wish to go.

In conclusion, we will briefly narrate a little incident that happened, years ago, upon the iron road, to show that not only may prejudices be dissipated in travelling, but that friendships may be founded under the most unlikely circumstances, and in spite of prejudices the most obnoxious. Some of our readers may remember the murder, in a first-class compartment, of the unfortunate Mr Briggs by the German Muller. A wave of tragic horror passed over all respectable travellers in or near London, and, it is said, greatly lessened the numbers of the first-class ticket-holders. However that may be, it happened that a Mr Wilson took his seat in a first-class compartment at Cannon Street Station on the afternoon of the day succeeding that terrible crime. The friend who saw him off remarked on his having the compartment to himself, adding that he was not likely to be troubled with company on account of yesterday's catastrophe. Accordingly, the pause at London Bridge had been made without any one entering Mr Wilson's carriage, and the train was in motion again, when the door flew open, and a man rushed in, and was flung into a seat by the starting of the engine. Much wrapped up, with his hat crushed down over his forehead, his height and appearance at once suggested to Mr Wilson that he was shut in with Muller himself. The resolute mouth and pointed chin—the only features distinctly visible—tallied with the descriptions of the murderer, of which Mr Wilson's mind was full. From behind the shelter of the 'Times' newspaper he continued to observe the newcomer and to compare item by item his appearance with the description in the columns before him. Ever and anon, while so engaged, his eyes met the wavering glances of the stranger, full of ominous meaning—so it seemed to him—and when he rose, unbuttoned his overcoat, and consulted a handsome gold watch with pendent seals, Mr Wilson thought he saw before his eyes the very property of the unhappy Mr Briggs. Reason is a light rider, and easily thrown when imagination runs away with it, and fear, though it may brace for a moment the sinews of the body, relaxes those of the mind; so, when the stranger moved along the carriage, seated himself opposite Mr Wilson, and asked, in a hesitating guttural voice—in every tone of which Mr Wilson heard the accent of the Teuton—if 'they were not timed to run thirty minutes without stopping?' Mr Wilson could only nod—his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and his eyes could not withdraw their gaze from the fiery orbs opposite.

While the two men sat thus, glaring at each other, the train dashed with a prolonged scream into the S—— tunnel, and the carriage was instantly in total darkness. At that moment Mr Wilson's wrists were seized with a grasp of iron. Deprived of the power of resistance, he sat preparing himself for the death-struggle as best he might, his hands held as in a vice, his eyes straining through the darkness, a cold sweat oozing at every pore. As he sat thus, it flashed into his mind that his assailant would probably wait for a glimmer of light before aiming his death-blow. As he thought this, they were out into the daylight, glaring at each other and gasping. Then Mr Wilson felt his enemy's hands relax, and heard him say in an interrupted voice: 'I beg your pardon; I'm afraid I've startled you. The fact is—the plain truth—I didn't like your looks, and the way you hid your face behind that paper and watched me. I suppose my mind is full of this horrible murder. I see now I was mistaken. But—pardon me; I really began to think you might be—Muller!'

With a half-hysterical laugh, Mr Wilson responded: 'And I've been in an awful funk, for that's just who I thought you were!'

In this instance, prejudice yielded to the knowledge gained by travel; for before they reached M——, the seeds of a friendship, still flourishing, were sown in the minds of these two wayfarers on the Iron Road.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE GREAT COTTON GAME.

BUT while affairs in London thus moved smoothly and with a comfortable lack of interest, matters in Lancashire were excited to a degree which presently wrought great consequences on all concerned in this history. George Suffield, even during his weeks of soiling to and fro to the Isle of Man, had committed himself seriously to speculation in cotton. Before the holiday season, he had had several successful deals through Tanderjee and Gorgonio; but their success had been quite eclipsed by that ventured on—and noted in a former chapter—by the advice of Gorgonio. His speculation in Septembers enriched him in a very few days by about two thousand pounds: he bought—through Gorgonio—at 5½ (that is, 5½d. per pound)—and sold again within a fortnight at 6½.

Thus elated and made confident, before even the end of August he began to buy largely of Octobers and Novembers—still through Gorgonio—with the intention of holding; for Mr Gorgonio's longing for a 'corner' in cotton had not been uttered in inattentive ears. The truth is, George had caught the fever of speculation, and caught it badly; besides the attractive feelings of danger and excitement, it created dreams of vast wealth to be realised in a few months, visions of ease and luxury, love and idleness, with the one adorable woman of the world sitting queen of all. That Isabel was always first in his thoughts, that all his design was for her ultimate adornment and delectation, redeems George's aberration into this doubtful course from

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the suspicion of sordidness and vulgarity. He was the kind of lover who is not demonstrative in word or gesture, but who expresses himself in gifts; and his designs for gifts were magnificent, though they were not love. The methods, however, by which he was led on and tempted to arrive at the fulfilment of his designs—and the toils in which he became snared—are of such prodigious moment that they must be dealt with fully by themselves. But first it is necessary to relate one or two matters connected therewith.

Daniel Trichinopoly had been so affected and scared by the dumb, death-bed confidences of his late master, that he had determined (almost) to forswear Tanderjee and Gorgonio, and with the tolerable wealth which the Sahib Raynor had conferred on him—the gratuity of fifty pounds and the legacy of fifty pounds more—to return over sea to his native place. But his new master had received him back with such signal favour, and had so loudly opposed his expressed desire that he might ‘go away,’ that he remained. It was inevitable that Daniel, having thus far yielded to temptation, should return to Tanderjee, and that Tanderjee should remind him with tears of the ‘beautiful’ tricks they had intended to play together—with the result that the impression of the Sahib Raynor’s death-bed became fainter and fainter, and that the last case of Daniel was worse than his first.

Precious time had been lost, and Daniel became angrily impatient to attain his ends. The most pressing and important of these was not only to become acquainted with the new Suffield machinery, but to get at the plans of it, of which Daniel was prepared to make ‘tracing copies.’ But he could do nothing for fear of ‘the old Guru.’ He had discovered that the Tame Philosopher now frequented nightly that part of the clough about the counting-house, and he was certain that he was on the watch.

He dropped this and that tale—not altogether untrue—into the ‘respectable Mister George’s’ private ear of the opprobrious things the Guru had said, or was reported to have said, concerning his ‘dear master,’ so that the Tame Philosopher was asked to dinner no more, and Mr George when he met him passed him with the merest word, cold and curt; and, last of all, he told the ‘respectable Mister George’ that he had caught the Guru on a certain occasion when he had come up to the hall to interview Mr George, listening at the library door when he (Mr George) and Mr Gorgonio were talking of cotton and of ‘corners.’ After that, Mr George refused to see the Tame Philosopher. But he was scarcely prepared for the immediate, and still less for a consequent, result. The immediate result was the Tame Philosopher’s migration to London, which was brought about by his writing a letter to the elder Mr Suffield of such a nature that the latter felt bound to invite the Philosopher to London. He needed a Secretary: every public man should have a Secretary; he would invite his old friend to be his Secretary; and his old friend would aid him in the invention and the writing of those speeches on great questions which his wife so longed that he should deliver.

Thus it came about that in less than a week

after Suffield had received the above letter, the Tame Philosopher left Lancashire and established himself as Secretary in Rutland Gate, with a lodging in the Brompton Road. Then came the subsequent result, unlooked for by Mr George.

The Tame Philosopher lost no time in looking up his ‘young friend’ Mr Alan Ainsworth; for he considered that—besides being Secretary to a politician, and partly on that account—he was eminently fitted to utter opinions on public questions, and that his eloquent style was certain to fascinate the London people and to bring himself the reputation and content for which his soul did pine.

One evening, therefore, when Ainsworth was rumpling his hair and tugging his moustache over his work, the Philosopher was unexpectedly ushered in.

‘You are busy, my dear young friend,’ said he, sitting down. ‘It is well to be busy, but not too busy. I would adapt Solomon’s maxim and say, “Be not busy overmuch.”’

‘Yes; I am rather busy,’ said Ainsworth, tapping his teeth with the handle of his pen: he found, presently, that he might lay his pen down, for the Philosopher had come to stay.

That was the Philosopher’s opportunity, and, after a complimentary remark or two concerning the quality, in his estimation, of Ainsworth’s work, he launched his proposal.

‘Do you know,’ said he, ‘that I have what should be a fruitful idea, and I am willing to offer it to you for the benefit of your paper. I shall write a weekly article—I think the form of a letter would be best—giving my opinion of the world to the world—what I think of its silliness, its folly, its chicanery, and its villainy. I am now in the very midst of things political; and I have sounded to the bottom the working of Lancashire industry and understand all its villainies.’

‘What, by the way,’ asked Ainsworth, with some hope of diverting or defeating the Philosopher’s evident intention of asking employment from him, ‘has become of my pet villain, Daniel Trichinopoly?’

‘Oh,’ said the Philosopher, ‘Daniel seems to be very well, and is certainly flourishing exceedingly under the *egis* of the house of Suffield. How exactly he is occupied I do not know; but he is deep in the confidence of Mr Suffield the younger, and he seems to have great influence over him. I may say, without prejudice to humanity in general, or to the race to which he belongs in particular, that I do not like Daniel, or trust him. He appears to be a child of light; but in reality, I fear, he is a creature of darkness: he has a notorious devil in his eye, and I doubt his end will not be peace with honour.’

‘Do you think,’ said Ainsworth, remembering his experience of Daniel in the opium den, ‘that he is engaged in some villainy?’

‘That,’ answered the Philosopher, ‘I would not venture to say. But he is prodigiously interested in cotton, like his master; and there is room in that for plenty of villainy. And, talking of cotton, my dear young friend, I would like to write for you an article on “corners” in cotton.’

'What exactly is a cotton "corner?"' asked Ainsworth.

'Well, my dear young sir, I'll explain by analogy. In Egypt in the olden days Joseph made a "corner" in grain: he bought up all the grain he could lay hands on and held it till people had to go to him and buy at whatever price he chose to sell. That was a notable "corner."

'Well,' said Ainsworth, 'write your article, and I'll submit it.'

The end was that the Tame Philosopher wrote his article on cotton 'corners,' wrote it, moreover, as one who had special knowledge of the subject, wrote it with particular mention of a 'corner' that was imminent in Lancashire, in which certain foreigners of Levantine and Indian origin would probably be found concerned. And the article was published and widely quoted and commented on (in Liverpool especially); and it was read by—among others—the elder Suffield, who wrote straightway to his son, and put such questions as these: Do you know anything from hearsay of this 'corner?' Have you made any provision of stock against it? And, do you think it likely that your ugly foreign broker—Levantine or something—whom we met that day in the Isle of Man, has anything to do with it?

George Suffield was angry and alarmed. He was angry because he knew—for his father told him—that M'Fie had written the article; and he thought that M'Fie knew far more than he possibly could know, that being a philosopher, metaphysical, prying, secretive, and crafty, he had argued out a conclusion, which in truth, like many a philosopher, he had only blundered on. And he was alarmed, because he feared that the incipient 'corner' might be spoiled by the shyness of operators on 'Change, and that his own design might be ruined and his father somehow might learn the whole business. He therefore wrote to Mr Gorgonio advising great caution in buying up 'futures'—though he would suggest not so much that he should restrict purchases as 'spread them out small among a great many people'—and declaring that it would be better thenceforward that he should not be publicly seen with Gorgonio, but that communications between them should be by letter, or through Mr Tanderjee or Daniel Trichinopoly. Nevertheless, one final confidential interview he thought they might have, to settle an important point: 'Shall we continue to think of a corner, or shall we not?' and he begged Mr Gorgonio to come on a certain evening to dinner to meet Mr Tanderjee and to stay the night.

On a certain evening, then, the three sat at dinner in Holdsworth Hall, and gradually grew more flushed and gay with the excellent meats and drinks that were set before them. Daniel waited upon them, and as he moved with soft self-possession and an easy smile behind their chairs, and as they ate and drank and talked, it really seemed as if Daniel were the only person there, and the others were puppets which he cleverly manipulated. And this was the conversation of moment in which Daniel seemed especially concerned.

'We have done a good deal of business together, Mr Gorgonio,' said George expansively, 'and you

have never led me wrong: not once have I lost a farthing through you; not only have I lost nothing, but I have made a good deal. I take this opportunity, Gorgonio, of acknowledging it.'

George put his hand to his glass; Daniel noiselessly approached and filled it, and then filled that of Gorgonio, and the two puppets bowed to each other, and Gorgonio murmured, 'A vot' santé!'—and Daniel smiled his approval as they both raised their glass and drank.

'I think,' said Gorgonio with a smile, 'we quite understand each other.—What, Mr Suffiel', is your opinion of the present state of the cotton market? Ha, ha!'

'We stand pretty well—don't we? We hold contracts for eighty thousand bales of the December-January deliveries—do we not?'

'Contracts, Mr Suffiel', for ninety thousand December-Januaries!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'I bought ten thousand more to-day! Now see here, Mr Suffiel! Mark my word! Not a single one bale will be tendered in December! Because why, Mr Suffiel? Because, sir, we are in November, and there is no more than ninety thousand bales in the whole city, and the stock will be not much more in December, because not so much cotton will come in as people expect—I have show you the American crop is shorter than they think—and we keep our advantage by buying. If on the 31st of December there is no more than one hundred thousand bales in Liverpool, and we hold contracts for ninety thousand still, then, Mr Suffiel', we control the market.'

'I want to do more than control the market,' answered George, expanding his chest: 'I want to rule it.'

'Go on with corner? Ah, if you do that!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'Ah!' he sighed, and his eye flashed. And Tanderjee murmured 'Ah!' and his eye flashed behind his spectacles; but Daniel behind them all only smiled with superior benignity like a bronze Buddha.

Then there was evidently a breathless moment for the three Asiatics—the two puppets and the other, who for the nonce forgot his part of manipulator—until George resumed the conversation, with trade technicalities interspersed that would not be likely to interest the reader. Then George pushed back his chair preparatory to departing into the billiard-room.

When they had spent some considerable time in the billiard-room, Tanderjee departed to catch his last train for home, and in a little while George and his remaining guest went to bed. Then—again a little while—and the house appeared all quiet and dark. To make sure that all was quiet when all was dark, a dark figure, darker and more substantial than the darkness, with no gleam of white anywhere about it, neither on face nor hands, passed softly along the upper corridor and listened at this door and at that. As the figure turned away from the second door, a board creaked dully beneath its tread and beneath the carpet, as if the ghost of Hamlet's father were in 'the cellarage' and fumbling to get out. But the figure went on softly—on and down the wide stairs to the hall and to the hall door. By the time the bolts and chains of the door had been carefully undone, another dark

figure, but with touches of lighter colour about face and hands, appeared softly at the top of the stairs and leaned over. As soon as the door was unfastened and the first figure had passed softly out, softly latching the door, the second figure sped swiftly and softly down the stairs, found the latch of the door, and slipped carefully out after the first.

The first figure was Daniel Trichinopoly. He had private business on hand that night, and privately he was setting about it. He had not yet discovered where the plans of the new machinery were kept, and every day that passed made the necessity for their speedy discovery more and more insistent. In the second figure it would not have been difficult to recognise the ugly Gorgonio. And the first sped on through the thick November night, and the second had great trouble to follow near enough and yet far enough off—over the sodden grass of the park, across the fence into the clough, over the brook by the little rustic bridge—that was rather difficult for Gorgonio, without incurring the risk of being seen, but he achieved it on his stomach—and along the further bank of the stream to a hole!—merely a hole in the side of the clough, like a rabbit's burrow enlarged, almost hidden by a bush and almost blocked by a large stone! To Gorgonio's amazement, Daniel quickly stripped himself to his under garments, laid himself down, and crept into the hole! Gorgonio sat down on the stone by the hole to wait for Daniel's return, and to meditate on the possible purpose of Daniel's burrowing.

'He do not visit his native home that way,' he murmured to himself. 'No, no; the way is too long and too war-rm! Ho, ho!' and he chuckled at the grimness of his joke. 'But where goes he, the dear Daniel? It is necessary he go somewhere, and for something. Lofe? No, not Daniel. Money? Eh? Something—something in a house: there is no money in this English ground. Ah, and we know in our East—do we not, Daniel!—that way of digging hole to enter house! Now where is a house?'

He rose from the stone and explored a few paces in the direction in which the hole seemed to run, and peered through the darkness a few paces farther still. He thought he saw a wall. He pushed a little nearer, and made out a small building of two storeys, whose outward wall was apparently part of the circumambient wall of the Suffield works.

'Ah, yes,' said he to himself. 'Here is something; and certainly here must be something inside. Windows strong and barred like prison; and *chevaux de frise* on walls. Certainly there is something inside.'

But lest Daniel should have slipped out of the hole, Gorgonio returned. Daniel's clothes were still there, so he sat upon the stone at the entrance, with his eye upon the building which he had discovered. When he had sat some time and was becoming cold, he was certain that he saw a light flash in a window of the building. He jumped up.

'Ah, the dear Daniel! He must be there! Now I will have laugh to myself! Now I will scare him; now I will frighten him! Oh, ho, ho! How he will be frighten, the dear Daniel!'

He ran along to the building, threw pebbles and dirt at the windows, and shouted in a gruff voice: 'Ho, ho! I saw you! Come out, sir! Come out!' and then ran back to the hole and laid himself on the stone with his face ready to put against the opening. When he heard a rumbling and heavy breathing, he prepared, and when Daniel's head appeared from the hole he faced it, and said: 'How do you do?'

(To be continued.)

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

THOUGH the lower slopes of the Lebanon are well known to the European inhabitants of Syria, who make these hills their summer resort, the upper ranges, clad in eternal snow, remain comparatively unexplored. When travellers invade the heights, the magnet which draws them thither is 'The Cedars;' and they have little idea that they are entering a region fraught with historic and romantic interest, and whose scenery, in grandeur and in varied effects, equals that of the Alps. One might spend several weeks among these hills and valleys, and yet leave much that is beautiful unseen.

We, unfortunately, had only four days at our disposal; the time assigned for our tour in Palestine was almost at an end, and we were on our way to Beyrout to join the steamer for Athens. We had started from England towards the close of March, and landing at Jaffa on the 11th of April, had resigned ourselves to the care of Bernhardt Heilpern, Messrs Cook's chief dragoman. Under his guidance we journeyed north through Bethel, Samaria, and Nazareth; then east to Damascus; and then northward again to the magnificent ruins of Baalbek, and we determined that, if possible, we would go to Beyrout via the Cedars of Lebanon.

There is a certain charm in getting quite off the beaten track, and in accomplishing something that others leave undone; so that, though all through the tour the Ultima Thule of our ambition had been Lebanon and the Cedars, the desire to see them increased when Bernhardt told us that few travellers found it possible to cross the highest range, where the Cedars are situated, the paths being impassable from the snow until late in the spring.

On the 12th of May, an intensely cold morning, we left Baalbek; and as we rode across the plain, the blasts from the snow-covered mountains became more and more bitter, till, when camping at Ain-ata, we were glad to sit round a camp-fire, though even then, while our faces were roasted, our backs were frozen. To add to the discomfort, a sudden gust blew down tent after tent, discovering the occupants sitting among the ruins—that is, their beds and baggage. The effect was ludicrous; and shouts of laughter greeted each unfortunate individual who was added to the number of the tentless. But we soon became grave on finding that all attempts to put up the tents were ineffectual, and that if the hurricane continued, we should be obliged to seek shelter in the village huts. A description of these huts will enable the reader to realise the situation. Imagine a low square hut built

of earth baked hard by the sun, with a roof of branches held together by mud; a hole at one side answers the triple purpose of door, window, and ventilation; the interior is divided into two rooms, in which the only furniture is a few cooking utensils; these rooms being occupied by the entire family, among whom are numbered the donkey and the poultry. With one voice we exclaimed: 'We will rather sleep in the open air than enter one of those filthy places.' Fortunately, however, the wind abated as suddenly as it had risen, and we were able to use our tents.

The villagers, on finding that it was our intention to cross the mountains, did their best to dissuade us, telling us that there had been a fresh fall of snow that morning, and that it was too deep for the horses to go through. But Bernhardt, steadfastly ignoring these remarks, engaged two sheikhs as guides, and twenty-one men to lead the horses and mules, as there was no trace of a path. We were a goodly procession as we started from the camp to climb the glittering wall of snow which rose before us. There were eleven of us mounted on horses; then came the baggage mules, twenty-one in number, and following these, several horses and donkeys carrying food for our animals. Our party was a mixture of the picturesque and the ridiculous, and the Europeans suffered from being in close contrast with the Orientals—we were ridiculous, and the Syrians picturesque.

We thoroughly enjoyed the ride up the steep side of the mountain; and our wonder and interest were awakened by the clever way our horses picked their path, rarely making a false step, though the going was extremely bad. Suddenly we came to a snow-drift, and the foremost horse went in up to the girths.

'Now, ladies and gentlemen,' said Bernhardt, 'you will please to dismount, and the guides will carry you.'

To this, though the gentlemen objected, the ladies agreed.

After a consultation, Mrs V—— started in 'sedan-chair' fashion, but she was soon deposited in the snow, the men not understanding that mode of carrying. The experiment was repeated, but with the same result; and then Mrs V——, objecting to being made a laughing-stock, refused to be carried any farther, and walked the rest of the way.

Then I tried; but, taking Bernhardt's advice, I climbed on to the man's back, as to this way of carrying burdens he was accustomed. I am about five feet one, and as broad as I am long; the man was about my height, but slight, and therefore I was not surprised to find, after a few steps, myself buried in the snow, with the man buried beneath me. He picked up both himself and me; and on we went, only to fall again amid the laughter of the others. A third time he tried, but with no better success; and then I followed my friend's example, and walked, as I did not wish to be summoned by the 'Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,' one of our party being President of the Society in his particular town.

When all had passed safely through, we mounted our horses and rode on. Just before reaching the crest of the mountain, we turned to look our last on the 'Holy Land.' Stretched

at our feet lay the plain of Buka'a; across it, miles away, the ruins of Baulbek could just be distinguished; in the far distance were the snow-clad slopes of Hermon glittering in the sunshine.

We passed over the ridge, and stood entranced by the magnificence of the view which met our gaze. To the right and left stretched the curving lines of snow-capped mountains, until, in the far distance, they were scarcely to be distinguished from the masses of cloud; and at the edge of the snow-line, apparently a few hundred feet below, a dark cluster of trees was visible.

'Look—there are the Cedars!'

'Those the Cedars!' we said, disappointed; having pictured to ourselves giants of the forest.

'They are not the dwarfs they appear to be; remember, they are two thousand feet below us,' said Bernhardt; and his estimate was right, for it took us an hour and a half to reach them.

We stood for some time gazing at the indescribable beauty of a panorama in which nature revealed herself under many aspects. On the heights, winter reigned supreme; the snow lay thick on the ground, and there was no sign of vegetation. Lower down, the earth, bare and brown, was strewn with rocks and stones hurled down by the winter's storms; and deep blue lines marked out the course of ravines and gullies; lower still, Spring had begun her gentle sway, and the landscape was clothed with tender green, which, as the gaze travelled downwards, gradually deepened and became richer, until the full glory of summer was attained. In the far distance, ten thousand feet below, lay the blue Mediterranean, separated from the land by a strip of golden sand; and to the left, where the mountains met the sea, was a small cluster of houses, which we were told was Beyrout—and we rejoiced to know that through this glorious scenery we were to take our four days' ride.

Time being precious, we could not afford to linger, and so followed the winding downward path as quickly as its roughness would allow, and were glad to dismount and rest under the shadow of the Cedars of Lebanon. From the mossy ground, starred with forget-me-nots and anemones, rose the massive red stems, with their spreading branches bending under a burden of freshly-fallen snow; shafts of sunlight falling across the boughs and lighting up the darkness of the grove.

There is a great deal of romantic interest attached to these trees. One has heard of them from childhood, and has pictured to one's self trees of more than ordinary beauty, and of an exceptional fragrance. These ideas probably arise from knowing that Solomon considered no other wood worthy of being used in the adornment of the Temple, and that Tiglath-Pileser, having conquered Carchemish, came hither for the express purpose of carrying away a goodly number of these forest treasures to beautify his palaces.

It is probable that at a very distant date the slopes of Lebanon were clothed with forest; but from time to time so many trees have been cut down by the Syrians themselves, as well as by their conquerors, that at the present day they exist only in small isolated groves. The most extensive of these, known to us as 'The Cedars

of Lebanon,' is called by the Syrians 'The Grove of the Lord,' and in it there are three hundred and ninety-three trees; of these, only twelve are of any great size, and they have received the name of 'The Twelve Apostles,' from a tradition that Christ once visited this spot with his apostles, who planted their staves, which grew into these goodly Cedars. The Maronite Patriarch claims the grove as his especial property, and allows no one to cut down or to harm the trees.

I can scarcely describe that afternoon's ride, which was an almost unbroken succession of wonders. Wild and grand, the scenery varied with each turn of the path: we rode on the verge of precipices, down narrow defiles, through streams, and over rocks, across which one would have thought it impossible for a horse to go; but ours picked their way so steadily that we could give all our attention to our magnificent surroundings. Our route lay through several villages, and one of these I especially remember. Built on the side of a ravine, so steep was the slope, that the flat-roofed stone houses looked like a succession of steps, the upper storey of one being on a level with the ground-floor of the one above. Here the women wore the head-dress peculiar to the Maronites—a flowing white veil, surmounted by an inverted silver bowl, which is handed down from mother to daughter, and carefully guarded as an heirloom. The people crowded out to see us pass, and broke from the apple-trees blossom-laden branches, and gave them to us.

That night we camped at the edge of a ravine, opposite to Hazrun, another Maronite town, and during the evening the sheik paid us a visit and smoked a friendly pipe. In a truly Eastern fashion, he placed all his possessions at our disposal, and offered to send his men to guard the camp. This we refused, our own servants being sufficient protection.

The start next morning was not made so early as usual, as some of the party wished to return the sheik's visit. They passed round the head of the ravine to Hazrun, and made their way to the sheik's house, where he received them in a friendly manner and introduced them to his wife and son. I did not go, but instead, remained at the edge of the gorge and watched the ever-varying scene. As the sun rose, the shadows disappeared; the mists on the mountain's breast melted into light; and the faintly-crimsoned clouds which guarded the heights rolling back to let in the morning glory, revealed range behind range and peak above peak. Opposite was a stream which seemed to leap in mad joy to meet its kindred waters in the gorge below. Our domestic affairs also claimed my attention. Usually, the tents were taken down while we breakfasted; and when we came out of the dining tent, the horses were ready, and we mounted and rode off, leaving the servants to follow; when they had finished packing. Later on, when we stopped to lunch, the baggage mules passed, and on arriving at our halting-place, everything, including afternoon tea, was in readiness. Not so in these regions. All the guides but one had been sent back, and as the servants did not know the way, they were to accompany us.

On that day, more grand scenery was in store for us, and there was a continual feast for the eyes. The guide lost his way, and led us by

a path even rougher than that of the day before. First a snow-covered shoulder of the mountain had to be traversed; then there was a long and precipitous descent to a desolate valley; now a morass was passed, now a torrent forded; at one time we crossed a natural bridge, overhung on one side by a huge cavern, and on the other dropping suddenly to a deep ravine; and so riding onwards and downwards, we drew slowly nearer to our resting-place, and to the sea, still several thousand feet below, until a sudden turn of the path brought us to the village of El Mnetira, and in full view of the most magnificent waterfall of the Lebanon, the Fountain of Afka.

We rode over the bridge to the other side of the river, and passed the evening on the river's bank, amid a scene of entrancing beauty. Above, from a limestone precipice, rushed the Fountain of Afka, dashing in three wild leaps from the cave to the river Adonis below, its dark waters transformed in the brilliant moonlight to a glittering fall of silver. High up in the face of the cliffs, lights were seen moving to and fro; and on inquiring, we found that there were passages in the rocks, and that the shepherds, who used these passages for housing their flocks, were passing up and down to see that all was well. We had time to call to mind the legend of Venus and Adonis, which tradition assigns to this spot; close by are the ruins of a temple of Venus; and it was here that the maidens of Lebanon came once a year to chant a lament for Adonis: 'I mourn Adonis—the beautiful Adonis is dead!'

On the third day we gradually left the wilkness, to which we had become accustomed, and our way lay by fields of springing corn, past terraces of apple and mulberry trees, until we entered a valley piled throughout its entire length with extraordinary masses of limestone rock. These rocks, whose softer parts have been worn away by the action of many storms, have formed themselves into grotesque groups, and in some cases with so near a resemblance to a town, that, until we were close to them, we were under the impression that we were approaching an inhabited and fortified place, with battlements and towers standing clearly out against the sky.

That night we camped at Ajeltun. This last night in tents was destined to be exceedingly uncomfortable, for, shortly after we had retired, the wind suddenly rose and threatened to overturn the tents; and the men were kept hard at work throughout the night hammering in the tent-pegs and piling stones on the ropes to keep them taut, and the continual hammering effectually kept us awake.

The next morning we mounted our horses for the last time, and rode slowly down the paved steps of the old Roman road. At every turn vegetation became more and more luxuriant; the ground was carpeted with flowers, and on all sides rose groves of orange and mulberry trees. We passed many a prosperous town, with its white churches and convents standing out against a background of pines; its large house, belonging to the sheik, surrounded by the dwellings of his dependents; and always we descended by precipitous paths, until at last we reached the foot of the hill from which flows the 'Fog River.'

Having passed beneath rocks inscribed with the

names of Assyrian and Roman emperors, and under the old Roman aqueduct, with piers curtained by tall grasses, and arches fringed with maiden-hair fern, we turned the corner, and came upon this inscription, printed in large letters, on the cliff: 'London Waterworks Company;' and then we realised that we had left the romantic and returned to the commonplace. A few hours' ride, first along the level sands, and then on the Damascus highway, brought us to Beyrout, where we dismounted at the 'Belle Vue Hotel,' and resigning our steeds into the hands of their attendants, realised with regret that our four days' ride in the Lebanon had become a thing of the past.

THE SACRED BEETLE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

THE next day, the little pleasure party had broken up. I need scarcely remark, by the way, that Mr Cotton, with praiseworthy honesty, but considerable trepidation lest his temporary appropriation of the Doctor's scarab should have been discovered, had, unobserved, replaced the 'nasty, stinkin' bug' in the place where he had found it. Only three of the community we have become acquainted with remained at Shephard's, namely, Miss Emerson, the Masher, and our hero. The Parson had swept his helpmate away in a torrent of conjugal indignation; the Misses Jenkins had departed for Alexandria *en route* to Italy; and Mr Cotton had found that he could no longer stay away from 'Hengland' and the rise and fall of the money market: he wished to be on the spot. But before dismissing him from our pages, it is only fitting to remark that he never forgot that last evening on the Nile boat and the attentions which were then paid him. Until he married, he used to rhapsodise on the 'doocid fine women' who appreciated his wit and lively conversation. On his attempting, however, some weeks after his marriage, to enlarge on the subject and glorify the occasion thereof, he met with such a sarcastic rebuff from his wife that he relegated the little episode to the pages of the past, which are usually kept turned down and under lock and key. As for poor Miss Priscilla Jenkins, she never forgot the handsome Doctor; and even the snappish Miss Hester would at times regretfully dream of 'those lovely eyes.'

It was at this time that Dr von Eberstein made the acquaintance of Colonel Merritt, and related to him what the Colonel called 'the richest joke he ever heard.'

The intimacy between Miss Emerson and the Professor grew apace. He discovered in her a kindred mind, a breadth of perception and thought which he had never expected to find in a woman; and she, recognising his sterling qualities and honesty of mind and purpose, thought more highly of him from day to day. I believe the Masher stayed on partly from curiosity, and partly because he wished to see whether the other ladies at the hotel would behave towards the Professor in a similar fashion to those who had been on the boat with him. He was not disappointed. The unhappy German became, much to his embarrassment, the lion of the hotel,

and would at times seek refuge in his room, where he smoked incessantly, and tore his hair with bewilderment.

One fine evening, Miss Emerson and Von Eberstein were strolling in the garden, when the former said quietly: 'Doctor, I have never seen what it is you always carry in that little box in your waistcoat pocket. Will you show it to me?'

'Certainly, my dear lady.' And he extracted the bronze scarab and laid it in her palm. As he did so, it seemed to both as though an electric shock had passed through them. The Doctor's heart rose to his lips, and the words he had for weeks been longing to speak came flowing forth.

'Miss Emerson, I am but a poor German Professor, but I love you very dearly; you must have seen it. Have I any hope that you will return my affection?'

She was silent for a while, twisting the little beetle this way and that in her hand. Then: 'Are you in earnest, Doctor von Eberstein?'

He drew himself up bravely before her. 'I am so much in earnest, Miss Emerson, that I have come to regard you as a part of my life. I am not good at fine phrases; my life has been passed in study. But I can honestly and truthfully declare to you that I have never said to any woman what I have now said to you. If you reject my suit, I do not say, as some do, that I shall go to the dogs or do anything foolish. Nè-è! That would be cowardly. But I do say that in that case I will never ask another woman to share my life with me. It is a poor life, but I lay it at your feet.'

She was silent again for a few moments, and then, turning to him with a bright smile on her face, said: 'I believe you, Carl; and I will trust myself to you.'

With a slight ejaculation, he drew her into his arms and kissed her: 'It is our betrothal,' he said.

During the next half-hour, as they paced to and fro, he confided to her the whole secret of his journey to Egypt, and showed her the ancient parchment which had led him to undertake it.

She mused awhile, and then asked: 'So you do not know the powers which this little scarab is supposed to possess?'

He shook his head solemnly.

To his astonishment, she broke into a peal of ringing laughter. 'Oh, Carl, how stupid you are! Why, I guessed them at once. Now,' she continued, 'you just lock it up and don't carry it about with you until you are allowed.' And she returned it to him. Again that electric shock seemed to flash through both. 'Now you notice how the ladies will treat you.'

That evening, sure enough, Doctor von Eberstein was left in peace. He was not the recipient of embarrassing attentions from the feminine portion of the community, and he was devoutly thankful therefor. He didn't understand the reason; but he had his orders, and that was sufficient for him. After some days of this rest and quietness, his mistress commanded him to come down to dinner with his scarab in his pocket. The old annoyance was promptly revived, and the badgered lover could not obtain

five minutes' uninterrupted conversation with his fiancée, who seemed to enjoy his predicament.

The next morning she asked him with a smile : 'Well, cannot you now guess at the peculiar properties of your scarab ?'

He answered slowly : 'I do not *know*, but it seems to me that whenever I have it about me, I am most troubled with unwelcome attentions.'

'Of course that's it ! Don't you see that whoever is its possessor is an object of attraction to the other sex ?'

'So-o-o ?' said he, thoughtfully, with the long German drawl. 'Then I shall lock it up, and no one shall carry it about.'

'Lend it to me, Carl,' said Miss Emerson with a wicked twinkle in her eyes.

'Nē-ē ! Gott bewahre !' he replied hastily.

'But I want to have some fun with it.' And after much coaxing, she had her own way.

Miss Emerson took a malicious delight in showing the little antique to the oldest and ugliest people in the room, and then casually begging them to retain it for a short time until she returned. Then, accompanied by Von Eberstein and Colonel Merritt—who now participated in the secret—she would plant herself in some quiet corner and survey the effects of her practical joke, which were as amusing to her co-conspirators as herself. Old men and young men, all deserted their partners, and clustered round the delighted but bewildered possessor, for the time, of the talisman. The younger ladies were furious. Then Miss Emerson would glide softly up to her victim and reclaim her scarab, thanking the unfortunate individual most affectionately for having taken care of it ; and then the galaxy of advisers would desert the elderly lady, and hover around Miss Emerson until she gave up the lodestone to Von Eberstein and bade him lock it away.

As the period of our hero's leave approached its expiration, he reminded his fiancée that she had promised to return with him to Germany as his wife. She acquiesced in the reasonableness of the proposition ; and a month later there was a very pretty wedding. I don't know whether she wore the scarab about her somewhere, but it was certainly a fact that the male portion of the spectators of the ceremony unanimously declared that the bride was the loveliest woman they had ever set eyes on ; while the ladies eulogised Doctor von Eberstein's looks, and his eyes in particular. The couple may have worn it turn about, but I can't say.

On the second evening out from Alexandria, Doctor and Mrs von Eberstein were leaning against the bulwarks of the big steamer, listening to the measured thud of the screw, and watching the calm moonlit sea as they sped along.

'Carl, dear,' said Mrs von Eberstein, 'do you place any great value on that little scarab of yours ?'

'Why, no ; not now,' he answered. 'I think it is a very dangerous possession for any one. I shall never dare to tell the story of it, for I should not be believed, nor would I care to try its powers any more.'

'Have you got it about you now, dear ?'

'Yes—in my waistcoat pocket, as usual.'

'Kiss me, Carl.'

And as he took her in his arms, her deft fingers slipped into his waistcoat pocket and brought out the little box.

'You will always love me, Carl ?'

'Always, my dear.'

'Then'— And she stretched her arm over the vessel's side ; her fingers opened ; there was a momentary flash of light, and the Sacred Beetle had vanished for ever from human eyes.

OUR BANK.

BY DEPOSITOR NUMBER ONE.

THE old Lady of Threadneedle Street does not concern herself about Our Bank, neither do the makers of guide-books for London ; therefore, it is not necessary to point out the exact locality in which it stands ; suffice it to say that it is attached to a fairly prosperous Co-operative Society, and is of the genus known as 'Penny.' The founders of our bank were men of simple minds and kindly hearts, who thought it, right, with the intent of 'teaching the young idea,' to decorate the inside page of the little deposit books with homely mottoes, or, as they called them, 'good words.' 'A Penny saved is a Penny gained.'

'If youth did know what age would crave,
Many a shilling youth would save.'

'There is many a poor creature now crawling through life, miserable himself, and the cause of misery in others, who might have lifted up his head and prospered, if he had begun early to save his pennies.' And others of a like character. One—the last on the list—having a peculiar attraction for the eye by reason of its quaint emphasis : 'Resolve never to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less.'

Years have rolled by ; perhaps dignity has grown with numbers ; our depositors are now counted by thousands ; but is it, one wonders, to the advantage of the present generation of 'young ideas' that these trite and homely sayings have been discarded, and their places filled with rules and regulations couched in legal phrases ?

If one were to ask a small depositor in the motto days, 'What is written inside your book ?' out would come the sayings in a string. But ask the same question to-day, and it is safe to guarantee that not one in twenty has read the rules, let alone committed them to memory. After all, the rules of our bank are but few, and anything but stringent ; and perhaps it is this absence of red-tapeism which makes it popular among a class not generally credited with thrifty habits. 'Arry and 'Arriet are not fond of the Post-office Bank, for instance, with its documents and signings ; but they like our bank—' 'Cos yer can 'ave yer money out w'en yer wants to without any fuss.' And they do have it out too. No need to refer to an almanac to tell when bank holidays are near—a glance at the withdrawal column of our

ledger is quite sufficient. One must confess that 'Arry and 'Arriet are not permanently thrifty, and that the sums they save seldom amount to pounds; but again and again the effort is made to 'get a few shillings by' in view of a rainy day or special event. The amounts entered also vary in accordance with the financial barometer for the time being. 'Can't spare more this week, gov'nor,' and twopence is bounced down on the desk with an 'I-care-for-nobody' air that is quite refreshing.

The laws governing Our Bank dictate that not more than five shillings shall be received as one deposit; but we feel much inclined to break this law when our friend comes one week with six or seven shillings, and says, when the regulation is pointed out to him: 'Oh, well, I may as well chuck the other bob away, for it's bound to go.'

At the present moment there is a Bill before Parliament which proposes to raise the amount receivable to ten shillings. If this becomes law, it will be good news to our friend and others of his class.

Perhaps the best example of the notions of thrift entertained by this class of depositor, is furnished by the young man who appeared at the desk one evening sans collar—and probably shirt—and proffered this request: 'I-warnts-ter-shuv-in-er-bob-en-pull-it-art-(out)-ergin-nex-week.' Being learned in the vernacular by long training, we were able to translate this to mean that the young man desired to deposit one shilling and withdraw the same at a week's notice. Not wishing to discourage even this spasmodic effort at saving, we took the 'bob,' giving in return a little homily on the value of a more continuous system; but, unfortunately, we have forgotten whether the homily took effect, or whether the bob was 'pulled out,' as desired.

Not all our depositors are of this rough-and-ready shiftless type, of course; but they predominate, because the neighbourhood round Our Bank is known as a poor, not to say low, one. There are several well-known persons—known to the police, that is—who habitually use Our Bank, among them a whole family of burglars, several of the members of which do not require to save at the present time; also several nice old ladies, whose periodical visits are a thing to be dreaded, so powerfully does the odour of their favourite beverage pervade them. One could hardly be civil, for instance, to the old creature who says, with what she, no doubt, takes to be an insinuatingly friendly manner: 'Please, my dear, let me have a book for my dear little boy; he's gone to his dear little school, and I wants to save his dear little ha'pence for him till he comes back.' It was a known fact that the 'dear little boy' in question was spending his time in a Reformatory, and that the 'dear little ha'pence' would be wanted in a week or so to help to prepare our old friend for a visit to the lock-up; so the book was handed over without comment, and with the best grace possible under the circumstances.

It is frequently matter for speculation as to where some of our depositors keep their books when they do get them, they acquire such an exceptional degree of dinginess. How exceptional, may be gathered from the fact that it is almost impossible to touch them except with the extreme tips of one's fingers.

However, the struggles of poverty in its easier moments to defend itself against the more direful strain of the inevitable rainy day, are often too pathetic for laughter or scorn; and many are the tales of valiant striving to keep heads above water which reach the ears of those who officiate at Our Bank.

There is a necessary rule that for all sums withdrawn a certain specified notice must be given; but need it be said that this rule is often broken. One week out of work and the cupboard is bare, and 'If you can't let me have it to-night, I must pawn his things for bread;' or, 'I haven't another penny in the world' is the too frequent pleading. Be it noticed that the money is never demanded, always asked for, often with a humble apology, quite unwarranted, except for the knowledge that our bank is too great a convenience to be misused.

There is quite an amusing display of gratitude expressed by some of our depositors, even when entering in their moneys. One old Irish washerwoman, with a face as round, rosy, and clean as a pippin, and a smile as bright as a summer day, always drops a funny little curtsy when handing in her book and money; and says, 'Thank ye kindly, sir,' when receiving it back with the item—which, by the way, she is unable to read—duly entered. There is another Irishwoman who, some years ago, was left a widow with two or three fatherless children. She was poor, ignorant, and, one must confess, dirty; but she determined that her 'childer' should have some chance in life, if possible; so every penny she could scrape or they could gather was put into a book for each child, never to be trespassed upon until wanted to give them a start out into the world.

Some months ago, she came with pride to draw several pounds.—'The first I've ever touched'—to get her girl an outfit before sending her to an Institution where she would be taught a useful trade. 'Now,' said she, 'I've only the boy and little one to bring on.'

These people are among our regular customers; and we have now been established long enough to see a whole generation of small depositors pass through the stages of boy and girlhood to man and womanhood, bringing in turn other small depositors to carry on the line. One's recollections of some of these depositors are very vivid. For instance, there was the little old lady whose delight it was to open a new account for each grandchild immediately on its arrival in this vale of tears!—once, before the young person had even a name—and whenever opportunity served, she would dilate on the beauty, cleverness, and progress of each child in turn. At last there were as many as ten books, the right disposal of the pennies in each of which was a source of great excitement to her and considerable hindrance to us. By-and-by, as years went on, the children were able to relieve grandmother of her task occasionally, and presently her visits became few and far between—the walk tired her, she said;

and now, for some years, she has not been at all, and we have lost trace of her. The children may still be among our depositors, but one fancies that it was our old friend's personality and her fond love which gave them any individuality, for it would be hard to pick them out now for any cleverness or beauty above the average.

Then there was the bright lad whose open handsome face won our regard. It wanted only half a word to draw from him all his hopes and aspirations and the details of his daily life. Presently, he finds a place in a City office, and with delight tells the amount of his salary and the fact that the money deposited is saved by walking to town each day. By-and-by the amount dwindles to a very small sum. 'Only wears out shoe-leather to walk, you know.' As his collars grow in height and cuffs in length, so his deposits decrease in number, till he only appears at rare intervals to make deposits for brothers and sisters. When questioned about himself, he says with a jaunty air, 'What's the use of saving? Let's make the most of things while we have them, I say.' He, too, has not been to Our Bank for some time; can it be that the pernicious philosophies of City life have completely taken hold of his bright confiding nature? One hopes not, sincerely.

Then, as an instance of development in another direction, we remember the young lady who suffers under the possession of an abnormally developed nasal organ. This feature when large, is popularly supposed to indicate strength of character; but, in the strict canons of art, does not conduce to perfection of beauty; and when this young lady first began to attend Our Bank, no attempt was made by those in charge of her to minimise the inharmonious effects of her too prominent feature by the assistance of art in dress. She generally appeared in a small round hat, and with her hair strained back from her face and done up in a tight plait at the back. As she grew older, however, and could take these matters into her own hands, one soon noticed a difference. The hair was brought forward and allowed to fall loosely round the face; a large shady hat replaced the small round one; and she generally contrived to have some show of white, or a loose fluffy scarf round her neck, so that to-day her erstwhile defect serves but to give her a pleasantly striking personality.

Occasionally, Our Bank gains a tinge of romance, when we find a young man and woman with different surnames who have been industriously accumulating capital for some time, giving notice to withdraw simultaneously; and we discover that they require the money to set up house-keeping together. It is a singular thing, but the officials of Our Bank seem to have an intuitive understanding when the money is wanted for this purpose; there is an ill-concealed smile on the faces of the withdrawers, which tells its own tale; and we generally try to add a trifle of interest in the shape of a congratulatory word.

A novelist in search of names for his characters might do worse than dip into the ledger of Our Bank. It goes without saying that there is rather above than below the average number of Tom Smiths and John Joneses; but we consider 'Temperance Sherry' and 'Temperance Allport'—the latter surname being acquired by marriage—to be somewhat unique. It is possible to make a regu-

lation make-a-fuss-about-nothing-and-live-happy-ever-after heroine of 'Clare Mildmay' or 'Jessie Jenkinson'; to invest 'Jeanette Ducrane' with fierce and dark passions, or to turn 'Malanie Turpen' and 'Kathleen Killeen' into heroines of the harum-scarum order. 'Absalom Hake' and 'Abigail Knock' are of the uncompromisingly severe type; but one almost hopes that 'Primrose Wood' will never change her surname, so charming is the suggestiveness of her quaint cognomen. 'Philadelphia Grubby' we count one of the curiosities of nomenclature.

Our depositors, as a rule, are not burdened with a superfluity of Christian names. Frederick Williams and Mary Janes of course abound, but they sometimes manage to arrive at good combinations, as, for example, the delightfully alliterative 'Richard Roland Radford.' Of surnames we have whole families of 'Muddles,' 'Wadlings,' and 'Grubers;' and there used to be a 'Pitchfork' among our members.

Have we ever been defrauded? One or two attempts have been made by means of forged entries to swell the withdrawable balance; but our depositors are not skilful in the use of the pen, and the forgeries have been instantly detected. Once Our Bank was made the medium of an impudent and ingenious fraud on tradesmen in the neighbourhood; but the offender was soon brought to book. Quite recently, a lad with a passion for the sea managed to raise the means of getting his heart's desire by stealing his father's deposit book and withdrawing the money; but such cases are remarkably rare.

The directors of Our Bank do not indulge themselves in an annual dinner; but every now and again they give the juvenile members an entertainment in the shape of a magic-lantern show, accompanied by a generous distribution of buns, oranges, and sweets, and wild is the excitement when the tickets are given out.

The rebate of Board School fees had an immensely stimulating effect on the business of Our Bank, a large number of new accounts being opened.

Many of the early promoters and most zealous voluntary helpers at Our Bank have passed away; but were they aware of our present position, they would rejoice, we feel sure, in the success resulting from their earnest efforts. Our Bank has touched a class who would not perhaps be reached by any other agency, a class too independent to brook 'charitable' assistance, and too unlearned to take easily to the Post-office.

While we have spoken most about what may be termed the intermittent depositor, there are still very many who have persisted in a regular course of systematic saving; and if the final result is not riches, yet the limit allowed by the law—twenty pounds—has been over and over again reached by the most unlikely-looking depositors.

It is estimated that in banks similarly attached to Co-operative Societies there are now over one hundred thousand depositors, holding a capital of over one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; yet the chief value of these banks is felt to be, however, not so much in this accumulation of capital, as in the aid they afford to preparation for the hundred-and-one small exigencies of everyday life, and in the teaching they almost un-

consciously give in habits of forethought and thrift. For this, if for no other reason, one may say, as we feel sure our old Irishwoman would say, 'Good luck to them.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE World's Fair at Chicago marks an era in human progress which will not be soon forgotten. On account of its vast size and comprehensiveness, it will stand out from all enterprises of the kind, and will create as much sensation in the civilised world as did the prototype of all International Exhibitions in 1851. In one respect it far outshines its fore-runners, and that is in its display of electrical applications. In the last twenty years the applications of electricity have been marvellously developed; so much so, that many new and important industries have sprung up from it. Of these we need only mention the telephone, the incandescent carbon filament, and electric traction for railways. These inventions alone will make the closing years of the nineteenth century ever memorable, and they are worthily illustrated at the great Exhibition at Chicago.

Increased swiftness in ships—the substitution of iron and steel for wood—steam and the screw propeller for the unbought wind—these all demand improvement in the manner of fixing a ship's position on the waste of waters. Lieutenant W. H. Beehler, United States Navy, of the Washington Hydrographic Office, has devised an instrument to be known as the 'Solarometer,' by means of which a ship's geographical position and the error of her compass may be obtained directly by observations of the heavenly bodies, whenever visible, without having to make the usual elaborate computations. Star observations are too frequently disregarded, and the sextant is useless when the horizon is obscured, even though the sun shine brightly in the celestial concave. The Solarometer will be specially valuable in just such an emergency, for it is rare that a star is not visible for a few moments on any given night, and the horizon no longer requires consideration. Safety of large liners will doubtless be ensured by the use of the Solarometer; but, inasmuch as three hundred and eighty pounds of mercury are required, it is not improbable that its weight and cost will militate against general adoption by navigators.

The German Admiralty have recently adopted a flashing light for signalling purposes—the invention of Professor Schevin—the principle of which is a stream of powdered magnesium, which is caused to fall into a benzine flame. The flashes are so bright that they are said to be visible by daylight at a distance of six miles, which statement is probably an exaggeration. We may mention that a lamp very similar to this, in which a powder consisting largely of magnesium is propelled into a spirit-flame, was devised about sixteen years ago in our own country by Captain Colomb, and was, if we remember rightly, approved by our Admiralty and adopted by them. The recent use of the flashlight for photographic purposes has, doubtless, renewed attention to this method of signalling.

A writer in an American paper called 'The Rural New Yorker' dwells upon the advantage of soaking potato-seed tubers in a solution of corrosive sublimate previous to planting, as a sure remedy against the blackened condition of potatoes known as potato scab. He asserts that the disease is due to a parasitic cause which operates from below, and that, therefore, the common expedient of spraying the plants is simply a waste of energy. The paper is illustrated by photographs, which show the condition of the doctored tubers and those which were untreated side by side; and it is pleaded that the treatment is easy of application, and results in an increased yield of potatoes. The plan recommended is to soak the seed-tubers for one and a half hours 'in a one-one-thousandth solution of corrosive sublimate.' It is not quite clear what strength of solution is here indicated; if it means one part of the salt in one thousand parts of water, this would be equal to one ounce to six gallons, which would be, we should think, needlessly strong for such an active poison.

Weather forecasts are being promulgated in New England in an altogether novel manner. On the summit of Mount Washington, an electric search-light is placed, and flashes its warnings over the surrounding country, the signals being well seen at a distance of eighty miles. From Boston the local forecast official sends out daily three hundred printed copies of weather forecasts for the next twenty-four hours. These go by rail, and are dropped at the various stations *en route*. At these stations the forecasts are immediately displayed, each in a frame provided by the Weather Bureau. It is found that this is the quickest method of bringing the forecasts under the notice of the public.

We have already noticed in these columns the introduction of what is called a Hydrocycle, that is, a boat which is propelled by paddle-wheel or screw worked pedal fashion by the occupant or occupants. Such a vessel with a crew of three can now often be seen on the reaches of the Upper Thames, accomplishing with ease a speed of six miles per hour; and this same hydrocycle has recently distinguished itself by beating the sculling record for the journey between Oxford and Putney, a distance of one hundred and two miles. In this journey there are thirty-one locks, and the delay in getting through them is often very vexatious. The sculling record was a trifle over twenty-three hours; but the hydrocycle covered the distance in nineteen hours. It would be interesting to know whether the work of propelling this novel form of boat is more or less exhausting than rowing. Possibly, this would be a matter governed by individual temperament and habit.

The Special Commission appointed under the auspices of 'The Lancet' to inquire into the water-supply and drainage of the city of Chicago, in view of the numbers of persons attracted by the World's Fair, reports that the water, taken from different points on Lake Michigan, is free from objection, provided that due care is exercised in filtering it, and that the water be cooled without contact with ice. It is obvious that if ice of unknown origin be placed in water to lower its temperature, previous filtration is rendered futile.

In a country parish not far from London a new form of water-cart may be seen in action, which seems to us a distinct improvement upon the ordinary kind. The water from the cart is discharged into a trough, below which are two horizontal partitioned wheels, which revolve at a rapid rate, and are geared to the main wheels of the cart. The water as fast as it runs upon these wheels is cast abroad in fine spray by centrifugal motion. This is a far more effective manner of laying the dust than the usual plan of flooding the road with water. Cyclists especially will rejoice in a method of watering which stops the dust without waterlogging the roads and making their progress slow.

Mr Watson Smith recently delivered before the Chemical and Physical Society of University College, London, a lecture on Diseases incident to Workpeople in Chemical and other Industries. With regard to that terrible disease of the jaw (necrosis) which attacks workers with phosphorus, the author tells us that the danger is far greater in the match factories than in those where the phosphorus is made. By using red or amorphous phosphorus, such as is now the custom in manufacturing matches which strike only on the box, all risk of disease is obviated. It is mostly in the small factories abroad where the yellow phosphorus is used, and it is impossible to stop the mischief without State interference. Referring to the new method of white-lead manufacture in which the carbonate gives way to the sulphate, the lecturer pointed out incidentally that the sulphate would be converted into carbonate by sodium bicarbonate. Hence, if a person is exposed to the dust of lead sulphate, a draught of the ordinary effervescing beverages may at once produce in his digestive organs the actively poisonous lead carbonate.

The 'Pathfinder' is a novel vessel which has been designed and built by Messrs Merryweather, the well-known fire engineers, and its purpose is to act as an hydraulic dredger, a floating fire-engine, or as an appliance for pumping out submerged ships. At its bow is a well, through which can be sunk a telescopic tube of copper, the other end of which is connected with a powerful steam-pump. This tube delivers a powerful jet of water upon any shoal which requires deepening, and very quickly removes it. At a recent trial on the Essex coast, five different portions of a shallow were thus operated upon in thirty-two minutes, an average increase of depth of eleven feet being obtained; and the amount of excavation was roughly estimated at one hundred tons of solid matter. It may be pointed out that by this system and by working at ebb-tide, the matter removed from a water-way is carried away piecemeal, and deposited over a large area; there is therefore no necessity of taking away the removed soil in barges, as is customary in other methods of dredging.

It is said that an experiment was lately made at West Lynn in order to test the tractive power of electricity against steam. A locomotive engine was coupled to a large electric car, and at the same moment they were started in opposite directions. At first, neither gained any advantage; but when sand was thrown on the track, the electric car gained the victory. We are sorry that no more details of the experiment are forth-

coming, for it would be interesting to learn the indicated horse-power both of the locomotive and of the steam-engine which furnished energy to the dynamo on the electric car.

While in this country we have been mainly exercised in the problem of heating railway carriages, Indian engineers have been endeavouring to find some satisfactory way of cooling them. The latest device for this purpose is described in an Indian technical journal, and consists of an automatic arrangement by which curtains suspended across an open trap-door in the carriage are kept saturated with water. These curtains are let down over the fore-end of the carriage, covering the trap-door in whichever direction the train is travelling. In addition to this arrangement, there is a revolving punkah fitted with fans, which is kept in constant motion while the train proceeds on its way.

A French paper recently pointed out that although asbestos was known by the ancients, who used it for crematory purposes, and although in more recent times it was spun into tablecloths, serviettes, &c., its applications were very limited until a few years ago. Twelve years back, not more than four articles were made of asbestos, whereas now at least one hundred things are made from it, and the list is ever extending. One of the most interesting and important applications of the material is in connection with ceramics, and it is believed that asbestos pottery will presently become very popular. The earthenware made from it has a peculiar fineness of grain which is unapproachable by any china-ware, and it can be made into statuettes, or enamelled so as to present a very attractive appearance. Asbestos pipes are highly appreciated by smokers; the material can be used for filtering the strongest acids; and as an insulator for electrical purposes it is unequalled. Asbestos is found in Siberia, the Tyrol, the Pyrenees, Greenland, Brazil, and Canada. There is no dearth of it, and its applications are on the increase.

It is generally known that when the junction of two dissimilar metals is heated, an electric current is generated; and upon this observation, made by Seebeck in 1821, many thermo-electrical devices have been based, some of these yielding sufficient electrical energy to be turned to practical account. A new form of thermo-electric stove has recently been described by a correspondent of the 'Times,' and it is said to be capable of furnishing both heat and light for a room twenty-one feet square. The stove is about three feet high and twenty inches in diameter, and contains the metallic bars, which, heated on the slow-combustion principle, furnish current sufficient to light six glow-lamps each of eight candle-power. During the daylight hours the current from such a stove can be stored in accumulators and used when required. This Thermo-electric Stove is the invention of Dr Giraud, and can be seen at work at the office of Messrs Renshaw & Co., of Queen Anne's Mansions, Westminster. The fuel consumption is said to be only forty pounds of a mixture of anthracite coal and coke per twenty-four hours.

Some very interesting 'Notes on Gesso-work,' by Walter Crane, appeared in the May number of the 'Studio,' and it is there indicated that there is a revival of this form of art decoration, which

is aptly described as being midway between painting and sculpture. There are many ancient examples of this beautiful form of decoration, which doubtless found its birth in Italy; but its most popular modern exponent is the pastry-cook, who by similar means decorates with liquid sugary compound the 'iced' surface of a bride-cake. Gesso is a mixture of whiting, glue, and resin, or similar materials, which is employed in a semi-plastic and semi-liquid condition, so that it may be trailed from a brush so as to form lines, or masses which can be built up on a flat surface so as to produce forms of any required kind. The article referred to is illustrated by some beautiful examples by the author, and this method of decoration is shown to produce very fine results. The necessary material is now sold in the form of a powder, which only requires to be mixed with water to be ready for use.

The manufacture of silk from wood-pulp would seem to be at first sight as mythical as the extraction of sunbeams from cucumbers; but it is a simple fact that the work is now being accomplished, and that a mill for the manufacture of the silk is in full operation at Besançon. The process is that of M. de Chardonnet, and is described in detail in a recent Report by the United States consul at St Etienne. It may be summarised as follows: The wood-pulp, such as is employed in paper-making, after being carefully purified by acid and dried in alcohol, is dissolved in a mixture of pure ether and alcohol, thus forming a viscous collodion like that used in photography. This collodion is placed in a vessel, where, under air-pressure, it is first of all forced through a filtering apparatus, and then into a horizontal tube having a number of glass exit tubes of very small bore. From these tubes the collodion issues in threads so fine that six of them must be combined to make a strand of the necessary consistency for weaving. On its exit, the thread passes through a vessel of water, which robs it of its surplus ether and alcohol, and thus helps it to become solid. It is also subsequently passed through a bath of ammonia, which takes from it its highly inflammable properties. It is believed that this silk has a great future before it; but whether it will prove a dangerous rival to the product of the silkworm remains to be seen.

The Meteorological Society is anxious to secure the co-operation of amateur photographers throughout the country in forming a collection of photographs which it is thought may be useful in helping to solve many problems connected with that branch of science to which it devotes attention. Firstly, a collection of groups of cloud photographs is wanted, from which it is hoped a better cloud-nomenclature can be drawn up than the one which now obtains; and more especially are required those delicate breaths of vapour known as cirrus clouds, which are so often seen high overhead. Hints on the best way of securing these difficult objects can be obtained from the Society; but we may mention here that the best results are obtained by using a mirror of black glass as a medium for reflection between objects and lens. The appearance of the bolder forms of cloud on the approach of a thunder-storm will also form valuable photographs. Beyond these, pictures of lightning are asked for, and pictures of any kind which afford evi-

dence of atmospheric disturbances. Photographs of damage resulting from floods, unusual wind-storms, and the like, will also be acceptable. We feel quite sure that many amateur photographers, whose usual work is of a comparatively aimless character, will be glad to join in a scheme which will give them the consciousness that they are contributing to a good cause.

To those who have an interest in the preserving of fresh eggs, the following notes from a correspondent may be useful: 'Last year we had some eggs, as an experiment, rubbed over with vaseline, and then packed in boxes with dry salt. The boxes were turned over every fortnight, to prevent the yolks settling and adhering to the shell. After the lapse of four months, the first box was opened, the eggs wiped clear from vaseline, and they were then boiled along with fresh-laid ones. As a matter of actual fact, it would have been difficult to distinguish one from the other, if we had not known that some of the eggs had been preserved. This year we commenced preserving by the same method only eight weeks before the time at which I write; and although the test is a much shorter one, it is quite sufficient to prove the value of the process. The fortnightly turning over is an essential feature, as it keeps the yolks in position; and the impossibility of doing this with lime-water, brine, or any wet method, condemns these at once, on account of the adhesion of the yolk to the shell, irrespective of the flavour, which with most other processes is not at all satisfactory. The result of our test this year is as follows: The first lot of eggs preserved were laid March 12th, and were rubbed with vaseline and covered with salt on the 13th; the lids of the boxes were then tied down, and the boxes turned upside down every fortnight or so. Eight weeks afterwards, the first box was opened; two eggs were poached and found perfect; two were boiled for two different persons who are in the habit of taking a new-laid egg daily. One of these two persons, not knowing the egg was a preserved one, remarked that it was very fresh and nice, but that the hens must be getting short of green food, as the yolk was paler than usual. This remark proved clearly that the egg was not passed over without critical notice; and the fact that the yolk was pale is easily accounted for, as during March the hens were practically without green food, they being kept in confinement, and depending for green stuff on the garden waste and grass-cutting from the tennis lawn. The eggs had the curdy, milky appearance which fresh-laid ones lose in about two days, and also the inimitable flavour peculiar to those which have not been handled much.'

THE NEW WELDLESS CHAIN.

THE use of chains dates far back into the world's history; gold chains being frequently mentioned by the earliest Egyptian chroniclers. Turning, however, to modern times, the first extant published patent for chains was obtained in 1634 by a blacksmith named Philip White, who sought, in his own words, 'a way for the mooring of shippes with iron chaynes by finding out the true heating ppareing and temping of Iyron for that ppose, and that he hath nowe attayned to the true vse of the said chaynes, and that the

same will be for the great saving of corlage and safety of shippes, and will redound to the good of our common wealth.' White was granted a patent for fourteen years, and paid five pounds per annum to the Exchequer at Westminster for protection in making his 'chaynes.'

The use of iron chains for mooring purposes in the British navy was advocated in 1690 by Sir Cloudesley Shovel; but it was not until the commencement of the present century that their use for vessels became general, when, in the hands of numerous hard-headed, shrewd mechanics and inventors, the chain reached its present form and perfection, though it was some little time ere prices reached reasonable limits.

It is on record that a vessel, built at Monkwearmouth in 1809, had one chain cable, costing forty-three shillings per hundredweight; indeed, such price was deemed very moderate for those days; for in 1811 chain cables averaged sixty pounds per ton, a rate which has gradually fallen to about twelve pounds or less per ton at the present day.

Viewing the importance of the chain industry, special interest attaches to attempts now being made to introduce into the market a new class of Weldless Chain—namely, one whose links are formed in such a manner as to require no joint whatever. The strength of a chain is proverbially that of its weakest link; and in like manner the strength of the link itself is that of its weakest part—namely, the weld or joint; and no further comment is necessary to demonstrate the superiority of a chain made up of links having no joint or weld whatever; whilst, owing to the absence of such welding, a class of steel of much higher carbon, and therefore increased strength, can be used, those steels which weld well being the softer and weaker qualities.

The design of the links of the new chain is exceedingly ingenious: the wire to form the link is bent into the shape of an elongated U, the ends of which are passed through the next link, bent back, and finally twisted on themselves in such a manner as to leave no danger of slipping loose, nor, the ends being left pointing inwards, is there any danger of their fouling anything.

The chain is called by the makers the 'Triumph;' and experiments have lately been made by Professor Hele-Shaw, of University College, Liverpool, as to the comparative strength of the weldless and welded chains. The strength of the new chain is remarkable, owing to the absence of all welding; and careful and reliable experiments have demonstrated it to have a breaking strain nearly double that of the single section of steel out of which it is made, and approximately three times that of the best British welded chains.

The facility presented by the new chain for speedy expedition and economical manufacture forms a powerful factor in its favour, no fewer than a dozen machines being readily controlled by a single man assisted by one boy. These machines—which in themselves mark an important advance in the chain industry, for up to the present time welded chains have been made mainly by hand—exhibit great ingenuity in their design; and the facility with which they convert reels of wire into fathoms of the new weldless chain leaves little doubt as to the success of the

invention we are now enabled to lay before our readers. The rapid demand for their product in America has induced the patentees of the new chain to effect arrangements for laying down works in this country; and it is anticipated that an establishment at Liverpool will shortly be in active operation.

Without entering into details, or unnecessarily going into the minutiae of quotations, we may briefly say that the new chain will be placed in the market at less than one-fifth the price at present ruling for a welded chain of equal strength; whilst, moreover, the new chain would only weigh about one-half the weight of the welded, a desideratum of no small moment when large quantities have to be handled and carried.

Enough has been said to demonstrate the value of the new weldless chain, and to emphasise the far-reaching benefits to accrue to every industry using them, as well as to the public at large, from reduced cost, coupled with diminished weight and augmented strength.

A TRANSFORMATION.

'Twas but a narrow, city way
Filled by a busy throng,
Before I heard that sun-bright day
A Blackbird's joyous song;
Transformed was that squalid street
The while his loud notes rang—
The early dews were round my feet,
The cowslips round me sprang.

No common sounds were in my ear:
I heard the ringdove's cry,
The thrushes singing sweet and clear,
The skylark's chanson high;
The wind that fanned my brow had come
O'er daisied hills and leas,
O'er hollows pale with hawthorn foam
And wild anemones.

His amber rain the sun-god shed;
I saw the greening haze
Of opening buds on boughs o'erhead;
I saw the gorse-gold's blaze;
I saw the crimson fir-cones sway
On odorous larch and pine:
A Blackbird's song on that spring day
Made viewless glories mine.

M. ROSE.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
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A TRIP TO MINORCA.

WHEN in Palma, the capital of Majorca, we told of our intention to cross to the island of Minorca, they tried to dissuade us from the trip. 'There is nothing whatever to see in the island except the *talayots*,' we were informed. 'Its scenery is about as beautiful as that of Lincolnshire; and its hotel accommodation, save in Mahon, the chief town, decidedly rough.'

But a fair acquaintance with the world had taught both my friend and me to distrust the opinion held by the inhabitants of one island about the nature of an adjacent island. Such opinion is apt to be based upon prejudice, or even upon reasonable envy. No sensible person would give full credit to the judgment of an average Frenchman about Great Britain and her people; or suppose that our insular ideas of France and the French are trustworthy through and through. Besides, there were special reasons why we should feel a curiosity about Minorca. Had we not, in the Palma Museum of the Lonja, seen a great escutcheon in stone of the lion and the unicorn lolling against a wall with cobwebs about it; and had we not been told that the monument was a relic from Minorca—a reminiscence of the days of the last century when the British made themselves very much at home in the little island? Majorca is a very lovely land, full of flowers, and with a nook of mountains where the scenery is so alluring and grand that it would be hard to match anywhere. But Majorca has been Spanish ever since its conquest from the Moors in 1225. It has never, like Minorca, had the Union-jack flying gaily from its forts during the spring and autumnal equinoxials.

And so we resisted our friends' counsel, and one afternoon went aboard the steamship *City of Mahon*, bound for Port Mahon. It was a breezy April day, and the white horses were running at a great pace outside Palma's bay. Our passage was not a pleasant one. The boat had a fiendish kind of roll in the open sea. Moreover, the deck was populous with a crowd of little boys and

girls—a juvenile theatrical troupe, engaged to perform twice or thrice in Minorca before returning to Spain. They were attended by half-a-dozen older folk, including the 'prima donna,' a languishing beauty, whose pallor was soon emphatic enough to show through her painted blushes in a very sad way. And save the fat manager of the troupe, I believe in half an hour every man, woman, and child belonging to it was very sea-sick. It was about as disagreeable a scene as it could be; for Spaniards are not heroic under such a trial.

Sunrise found us, however, at anchor in the fine harbour of Mahon. The frowning forts of Spain were to our right; and on the other side of the inlet we could see the dismantled ruins of the works built up so spiritedly and with such art by our own engineers nearly a hundred and fifty years ago. A rosy sun was just peeping over the red houses of Mahon, and casting a fair welcome sheen upon the still water of the inlet, and making the rather bare hilly boundaries of the harbour look pretty enough in the translucent air.

There was every promise of a fine day, a mercy to be grateful for in the Balearics in spring, when a good deal of rain is wont to fall. Summer here is generally as dry as a bone. The hot plain country of Majorca is then, in spite of its vineyards and olive woods, a profoundly disagreeable place of sojourn. The dust and glare of the long white roads are very conducive to ophthalmia. They are bad enough in spring, but summer much intensifies the badness. Each brook bed then dries up and cracks, as if it besought the obdurate heavens to pity its agony of thirst.

The diligences of the interior are vile instruments of torture at any time. Even in the coupé, where you do get plenty of air, you are half choked by the cloud of dust in the midst of which the three or four little long-tailed horses jog along with a well-assumed air of resignation. Those who are used to the land find support in the bad cigars of Spain and the

thimblefuls of brandy which it is the fashion to drink in the different villages by the way. But to an unbroken foreigner, these are additional sources of irritation, not springs of consolation.

Late in the day we found ourselves in the diligence from Mahon to Ciudadela, with a blue sky over us, and a very endurable amount of dust in our midst, arising from our horses' feet. In Minorca, by the way, they have a wicked habit of cropping their horses' tails poodle-wise, which much detracts from the dignity of the noble animals.

We had in the meantime spent several hours among the ruins of the British forts at the head of the harbour, and reflected about Admiral Byng. It seems clear that in our day we did not seize upon the right positions for fortification. Out of question, Spain has shown wisdom in concentrating her powers upon the other side of the inlet. It is a torpedo-shaped headland, all but an island, elevated, and with precipitous red rocks as a seaward boundary. From this elevation, the Spanish engineers look down upon the remains of our Forts Marlborough, St Philip, and the suburb of George Town across the water. Their guns have a very formidable air, and the acres of red-roofed ammunition stores, barracks, and other buildings on the heights, are sufficiently impressive.

Our hopes of a closer inspection of the Mola, as this great fortified post is called, were signally defeated. Though I bore a letter to the chief officer of the place, he could not act as he would like to have acted. A Government pinnace was offered us, that we might sail round the cape. But as for getting within the walls, that was impossible. The War Minister had issued an express prohibition, and not to oblige a crowned head would my friend have run counter to it.

We rambled from one heap of rubbish to another, and marked where the French cannon-shot had harmed us most. Flowers were blooming heartily among the ruins, and bees buzzed about us. The blue sea laved the lower parts of the work, transparent for many a yard. The whole area is conspicuously devoted to slow decay. Above, on a prominent rock of the fort, are a few tombstones to British officers, but they are quite indecipherable. The salt air has eaten into the stone; and lizards scamper at headlong speed up and down their hot surfaces. And below, in the arched subterranean rooms, a myriad of names are scrawled on the plastered walls, Spanish as well as British. Of the latter, some are as modern as you please, for the Mediterranean squadron often comes to an anchor in Port Mahon and gives the jack-tars a day on shore.

Unless the Duke of Newcastle's ghost revisits the earth to afford us information, I am afraid we are unlikely to know the truth about the tragedy of Admiral Byng. He certainly failed to relieve the siege of Port Mahon, and so we lost the island. But it is by no means certain that he deserved blame for the failure. Be that as it may, he died like a gentleman.

'What satisfaction,' he asked, 'can I receive from the liberty to crawl a few years longer on the earth with the infamous load of a pardon on my back? I despise life upon such terms, and

would rather have them take it. I am conscious of no crimes, and am particularly happy in not dying the mean, despicable, ignominious wretch my enemies would have had the world believe me.'

When the news reached him of his suspension, he stripped off his uniform and threw it into the sea. This was at Gibraltar. He was executed at Spithead, on the *Monarch*, on the 14th March 1757. A cushion was set for him to kneel upon in the fore-castle of the ship—though he protested he was entitled to die on the quarter-deck—and at the dropping of his handkerchief five of the six marines who had been told off for the hateful task shot into his body. The sixth missed his aim.

'There lies the bravest and best officer of the navy,' exclaimed a common sailor, when he fell dead.

It is hard to read Byng's last words without feeling some emotion. If he was merely a State tool, to be discarded and broken when done with, then the statesmen who sacrificed him had much to answer for. In any case, none but a man of sterling worth could have expressed himself as follows at such a time: 'Would to Heaven I had died discharging my duty in the day of battle; then would my name have been transmitted, with my father's, to posterity with honour, which now will be remembered with indignation, a reproach to my relations, a disgrace to the marine, and a scandal to my country.'

When we had ridden the whole length of the island and viewed it from an eminence in the middle, we reluctantly came to the conclusion that Minorca is rather a dull and not at all a beautiful country. Save its harbour of Mahon, it has little to recommend it to the world at large. The winds are so strong over it, and the surface is so flat, that nowhere are there trees of any size. For the most part in the interior, where barley is not grown, a low scrub covers the land; though in places there are the beginnings of little artificial copses of pines which may in time get the better of their enemy, the storms.

A capital road runs through the island from north to south. General Wade started it; but since our day Spain has much improved on it, and now it would gladden even the critical soul of a bicyclist. The Minorquins meander up and down it on a very respectable species of ass, and in a mood that makes them ready to stop and gossip with any one who addresses them with a commonplace civility. There are several bright little villages in the interior. Alayor is the chief, with a big church and a sheaf of windmills conspicuous over its white-faced houses. Also, there is Mercadel; and close behind Mercadel is the famous peak called Monte Toro—or the Bull Mountain—upon which, several centuries ago, the Virgin is said to have appeared one day, in consequence of which the place was made the site of a church and monastery.

From Mercadel, which is as nearly as possible in the middle of the island, a good road trends west to the clean little village of San Cristobal. Here we picnicked agreeably with a native to whom we had been recommended, and paid respectful visits to sundry talayots of the vicinity.

Antiquaries and archæologists would delight in the talayots of Minorca. But to the common traveller they repay investigation less than one has a right to expect, seeing how their fame has been noised abroad. They are not nearly so attractive as the nuraghe, or round towers, of Sardinia, with which they may have an affinity. They are harder to discover, and as spectacles they are trivial. But there is no doubting their antiquity. Even the nuraghe must yield them the precedence for their roughness of architecture and crudity of design.

A talayot is merely an irregular round or polygonal heap of rocks, with or without a central chamber, the rock masses at the base being of course the largest. There is little attempt at masonry in them. The limestone lumps have been dug out of the adjacent soil, and piled one upon the other until the edifice is of the desired height and magnitude. They are of various dimensions, the average being about fifteen yards in diameter and about six in elevation. Where internal chambers exist, they are generally approached by a hole that is little better than a burrow, slightly below the surface of the soil. Here, too, the workmanship is much more primitive than that of the nuraghe, which are not only built of stones very fairly dressed, but which further have in some instances spiral inner staircases as well as a lofty domed chamber of considerable strength.

Who shall say, with assurance, whether the builders of the talayots and the builders of the nuraghe were contemporaries? It is not improbable, even though the latter seem to belong to a more cultivated age. Both may be the handiwork of men of Phœnician origin, or of the primitive populations whom the Carthaginians displaced. In the neighbourhood of certain of the talayots one sees clear traces of an arrangement of monoliths in the form of colonnades, porticos, and chambers open to the air. This is notably so with what is termed the Hostal group by Ciudadela, the old capital of the island, at the north-west corner of it. Some of these monoliths are recumbent, having evidently been overturned by force; but it is easy to give order to the others, in spite of the jungle of flowers, bramble, and ryegrass which envelops them. Very interesting and suggestive here is the rude highway through the brake of vegetation still indicated by the monoliths. A brace of stones, each about five feet and a half in height, stand like gate-posts in front of the entrance chamber of one of the talayots; and at the base of one of these monoliths my friend and I discovered, deep embedded, a basin of stone for all the world like a piscina, about a foot in diameter. We hit upon it by chance. What purpose it may have served, we could not of course tell.

The talayots apart, there is not much to say about Minorca. The town of Mahon is humdrum and rather pretentious. Its four-storeyed red houses seem to date from the same epoch which saw the rise of the Bloomsbury district of London. I daresay the same architects, or their pupils, had a hand in both achievements. The town deserves some praise for its hotels, in which you may live satisfactorily for about four shillings a day. This includes wine and also certain of those nice little biscuits which in Spain are known generi-

cally as 'Minorquin pastry.' No doubt, thanks to the tradition of British occupation—at least we will take leave to fancy so—cleanliness is in much esteem here.

Boots and shoes appear to be the staple manufactures in Mahon as in Majorca. The cobbler looks up from his work for a moment at the sound of a strange step on the very rough stones which pave the streets; but he has not enough curiosity in him to follow the wayfarer with his eyes for more than a moment. Another industry merits notice: this is the arrangement of shells and seaweed in fancy forms, such as ships, boxes, bouquets, and the like. It would seem a species of labour likely to be better rewarded at Ramsgate or Ilfracombe than in Mahon. There is, however, a certain demand for these pretty trifles from the British sailors when the fleet calls here.

When we had been four days in Minorca, we felt that we knew the island as well almost as the oldest inhabitant. It is but twenty-eight miles long by about ten broad, and easy of access everywhere. Word was then brought us of a steamer likely to set off for Palma on the fifth day. Without delay, we offered ourselves as passengers; and so duly the shores of the little island receded from us as the gray mountains of Majorca grew clearer. There was a lusty gale again, and a sea in which we tossed somewhat rudely. But eight hours sufficed to carry us across the strait, and enabled us to set foot once more on the much livelier strand of Palma.

The entire population of Minorca is only about thirty-five thousand, whereas Palma alone has nearly twice as many.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.—'CONFESSION IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL.'

AFTER Isabel was established in her flat and had entertained company, she was drawn more and more into the round of social fashion. It was not 'the season,' as commonly understood, but Parliament was sitting, and the polite world was fairly full. Isabel came to be regarded as a 'success.' Certain leaders of fashion were pleased to set the seal of their approval on her; and Lady Padiham declared her 'perfectly charming,' and looked wistfully sometimes from her to her son, who, for his part, appeared quite content with the society and the conversation of his little Phemy. Isabel's fortune was not so much of a fortune as mere fortunes go—there are giddy young actresses who earn as much by twirling on their toes, and operatic songstresses who earn far more by their voices—but, added to Isabel's beauty and to Isabel's manners and attainments, it was a great deal.

Many gay young sparks fluttered round her at social gatherings, but they were speedily extinguished in her superior fire. The men who came round her and stayed were serious politicians, and eminent men of science and of letters; and it was whispered that a certain distinguished novelist was going to put her in a book; but the

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only reason for the whisper seemed to be that he talked very intimately with her for a long while one evening, and was observed to watch her closely when she was conversing with others.

Ainsworth was present at some of these gatherings—he received cards of invitation, he scarcely knew why—but the court he saw paid to Isabel was not eminently encouraging to his ambition. He thought modestly of his own merits, and every time he saw her with her court of admirers, when it was difficult to have a word with her, he resolved he would not accept another invitation; yet the next invitation he received he accepted, in the hope of seeing her and speaking with her.

Sometimes he heard things said about her which, for no reason in particular, he resented. On one occasion he stood near three ladies who talked of her.

‘How do you like Miss Raynor?’ said one.

‘She is very much admired,’ said another, not venturing an opinion of her own.

‘She is very much run after,’ said the third, more boldly—‘especially by men.’

‘Yes,’ said the first; ‘she is decidedly much more of a man’s woman than of a woman’s.’

Ainsworth could not quite say to himself, and he would have found it impossible to say to another, what harm there was in being ‘a man’s woman;’ but he did not like it.

Isabel, on her own part, was not free from troublesome feelings about Ainsworth. Early in these social dissipation she had experienced a singular shock. It was at a dinner at her uncle’s, where she had got into the habit of thinking her aunt, Pheny, and herself supreme. It was somewhat of a surprise to her to find Miss Bruno, the novelist, of the company, though—remembering her aunt’s words at her own house-warming—it was no surprise to see Ainsworth set down at dinner beside her; but as dinner progressed and Ainsworth and Miss Bruno appeared to become more and more interested in each other, appeared even to begin to exchange confidences, it became a positive pain to her to know that they were together! It was the first time she had seen Ainsworth in agreeable and confidential talk with another young woman than herself! Miss Bruno was not unattractive: she was a large, pale woman, with an abundance of fluffy straw-coloured hair. Isabel found herself asking the question, ‘Does he admire her?’ when the meaning of her feeling and the pain of it rose upon her in a blinding blush. Now she knew what her feeling for Ainsworth must be—that it was no longer mere friendliness—though when it had ceased to be that she could not guess—and that she desired to have him for her own, and could not endure to think he might be another’s, or might wish to be another’s!

The vividness of that feeling passed, of course, but the recognition of it remained. She frankly considered the whole matter, reviewed her intercourse with Ainsworth from the beginning, and came to the conclusion that Ainsworth loved her! That filled her heart with joy, till she considered also and completely understood his frequent girdings at her wealth. Might he not, in his absurd belief in the difference this wealth made between them—might he not turn from her in hopelessness of winning her? She resolved

that she would show him, more clearly than she had ever yet said, that this difference of wealth was less than nothing, and vanity. With more care and intention than before, she invited him to her house when she was going to entertain other guests, and sometimes she asked him alone; for he had fallen into the habit of calling seldom except when invited.

Suddenly such tête-à-tête hospitalities were threatened with interruption—in singular fashion.

Isabel’s father had so much improved in his habits—though, unhappily, but little in his health—that he now regularly occupied himself with writing. His daughter had assured him there was no longer necessity for doing hack-work or journalism, since she had enough money to provide for him and herself both, and therefore he had turned to fulfil the dream of his life: he had begun to write the great philosophic work that was to make him famous—‘A Defence of Transcendentalism’—a work the absolute need for which was evident in an age of mere utilitarian realism. Daily, therefore, he and Alexander—who remained faithful to his chief—journeyed to the British Museum, to rummage, make notes of authorities, and write *marginalia* in the Reading Room. His daughter saw him daily depart on these expeditions without anxiety, for not since the summer had he disappeared for an opium debauch, and she had therefore postponed an expensive experiment for his complete restoration which had been in her mind since ever her wealth had come to her. He still appeared sometimes loose-nerved and shaken, but she thought that condition was but the result of his persistent habit in the past, aggravated by his present regular application to work. Seeing him thus, Isabel was arranging to take him away for a week’s rest and change in the soft air of a southern watering-place, when one morning the unexpected happened.

Alexander had come, as usual, to accompany his chief to the British Museum. He sat with his hat on his knees, answering Isabel’s talk in unusually laconic and morose tones, waiting for the chief to appear. At length he came in, in a guise that amazed his daughter. His tall thin form was clothed in a long old ulster, from each pocket of which stuck the heel of a slipper. On his head was a travelling cap, the lappets of which dangled loosely over his ears. Under his arms he carried a book or two, tied together with string; and a bundle of manuscript, including his voluminous notes for his ‘Defence of Transcendentalism,’ also tied about and about with string; and on his arm hung an extra coat. When she saw him, Isabel burst into uncontrollable laughter, though there was a feeling of anxiety and vexation at her heart. Her father winced and frowned a little on being thus greeted.

‘Father dear,’ said she, going to him and laying her hand on his arm, ‘what on earth do you mean by this?’

‘Am I,’ said he, ‘so very ridiculous?’

‘No, no, my dear,’ said she. ‘Forgive me, but I could not help laughing at your unexpected appearance with all these *impedimenta*. What is the meaning of it?’

‘I am going away, my child. Comparatively naked came I to you six months ago, and com-

paratively naked do I depart. I am going away with nothing, my dear, that your bounty has conferred on me—nothing, I mean, that is detachable from myself.’

‘Going away?’ said she. ‘But for how long?’

‘Going away altogether, my dear, to work out my own salvation.’

‘Work out your own salvation? What nonsense are you talking, father?’

‘To be explicit, my child.—I and Alexander have come to the conclusion that this gay, giddy life is not for us to lead. We must work and redeem the time. Besides, I am an anxiety and a burden to you.’

‘You and Alexander, I suppose,’ exclaimed she angrily, ‘wish to return to your old disreputable way of living!’

‘That, my child,’ said her father with a gentle sadness, ‘is an unkind thrust!’

‘It is unworthy of you, Miss Raynor,’ put in Alexander, ‘to say that!—But tell Miss Raynor the truth, sir.’

‘I beg, Alexander,’ said Mr Raynor, ‘that you will not interfere.’

Isabel was impatient and angry, but her anger was chastened and controlled by her abounding sense of the humour of the situation: while she seemed exceedingly serious and anxious, she was laughing in her heart.

‘I ought to lead, my dear,’ said her father, ‘and I wish to lead, peaceful, laborious days, uncharged with excitements: much eating and drinking, and contact with people of rank and fashion, do not agree with me. The world is too much with us here. I have a dream of peace through work, of rest through toil, and I wish to fulfil it.’

‘But, father dear,’ said Isabel, ‘can you not fulfil it here? You can be as quiet as you like. I thought you enjoyed seeing people and talking with them; and people certainly enjoy talking with you: again and again have I been complimented on having so clever a father. But if you don’t like seeing many people, my dear, then we shall see only few people—Mr Ainsworth and one or two more: and your days can be as peaceful and laborious as you will—though I think you have been making them a little too laborious lately.’

‘Let me advise you, sir,’ said Alexander, in his most portentously solemn tone, still nursing his hat on his knee, ‘to tell Miss Raynor the whole truth.’

‘Let me suggest, Alexander,’ said his chief, ‘that you should take a short walk and return in a quarter of an hour. By that time, I daresay, my interview with my daughter will be at an end.’

‘Very well,’ said Alexander, rising; ‘I will return in a quarter of an hour.’

‘My dear,’ said Mr Raynor, as soon as Alexander was gone, ‘I am a miserable sinner. I have never told you anything but truth, my child; I think I am incapable of *speaking* anything but the truth; but, my dear, I have been acting a lie!’ He set his *impedimenta* on the table and sat down, dropping his chin in dejection on his breast. ‘You have believed—I have induced you by my conduct to believe—that I have given up the use of that detestable drug: I have not, my dear. I have not used it openly in the

form of opium since the summer, but secretly I have taken it since ever you took me to the Isle of Man, in the form of laudanum. I began it there—I could not live without the detested stuff—and I have not since intermitted more than a day or two without a dose of it.’

‘Oh, my poor father!’ said she, kneeling by him and taking his hand. ‘What a bond-slave to a deadly habit you have made yourself!’

‘Bond-slave indeed, my dear!’ he assented. ‘Bound with bonds more intangible than gossamer, but more enduring than thongs or chains!’ And he showed, even in that moment, an evident relish of his phrases.

‘And what were you intending to do, my poor dear?’ said his daughter, with tears in her eyes. ‘Where were you intending to go?’

‘Alexander was going to find a lodging,’ said he, turning on her helplessly his large appealing eyes; ‘and I was going away to work till my book was done, and then to lie down and die! My continued existence is a burden and a shame to the earth! And yet I once had great schemes!’ he added with a wondering pathos.

‘But, dear father,’ said Isabel, caressing his hand, ‘how could you work in a poverty-stricken lodging, after having had comfort and plenty, alone, after you have been used to cheerful society, and with that habit growing tighter about you? You do not understand yourself, my dear. You have confessed to me, and now we will take counsel together what must be done. Why did you not tell me before, dear? Have I been unkind to you? Have I been neglecting you? No, no. I hope I have not.’

‘No, no, my child!’ said he, while tears sprang in his eyes and flowed weakly down his cheeks. ‘No! If anything could save me, your love would, my child! It embraces and compasses me all about!’

‘Well, dear,’ said she soothingly, ‘we must now think of something to be done to deliver you from this.’

‘“O wretched man that I am!”’ he murmured, shaking his head. ‘“Who will deliver me?” This new form of the habit is worse than the other! It is always with me! I sometimes sit in horror—deadly horror!—of the degradation and the blighted utility of my life!’

‘But to think such things,’ said his daughter, ‘is only morbid! Hopelessness of that kind is paralyzing! And in any case you must not think of leaving me alone! I am determined, my dear, to see you yet free and strong! And to gain that end I will spend all I have, if it is necessary! Don’t you think, father, it would be wise to take the advice of a clever doctor?’

‘Oh, not a doctor, my child!’ exclaimed her father in something like terror.

‘Well, shall we talk the matter over with Mr Ainsworth? You would not like to take Uncle George into counsel. He is good and kind; but he does not understand your case.’

‘Yes,’ said he, with something like cheerfulness, ‘let us talk it over with Ainsworth.’

So, when Alexander returned, he was despatched with a note to Ainsworth, at the office of his newspaper, requesting him to call as soon as he could. He sent back word that he would

not be free till two o'clock, but that he would set out then.

Ainsworth came to his time, and the case was set forth to him. What did he think should be done? What would he advise?

'Most people,' said he, 'have opinions ready about the treatment of everything, from a pimple to an earthquake. I, too, have opinions, but I think that in this case they are worth nothing. I would suggest that the proper thing to do first is to see a competent doctor.'

'In fact,' said Isabel, 'you are like the man in Charles Lamb's story: you advise that we should take some advice.'

Isabel spoke lightly, on purpose to reassure her father and make him feel more at ease.

'Quite so,' said Ainsworth. 'Dr Sandringham is said to be a very good man. He is to be seen, I believe, up to four o'clock. There is no time for action like the present: suppose we go at once?'

Mr Raynor, having Isabel's opinion corroborated by Ainsworth's, agreed to see a doctor; and a cab was called, and he was being driven—in the company of his daughter and Ainsworth—to Dr Sandringham's, before he had time to turn round. Isabel and her father entered the doctor's consulting-room together, while Ainsworth remained in the waiting-room. Then Isabel came out and waited also, while the doctor interviewed Mr Raynor for half an hour alone. At the end of that time he emerged radiant with hope: such virtue is there in the word of one with authority.

'He says I'll get over it,' he exclaimed, straightening himself. 'And he wants to speak to you, my dear.'

Isabel entered the presence of the doctor again, filled with curiosity and hope.

'Your father's is a most interesting case, Miss Raynor,' said he. 'I am all the more hopeful of it because he is a man of quick imagination. I think we can cure him of his habit; but—the cure, I tell you frankly, will be rather expensive—a matter of six or seven hundred pounds a year. Is that beyond you?'

'Oh no,' said Isabel. 'I will gladly pay whatever is necessary. What must be done?'

'There is a doctor who takes two or three patients in his house on the Surrey hills: I recommend him to go there.'

'Go away from under my care?' exclaimed Isabel.

'It is much better that he should be from under your care, my dear young lady. He will be taken complete and thoughtful care of by a scientific man who will understand him. You need be under no apprehension, I assure you, that he will not be taken care of.'

'Does he approve of going away himself?'

'Quite,' answered the doctor promptly.

'Then,' answered Isabel, 'I have no more to say. When should he go?'

'As soon as it can be arranged. I will telegraph to Dr Skelton to be here to-morrow. I will tell him all I think of it, and then he will come on to you. I am glad to hear that your father is engaged on a philosophic work: he will be best employed. And, permit me to suggest—keep from him all particulars of outlay of money: I can see it would prey on him very much if he thought he were a great expense.'

So the three drove back to Isabel's abode, discussing cheerfully her father's going. He was enamoured of his prospect.

'Though,' said he, 'I shall miss the Museum. What shall I do for books for my work?'

'We will get you a subscription at the London Library,' said Ainsworth; 'and I—or Miss Raynor—will bring you a bundle of books once a week, or when you will.'

'That will do very well,' said Isabel.

'But what,' said Mr Raynor, 'is to become of Alexander? My poor Alexander!—he is a faithful creature! He has been with me for years!—a true friend!'

'I will look after him, father,' said Isabel, 'as much as he will let me.'

'And what services of his Miss Raynor does not need,' said Ainsworth, 'I will secure. He shall be my Patroclus, my *fidus Achates*, as he has been yours, Mr Raynor.'

Thus they talked on the way; and Ainsworth, though he felt he ought to have been at work earning gold to bring his 'queen of gold' nearer to him, abandoned himself to the delight of this brief, bright interval, which reminded him of the Marylebone days when they had all been gay and easy friends together.

And thus it came about that Mr Raynor went away to be cured, and that tête-à-tête meetings between Isabel and Ainsworth ceased for a time.

HOW TO TAKE OUT A PATENT.

BY AN OLD PATENTEE.

To take out a Patent for the invention of a machine or some mechanical combination, or for the discovery of some new chemical or manufacturing process, was a serious business long ago. But we have changed all that of late years, thanks to those who advocated for so long and so persistently a 'Reform of the Patent Laws'; and also to the influence of the Great Exhibition of 1851. The result was the passing of the Patent Amendment Act of 1852, and of a subsequent Act in 1883. Later legislation on the subject is contained in the Patent Act, 1888, and the Patent Rules, 1890.

Estimated roughly, the cost of taking out a patent now, securing the invention for the first four years, is nearly represented by pence, but under the old Act it was represented by pounds. To such readers as have an inventive faculty and who would like to take out their own patents, I venture to think that I may be of some service, and this in the way of giving hints directly and practically useful, which will enable them to get their inventions secured by letters-patent at a very moderate cost.

The real difficulty with which you, my inventive reader, will have to contend lies in the direction of your own work—namely, the preparation of your drawings, the drawing up of your specifications, and the making of your 'claims.' Having matured your invention, so far as you can at the early stages of its existence, the first step you should take is to ascertain

whether your invention is 'new.' This, if done at all, should be done before you proceed to make 'Application for Provisional Protection.' But as going back through the Patent Office Records of years to find and glance over all specifications of patents for inventions bearing on the subject of yours takes much time, and as time is money, you may, as many do—the 'fees' being now so small—dispense with the 'search' altogether. You run this risk, however, that some morning after having applied for Provisional Protection, or at a later stage for completion of your patent, you may receive an official document informing you that some one has given 'notice of *opposition* to (your) grant for provisional protection,' or to your 'patent,' as the case may be. Should you in this case elect 'not to fight,' but rather to drop the patent, the loss in fees paid, say even for protection for the first four years, is not very great. But remember that there are patents worth fighting for; I myself have at least one over which I should be inclined to be somewhat pugnacious. But if you fight, take my advice. Do not fight unaided; secure the services of a first-class patent agent. Patent business is now of such enormous extent that every town of importance has at least one first-class patent agent.

But if, to be as safe as you can make yourself, you decide to make the 'search,' that is now, as compared with the old and costly system, a comparatively easy task, since the complete specifications of all the patents which are taken out each year are *printed*, and complete sets of these are kept in certain places of easy access to the public. The public offices in which complete sets can be examined are as follows: In London, the Patent Office Library in 25 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane; and at the Department of Science and Art, South Kensington. In Edinburgh, at the Museum of Science and Art. In Dublin, in the Public Record Office.

Assuming that you elect to go on with your patent without making a 'search,' your first work is the preparation of the 'specification'—as it is officially termed—or description of the invention. The worth of the invention lies in truth in this document. A doubtful phrase in it, the employment of a wrong term, the omission of one sentence, the giving of another, may wreck the patent, may give a loophole to the sharp, perhaps over-sharp and unscrupulous, some of whom are always on the look-out for an opportunity to set the patentee at defiance, or subject him to vexatious and costly litigation in defending his rights. And of this document the most important part is that in which all the 'claims' are stated.

Then, again, with regard to the drawings—here assuming that your invention is a mechanical one—you must be careful in preparing them for 'sending in to the Patent Office,' that they clearly and explicitly set forth the character of the machine, or the nature of the particular mechanical combination claimed. 'Pretty' or 'nice-looking' drawings, such as youthful draughtsmen are usually ambitious to produce, are not required. Indeed, the style in which the officials require them to be executed precludes this fineness of drawing. What is wanted is

absolute clearness in showing what it is which you claim as your invention.

The specifications required under the Patent Office régime are of two kinds or classes—first, the 'Provisional,' and second, the 'Complete.' Of these the provisional, as its name partly imports, has for its object the securing to the inventor the 'right' to a patent if accepted officially and not opposed. This 'right' prevents another from taking undue advantage of the inventor, or his being forestalled by some one who may be thinking of something of the same sort, and of protecting it by patent. But the official acceptance of the provisional specification, or the granting of what is officially termed 'provisional protection,' brings with it three other and important advantages. In the first place it gives you nine months, during which period you may be making inquiries as to the probable chances of your invention meeting with commercial success. The second, and possibly the greatest advantage to many inventors is this. The inventor may not have the means to do justice to his patent if it be finally accepted. Or it may be that the bringing out and manufacturing expenses may amount to such a sum that he will be compelled to get the help of a capitalist. Now, his provisional protection secures him from the risks which a patentee ran under the old patent laws arising from those to whom he showed his invention in confidence. The third advantage which accrues to the inventor from the provisional protection which he obtains is that the period of nine months which it gives him can be employed in maturing and perfecting his invention. Those nine months of grace begin from the *date of the application* for provisional protection which the inventor sends in, *not* from the date of its official acceptance. Practically, the nine months is reduced to about seven.

The second class of specification recognised under Patent Office régime is that known as the 'Complete.' A provisional specification differs from a complete in those two points: in the first place, all that is demanded from it is such a fairly complete description of what the invention actually is, that there will be no doubt as to what the inventor desires to secure by patent. The full details, making clear the method in which the invention is to be carried out, are not required. All these are reserved for the Complete Specification, in which they *must* be given. The second characteristic of a provisional as compared with a complete specification is that it is not imperative that the inventor should state what are the 'claims' which he makes. These, again, are reserved for the complete specification, in which also they *must* appear.

Although the two kinds of specification now described differ in most important points, it is not essentially necessary that both should be sent into the Patent Office. The provisional specification may be altogether dispensed with, and the complete one sent in at the first. Each specification—provisional and complete—*must* be sent in 'in duplicate'—that is, two copies of specifications, and two sets of drawings, are now required, in place of four under the other method, in which you take out both 'provisional' and 'complete' specifications.

Assuming that you have got your scheme so

far matured that you are prepared to apply for a provisional specification, you will now be ready to prepare the finished official form to be forwarded to the Patent Office. The paper, of the size known as foolscap, must be strong and of good quality, and be wide ruled, with a margin of two inches on the left-hand side of the page. The style of handwriting best liked by the officials is clear, round, and large, so as to be distinctly read off at once. In paging your office copy, the first page must *not* be '1,' but '2,' and this inasmuch as the stamped and printed form presently to be described forms in the official arrangement 'page 1.' All the sheets of the specification are to be secured or fastened consecutively together at the left-hand upper corner. The provisional specification concludes thus: 'As witness my hand this _____ day of _____ One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety ____.' Finally, you sign with your full name.

Having thus got ready your provisional specification for sending in to the Patent Office, you must now address yourself to getting your drawings prepared. There are two sizes of sheets allowed by the Patent Office. The first size, which is that preferred, is thirteen inches by eight. The second size of sheet is thirteen by sixteen inches. There must be a margin of half an inch in width set off on the sides and ends. The quality of the drawing-paper you employ must be good—strong, pure white in colour, and hot-pressed or calendered so as to present a smooth surface. There is no limit placed to the number of the sheets of drawings you may send in along with your specification. The sheets are tagged at the corner along with, and *after*, the specification. Colour or India-ink washes should only be used when absolutely necessary, drawings in pure outline being preferred by the office. When 'hatching' or cross-lines are employed to indicate parts of the subjects which are shown in section, the lines must be 'drawn in' pretty widely apart. 'Shade-lines'—that is, broad and dark lines to indicate parts in projection or for effect—should only be used when absolutely necessary. Letters of reference must not be of less height than one-eighth of an inch; and when the part indicated is small and would be rendered obscure by so large a sized letter being superimposed upon it, the reference letter must be placed outside the drawing on the free space of paper, with a dotted line, if necessary, to the part to which the letter of reference applies. The lines of the drawings and all the reference letters must be made permanent in Indian or China ink, of a deep, absolutely black colour. The sheets should also be numbered consecutively, and the various figures marked Fig. 1, Fig. 2, &c. The scale of the drawings must be large enough to make all the points or details of your invention clearly understood beyond any doubt. It is absolutely essential that the 'scale' be drawn, not merely indicated in words.

Having thus all your documents ready to hand, you are now prepared to make application in the official form. The first step in this will be for you to obtain the stamped form marked 'A,' and the Form 'B,' which is unstamped, and is otherwise a duplicate of Form 'A.' The cost of Form

'A' is one pound sterling (Form 'B' not being charged). It may be obtained through any money order post-office in the kingdom within three or four days from the date of application. Some of the General Post-offices in large towns generally keep all the patent forms in stock. Forms may also be obtained through the medium of Inland Revenue offices. Having obtained your two forms, you proceed to fill up their blank spaces. The filling up of the forms is completed when you adhibit your signature, and the day of the month and the year on which you signed the document.

If the space in the *printed* form for the 'general description' is too small to take in its matter, condensed to the full as you will try to make it, you must *not* 'continue' it by going 'over' and writing on the back of the form. But you must take one of your specification paper sheets—with its margin—and continue and conclude your general description on it, if the length of its matter will permit of its conclusion. If it does not, you must take another and second sheet. The printed 'form' is considered officially to be 'Page 1,' so that if you can get in your 'general description' into its blank space, the first page of your written provisional specification will commence with the number or figure '2.' If you have two extra sheets or pages, it will then be '3.' The documents should be accompanied with a courteous note, addressed—as also the packet—to 'The Comptroller-general, Patent Office, 25 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.' And here, in justice to a class of whose members harsh things are sometimes spoken, I venture to say, speaking from experience, that the Patent officials are both courteous and considerate.

In due course you will receive a printed form acknowledging receipt of your documents; and probably, within six or eight weeks after the date of your application, you will receive a notification of the acceptance or refusal of your application. You will now, as already stated, have nine months—less the time taken in getting your provisional acceptance—to mature your invention, also to make such inquiries as will enable you to decide whether you should go on with it or not.

Assuming that your invention is too good a one to be thrown up, you will, of course, in ample time begin to prepare your 'Complete Specification' for filing at the Patent Office. Bear carefully in mind the date at which you ought to lodge your complete specification. A *single hour after the date* will make your patent void. It is right, however, to state that official provision is made for your being placed under such circumstances as will prevent you from lodging your complete specification before the appointed or legal date. Such, for example, as your having instituted some trials or experiments which you should like to see the result of, so that you might embody in your documents some improvements which would greatly enhance the value of your patent. By the payment of certain fees, running from two to six pounds, you can obtain 'extension of time' in which to file your final document—an extension varying from one to three months. But be careful to note this—that your application for this extension must

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

itself be made in time. A detailed statement of your 'claims' forms the last paragraph of the complete specification. They are preceded by the following introductory paragraph: 'Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, and declare that what I claim is:'

Then follows the statement of claims. Each claim is numbered, as (1), (2), &c., and each forms a distinct and complete paragraph. Although the validity of your patent is dependent on the complete specification taken as a whole, nevertheless much rests also upon the 'claims' you make. I ought, indeed, the rather to say 'very much;' for it is the claims which differentiate your invention from that of others proposing to do the same work, or having the same purpose in view. At the same time, the utmost care should be taken not to include claims which might or would go beyond what you conceive or believe to be actually new.

Arrived at this stage of your application for protection by patent for your invention, you are now ready to purchase the next form required to complete it. This is known in the official list as 'Form C,' the stamp on which is of the value of three pounds sterling. By paying this amount to the Postmaster at the nearest Money Order Office, the form will be received in a few days after the payment has been made. It is accompanied by a duplicate form unstamped, and for which no charge is made.

Form C has then to be filled up precisely in the same way as the provisional specification. But the number of the patent, and the date of its application given in the acceptance document, must be referred to in the complete specification. The form and the pages of what may be called the text of the specification, and the drawing or drawings, if any, are then to be sewed together, making two sets, one set carrying the stamped Form C, the other the duplicate form, unstamped. Then, as in the case of the provisional specification, carefully make up the packet and despatch it.

Let me hope that your acceptance will be followed some fine morning by an official envelope containing your 'Patent Grant,' officially signed and sealed, with a printed note informing you that it is now forwarded, and directing your attention to the way in which, and the dates at which the succeeding payments are to be made in order to prevent your patent from lapsing and 'becoming void.'

The full period over which your patent gives you protection for your invention is fourteen years, commencing on the date of your application for provisional protection. The cost of protection for the first four years is covered by the two forms 'A' and 'C,' amounting together to four pounds. Before the expiry of the fourth year from date of application you must pay the first renewal fee of five pounds. Before the expiration of the fifth year, and in respect to the sixth year, you will have to pay six pounds. The succeeding payments, before the expiration of the sixth up to and inclusive of the fourteenth year, are eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen pounds. Thus, beginning with four pounds for the first four years, each year's payment rises one pound in value. The total amount paid for the fourteen

years is ninety-nine pounds, and embraces the three kingdoms and the Isle of Man, but not the Channel Islands, or any of the British possessions or colonies.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME

A MARSHLAND ROMANCE.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE MISTY NIGHT.

THE boom of a signal-gun shivered across the marshlands in the lower reaches of the Thames. It was a damp, wintry afternoon; and over these fenny levels, that extend for miles along the river-banks and far inland, with their narrow dikes, stunted pollards, and blear-eyed cattle dotted here and there, a white mist was rising. It had already risen above the dikes, it had settled round the pollards up to their stumpy heads, and the cattle were grazing below it, or else ruminating, apparently accustomed to their misty surroundings.

On a slope behind these marshlands there is many a straggling village. One of these is known as Little Thurrock. It straggles back from the swamps, as if it had picked its way out of them, and stopt at the foot of the old chalk hills. The clock in the square tower of Little Thurrock Church—a tower that looks almost as old as the hills behind it—was striking four. Its chimes had hardly died away when the joyous shouts of the village school children filled the air. Out they flocked with hurrying footsteps from the school-house adjoining. The school-door had been flung open like a safety-valve for steam at high pressure, and the sound of children's voices had come bursting forth.

At a raised desk within the school-room sat a girl of eighteen. She leaned her elbows upon the desk and stared abstractedly before her. On a bench below the desk was a curly-headed boy, who watched the girl's face intently.

'They're firing agin!' he presently ventured to suggest. 'It's from the hulks; ain't it?'

The school-mistress looked severe—if a frown on so sweet a face could be called severe—and answered: 'Mind you don't go there, Jim, when you grow up. It seems to me that you are going that way.'

The boy hung his head. But he soon looked up again to find the girl more abstracted than ever. 'May I go now?'

The girl looked at him with a flash of her dark eyes: 'What!—to the hulks?'

'No,' said Jim. 'May I go home, I mean?'

'You will never'—and the girl could scarcely suppress a smile—'never play at convicts in school-hours again?'

The boy shook his head with energy.

'Then you may go. But'—

'Good-night, miss!'

A skip and a jump, and Jim had reached the door. In another minute his voice was mingling with the other voices that were now growing less audible in the lanes and bypaths, as the children scattered into their various homeward ways.

For a moment there was a thoughtful look on the girl's face; but her eyes brightened as she locked up her books and papers; and when she had put on her bonnet and cloak, she hurried out with hardly less eagerness than her noisy pupils. She did not shout or dance along, however, as they had done, though she felt a strong impulse to whirl round and round on tiptoe into the mist. The night was closing in; a light wind was creeping up from the river, and driving the mist before it in shadowy, fantastic shapes. A curlew passed high over the girl's head in swift flight, delivering its plaintive cry.

The girl began to sing blithely, and now seemed almost to be dancing as she tripped quickly on her way. She gave no apparent heed to the repeated sound of the gun that came to her ear over the darkening marshes; it was a sound to which she had been accustomed since childhood. It did not interrupt her singing or cause her to walk along less buoyantly. Indeed, she moved so nimbly that she hardly appeared to touch the ground. She was tall and shapely, and with her long gray cloak wrapped about her, she appeared as though fading, as the light faded overhead, into a lively spirit of the mist. She soon left the village behind her, and descending obliquely towards the marshlands, presently came in sight of a cottage standing alone at the road-side. A light had appeared at one of the windows, and at the sight of it she hastened her steps still more. A low stone wall surrounded the garden. The girl passed in at a gateway, and turning down a side-path, reached a back door. She raised the latch and went in. She found herself in a neatly furnished kitchen. A middle-aged, rosy-faced woman, with a peevish look, was busying herself over the tea-tray.

'Father is in?'

'He is, miss. But he ain't in the best o' tempers,' was the answer, 'I can tell you.'

Without further questioning, the girl passed through the kitchen into a snug little parlour. An elderly man sat in a comfortable armchair before the fire; a shaded lamp stood on a table at his elbow. The light fell upon a handsome, delicate face; but there was little that could be called cheery in the expression; and the gray hair and dark bushy eyebrows only added to the look of sternness. There was no deep sympathy in the cold gray eyes. The man, indeed, scarcely looked up when the girl came in; and even when she kissed him playfully on both cheeks, he kept his eyes bent upon the fire. And yet he seemed to be watching her in a stealthy way all the while from under those convenient eyebrows.

'No letter for me, father?' The girl asked the question in an unsteady voice. She waited with parted lips and wide-open eyes for a reply. He looked up now, but not at her. He looked sternly at the woman who happened at this moment to come bustling in with the tray.

'Do you hear, Mrs Gilkes? You brought me the letters this morning. Any for Miss Jessie?'

The severe tone in which he questioned her appeared to flurry Mrs Gilkes, for she answered in a stammering manner: 'Letters? I gave them all to you, sir, without so much as glancing

at 'em. Any for Miss Jessie? Why, no—not that I knows of, Mr Bryce.'

'You know there were none,' said Mr Bryce. 'Don't I always send you up to the school with them, when there are any, the moment I can spare you?'

'You do, sir.' Then answering Jessie's appealing look, Mrs Gilkes went on: 'But what with one thing, as you know, and what with another'—

'You can go, Mrs Gilkes,' interposed Mr Bryce.—'You don't want her any longer; do you, Jess?'

Jess followed the woman out into the kitchen. She looked deeply troubled; but she brushed a tear from her flushed cheek, and said, laughingly: 'Jim has been naughty again, Mrs Gilkes. His mind is always running on convicts; I'm afraid he's quite incorrigible.'

Mrs Gilkes, who was Jim's mother, looked as shame-faced, upon hearing this unsatisfactory report, as though she were a convict herself. She put on her bonnet and shawl in her flurried manner, and answered, half-apologetically: 'He always is a bit queer, my Jim is, when they're a-firing for convicts. I'm given summat that way myself. They was a-firing the night afore my Jim was born; so it's in his nature like, you'll understand?'

When Jess had bolted the door behind Mrs Gilkes, her face instantly changed. The brightness went out of her laughing eyes. She seemed like one who could no longer keep back the disappointment and consequent grief that had overtaken her. 'No letter from him yet? What can it mean?' She stood with her hands clasped, looking blankly before her. She looked the picture of despondency, with ripe, red quivering lips, and a bright tear rolling down each cheek.

'Jess!' It was her father. She made an effort to recover her cheerful look; she knew that he hated the sight of tears. He expected every one about him to be bright and chatty; and he seldom had reason to complain of Jess. But to-night—as she found it impossible to hide from him—she felt in no amiable frame of mind. Something weighed heavily upon her spirits—something that seemed more than a mere presentiment, something that she could not put aside.

'When you've done gossiping,' said he, as she entered the room, 'perhaps you'll make the tea.'

She set to work in silence. Her father watched her movements in his cunning way. He did not appear perplexed at finding her so uncommunicative, though it was by no means a usual mood with her. He appeared more anxious than perplexed about Jess to-night.

'Well,' said he, when she had handed him his cup and had fallen back into a state of abstraction, 'you are not very entertaining.'

The girl looked up suddenly at her father with searching eyes. 'I am trying to think,' said she, 'why John does not write.'

Her father made no answer. But he frowned, and fidgeted in his chair, and plainly showed that there was little entertainment, in his opinion, to be got out of that subject. He even made more than one effort to rise from his chair, as if with the thought of pacing up and down the room;

but he was too indolent, as well as too gouty and rheumatic, to get upon his feet without considerable provocation.

'Father!' cried the girl, with a restless look in her eyes, 'I must know the meaning of John's silence; I can bear it no longer!'

Mr Bryce's face became troubled. But it was evident that John's silence was not the cause; it was Jessie's impulsive and determined manner.

'Patience, Jess,' said he, in a conciliatory tone—'patience!'

'Patience?' said the girl, jumping up from her chair. 'I have shown too much patience! I have followed your advice. I have waited—waited! I ought to have followed my own instinct long ago. I hope it is not yet too late.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean,' said the girl, 'that when no answer came to my appeal—not one word of reply to all my letters—I should have gone straight to London. But you dissuaded me. I should have gone and learned what his silence meant; for I will not believe that he is changed towards me, unless he tells me so. A letter from him would not convince me; nothing would now, except his own outspoken confession.'

Mr Bryce began to exhibit so much uneasiness, his eyes wandering from one object in the room to another, that Jessie must have noticed it, if she had been less self-absorbed.

'To-morrow,' said Jess, 'I shall go to town.—It's no use trying to dissuade me now,' she hastened to add, noticing a sudden movement on her father's part, as though he were about to interrupt her. 'It's Saturday; there will be no school. And if you refuse to give me the money for the journey, father, I shall walk!'

Her father looked at her straight for the first time. She returned his glance, and was surprised to see no sign of anger, or even opposition. She saw something worse—she saw a look of actual dread.

'Jess,' said he, making a great effort to steady his voice, 'you can go to London if you like. I don't grudge you the money. But you will do no good, my girl, by going there.'

Jess was dumfounded. Her father's answer was so unexpected; his changed attitude bewildered her. Suddenly she broke out in her impulsive way: 'Something has happened!' She looked about her distractedly, as if for some explanation. 'Something has happened!' she repeated. 'You knew it. You have kept it from me!' Jessie spoke in a tone of bitter reproach. A burst of anger would have touched her father less keenly.

He broke out in a weak, pleading voice. 'It was done for the best—all for the best,' said he. 'Jessie! you shall know everything, my dear—everything.'

She pressed her hands before her eyes. 'He cannot be dead?' She asked the question as though slowly realising that something even worse must have come to pass.

'Sit down,' her father insisted. 'I will tell you in a few words what has really occurred.'

She obeyed; and leaning her elbows on the table, with her head between her restless hands, she waited eagerly for him to speak.

'John Upcraft got into difficulties,' Mr Bryce began—'weeks ago. It led to legal proceedings.

There was a trial—it lasted for some days—and, in a word, he was found guilty.'

Jess rubbed her eyes. 'Guilty?' and she looked about her, as if doubting whether she was awake. 'Guilty of what?'

'Why, you see,' said Mr Bryce, trying to get delicately over the avowal, 'the case was a serious one—very serious. It had to be dealt with in the criminal courts. For the accusation brought against Upcraft was one of forgery. In fact—Shall I go on?'

'No!' There was determination in Jessie's tone. What more was there to hear? A look of horror settled upon her face. Her father bent his head and wisely remained silent.

'He wrote to me—didn't he?' Jess presently asked in a choking voice. 'He must have written!—Where are his letters?'

Still silent—never even glancing towards her—Mr Bryce rose slowly from his armchair and went to his desk under the window. He unlocked a drawer and brought out a packet of letters.

Jess took them eagerly in both her hands. But the sight of John Upcraft's familiar handwriting was more than she could bear to look upon unmoved. The letters were unopened—had remained unanswered for weeks! What would he think of her? The self-questioning brought a flood of tears.

'These newspapers,' said her father, taking a bundle from the same drawer, 'contain an account of the whole case. When you have read them, Jessie, you will have learned all.' While still speaking, he hobbled to his armchair and sank down.

The girl was on the point of leaving him. She stopped, with her hand upon the door, and looked back. There was suppressed anger in her tone, but her eyes flashed at him with passion as she asked: 'Why did you keep all this from me?'

Mr Bryce looked nervously into his daughter's face. 'Shall I be candid? Well, then! I did not feel sure of you, Jess, you are so impulsive. I dreaded—and the dread kept me awake many a night—that if you knew of this business, you would throw up your situation at Thurrock School. And that, I knew,' he added, 'would mean ruin—starvation. For am I not poor and afflicted?'

By profession, Mr Bryce was a surgeon; but his ailments—so he told every one—had forced him to retire from practice. He had given Jess a good education, however, before retiring: he had even had her trained for a nurse at the county hospital. He was poor, as he had avowed—wretchedly poor. But Jessie's earnings at the village school, and his own slight savings, just enabled them to meet the expenses of their modest home.

For a moment, after her father had ceased speaking, Jess stood looking at him more in pity than anger. His want of heart—his unsympathetic, selfish nature, was well known to her. But she had thought to receive some words of commiseration. It was inconceivable to her. He appeared indifferent, so long as his comforts were secure. What this calamity meant for her seemed to give him no concern. She sat down over the kitchen fire to read the letters. She felt eager to break the seals; and yet the dread

that they would confirm what her father had so reluctantly told her, made her hesitate. She could no more believe John Upercraft guilty than believe that his love for her had changed.

In the midst of these thoughts the noise of the signal-gun smote faintly upon her ear. To-night, she felt a strange fascination for the sound. The wretched convicts down in the prison-ships, on the banks of the marshlands, had a new interest for her. There was one of these men, there could be little question, out in the foggy marshlands now. She had seen one of them once; it was a year or two ago; and the whole scene recurred to her. The man had been hunted down by a company of soldiers, and retaken. They had passed the cottage on their way to the river: Jess had seen the convict's face by the light of flaring torches as they went by; and never had she forgotten the man's look, though it had only flashed upon her for one moment.

And this was now John Upercraft's fate. He was lying in some damp prison-ship, perhaps, while she sat thinking—thinking beside this warm fire!

At this moment there came a continuous knocking at the kitchen door.

THE IMPORTED LIVE-MEAT TRADE.

IN the early days of 1874, a small quantity of beef, mutton, and poultry was shipped from Canada to England. The consignment was but an insignificant one, containing as it did some twelve tons in all; but viewed in the light of later developments, the shipment was most important, for it ushered in a trade that now provides us with one of the most necessary elements of our imported food-supply. This beef, the pioneer of vast cargoes that were to follow, found ready sale at from sixpence to sevenpence per pound, and left a handsome margin of profit when the initial cost of threepence per pound, freight, and other expenses were paid.

The news of the success attaching to this venture soon became noised abroad, and, from dead-meat to live being a perfectly easy and natural transition to the commercial mind, the September of 1874 saw the arrival of 273 live cattle from Canada, a total which was increased to 455 before the close of the season. Prior to this date, the only foreign market for Canadian cattle was the United States, which levied an *ad-valorem* duty of twenty per cent. on every beast imported. The British market, however, was the better one, and as the freight across the Atlantic was about equal to the tax which had to be paid on admission to the States, it is small wonder that the most sanguine expectations were formed as to the possibilities of the trade.

The first consignment of Canadian cattle brought on an average thirty-two pounds per head, and the cost of conveyance to England amounted to six pounds per head—a sum that has now fallen to about one-third or one-fourth of that amount. Canada was not allowed, however, to reap the

whole benefit of this lucrative business. The States began to send cattle also. But at first much opposition was experienced. The English producers cried out most bitterly against what they considered an invasion of their vested interests. The roast beef of Old England was in danger, and, strange to say, the public sentiment was for a time aroused against the trade. The incalculable benefits which a supply of good beef conferred—for experiment proved it to be of the best quality—soon overcame the prejudice, and the British consumer consoled himself with the thought that if his beef was not exactly a home-grown product, it was at least killed and dressed on English ground.

The most serious objection made to the trade, however, was the danger of contagion to English stock; and to guard against this, the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act was passed in 1877. By this law, all cattle coming from a country where disease is known to be, must be slaughtered at the port of landing within ten days after they are disembarked. This produced some important modifications in the trade, for in those days refrigeration was a science that was in its earliest infancy, and dead meat could only be carried in the winter season. The passing of the Act therefore necessitated that all cattle sent from an infected area should be fat and ready for the market. Milch and store beasts would thus be comparatively valueless unless they were fattened on the other side of the Atlantic. The United States were soon scheduled as infected; but Canada remained free, and her cattle could be sent inland to fairs and markets. In 1883, trade jealousies made a desperate attempt to prove that Canada contained disease. The allegation, however, was denied, and the most searching examinations failed to prove that the live importations from Canada were other than sound in wind and limb. On the 21st November last, Canada was also scheduled, one single case sufficing to bring this about; and until the restriction is removed, her cattle are subject to the same rigorous rules as apply to those imported from the States.

Liverpool's share in the vast traffic that supplies the British consumer with much of his beef far exceeds that of any other port, and the provisions which her Docks and Harbour Board have made for the requirements of the business are on the most complete scale. In fact, the Mersey cattle-trade is second to none in the world; and it may give some idea of its magnitude to remark that at the more important of its two 'lairages,' the highest record of animals slaughtered on a single day is in excess of eighteen hundred.

There are several vessels among Liverpool's cattle-fleet that carry with perfect comfort and safety a thousand head of cattle, and the average loss per cent. all the year round is but one-half, or, in other words, one beast out of every two hundred dies on shipboard. Cattle-carrying has now attained the dignity of a science; and one has but to observe the condition of the bovine passengers as they are landed to see how healthy is the treatment which they must have received during their voyage.

On arrival in the Mersey, the cattle-laden steamer proceeds, we will suppose, to the Woodside Cattle-stage, which is on the Cheshire side of the river, immediately opposite to Liverpool. Here the cattle are landed amid the persuasions, vocal and otherwise, of the cattle-men, or 'bull-pushers,' as the vernacular of the trade denominates those who have had charge of them during the voyage. From the stage they proceed direct into the lairage, where there is stall accommodation—and this is only one of two lairages devoted to the American live-meat trade—for 3500 head. Very comfortable, indeed, are the quarters in which the cattle now find themselves. Their inviting coolness, the all-pervading sense of cleanliness, combined with the suggestiveness of the sweet-smelling hay, would lure the most refractory of bullocks to enter, even were the door-posts inscribed in characters intelligible to the bovine understanding with the warning, 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.'

Each animal is allowed food, bedding, and fresh water *ad libitum*—advantages of which it takes full benefit, thinking but little, as it chews the cud of reflection, of the fate now so closely impending. Perhaps the most striking feature of this vast collection of live-meat is the individual resemblance that obtains between each. All are plump, well-fed bullocks, of much the same height and proportions; and each thinks, no doubt—if it be given to him to think at all—that he has lighted upon good times. So he has undoubtedly, while they last. The transitoriness of things terrestrial, however, is proverbial, and applies to conditions bovine as well as human. After a few days spent in this peaceful and quiet retirement, there enters to the bullocks the buyer, who, with the skilled eye of the connoisseur, makes selection of the beasts he requires. He then takes from his pocket a pair of scissors, and shears from the hide a small portion of the hair, so as to leave a bald cross, a circular patch, or a triangle, according to the device he has adopted as his mark. This is the signing of the death-warrant. The selected beasts are led out into the open and penned at the entrance to one of the many slaughter-houses. The end is near now. A sliding door is pushed back, and one by one the beasts are led into the shambles. Here, in a few moments, all is over; and in as many minutes more, the beast that entered full of life and vigour is killed, divided, and dressed ready for the market.

A party of English tourists were once being shown over a great hog-killing establishment at Chicago, when an American present boasted, with all the complacency of wanton utilitarianism, that everything relative to the poor hog was used in some way or other. 'Nothing is wasted,' he said; 'everything is used save the poor animal's dying squeal, and we would use that too, did not the hog need it to die with.'

The bullock slaughtered in England is not allowed this luxury, nor is it necessary—everything is swift, sudden, and silent. When the carcass is dressed ready for the market, it is suspended from a line of overhead rails, along which it can be run into the cooling chambers. In the summer-time, refrigerating rooms have to be used, and are then in great demand, as will be readily imagined from the magnitude of the work

performed. The lairages have railway connection with all the principal lines in the kingdom; so that the meat passes out of the cooling chamber into the meat van which is drawn up at the door, not to be again handled until its final destination is reached. It says much for the despatch with which the business of this lairage is conducted, when it is stated that, during a busy season, meat has been placed upon the London market within thirty-six hours after the live beasts were landed from the cattle-ship. At the Woodside Lairage there is, as we have said, accommodation for 3500 head of cattle, and during a rush there have even been more than that number patiently awaiting the mandate of the buyers. There is something impressive in the sight of this vast collection of patient ministers to our wants. We have stated above that they are young bullocks in prime condition. Occasionally, however, one sees beasts that bear evidence of having been employed as oxen frequently are in new districts where horses may be scarce. All, however, have attached to their ear a metal tag, which bears an identifying number. This serves a double purpose. In case of disease, it is possible, by referring to the number, to find out the port of shipment and the district from which the diseased animal came. The tag is left attached to the hide when the animal is dead, and all such labelled hides are admitted to the States duty free as home-raised products. The transatlantic trade in wet hides, however, is not so great as it was some years ago.

Although eighteen hundred is the record of beasts slaughtered in a single day at the Woodside Lairage, the usual number falls much short of this. No doubt, the average weekly number of American cattle killed and dressed at the two lairages on Liverpool's vast Dock estate lies between 6500 and 7000, which gives a total of over 200,000 for the year.

Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Salisbury, when he becomes apprised of young Arthur's death, the line, 'The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house.' However aptly such an adjective as uncleanly might apply to the slaughter-houses of Shakespeare's time, it is by no means applicable to those under discussion. Cleanliness is insisted upon, and secured. Nothing is wasted. Those portions of the beast that usually come under the term offal are all of them carefully marketed. Nothing is lost. To say what becomes of them, however, is a very delicate matter. The fatty products undergo an initial clarification process by being steeped in brine. They are then, after further preparation, used in the manufacture of margarine and kindred apologies for butter. The bulk of the fatty matter so used is exported to the Continent, whence much of it is sent back to England as oleo-margarine. It need not be said that this fatty matter is perfectly clean and wholesome; and if the oleo-margarine of which it forms part is sold as such, and not as butter, there can be no reasonable objection to the commodity as an aid in domestic cookery.

Such are the more salient features of Liverpool's share in the imported live-meat trade, a trade which has developed with phenomenal rapidity. In addition to the enormous number of live cattle imported into the country, there must be considered the dead-meat which is

brought also. It is only by summing the two that we can form any idea of the extent to which we are dependent upon lands outside our own island cluster to supply us with the most elementary necessities of daily life.

MISS HELEN.

By VIVIAN BROOKE.

ROWDY! 'Tis no word for it—too genteel by half. We were as wicked a set, at our diggin's, as New South Wales could show—no slight thing. If the world's kettle had been set on the boil, we'd have come to the top as prime scum—truth, and no lie, mate. But amongst us was a man dubbed 'the Squire,' because, though he fared like the rest of us, toiled, lived, and dressed just as we did, yet there was that in him which stamped him as of quite a different breed. Swells out of luck are to be found by the bushel in Australia; still, I never came upon *his* double before or since. Rumour went that he was a Baronet at home in England, but had been forced to cut and run; so he tried New South Wales and the gold diggin's, bent on succeeding.

I found him at Green Valley Creek when I reached it; we worked not far off each other. I can't say I liked him, though he was wonderfully quiet and civil spoken, but cold as ice, and hard as nails; a chap who was never tired, and who never gave in, but plodded on and on towards his own end, whatever that might be. But silent as he was, and selfish, he opened out a bit to me, pra'ps because, though I didn't set up either for a swell or a saint, I wasn't quite so bad as the worst in Green Valley Creek. I had been respectably brought up, the son of a small farmer in Kent; but I didn't go in for respectability myself; it never agreed with me; so I was sent adrift at last with fifty pounds in my pocket, and the world before me. There was a fresh stampede towards Australia at the time, and I joined the general rush and scramble; and, as I say, when I had settled down at my claim, 'the Squire' and I scraped up a sort of friendship.

He did not live alone; his daughter was with him, though how and when she reached him none knew; she *had* reached him, and bore her strange life as best she might. They dwelt in a small shanty in the midst of many pines, a poor rough place, far apart from the other huts; a queer frame for such a stately picture of a woman—a lady! with the same superior bearing visible in her father. I'd walked that way with 'the Squire' once, and she ran out to meet him. The sight of her struck me all of a heap, so unexpected in the lonely spot, where there was no other company than the bright-winged birds, no other sound than the stir of the windy trees. She was tall, the colour of wild roses in her cheeks, Heaven's blue in her eyes. Her dress, dark and close fitting, had none of the flashy ornaments that women such as *we* take up with cram on; her hair, coiled smooth about her head, shone like black satin.

'This is one of my—chums, my dear,' said 'the Squire' with his soft voice and his hard smile.

Since then, I had hung about the log-house

often, labour ended. I fetched water, got in sticks, cleaned boots, or did such odd jobs which were not fit for her, and said no word; but she found me out in a brace of shakes, and grew used to and was thankful for such help as I could give, knowing that I meant no harm, though I startled her at first—a great Orson of a chap in my rough gear.

One evening I came on her watching in the gloaming. How eerie it was there underneath the trees; the wind soughed through the branches, bringing a dash of rain; a deluge was in the black clouds sweeping across the sky.

'I am anxious about my father,' she said, looking like a tall white lily that somehow had been shoved into the wrong pot, and touching my big earth-stained fingers with her fine slim hand. 'I am always anxious about him; though, since knowing you, I have not felt so absolutely distressed, for I am glad to recollect that you are within his call. You would stand between him and harm, I think.'

'Why, yes, miss; make your mind easy on that score; 'twould be done with a will.—But what harm is like to come, that you need hurry?'

'Oh, but, Mr Straightways, it is such a hard, dreadful life for him.'

'And for you, miss!'

'Ah, but I will not think of myself; that would never do,' she answered quickly; and going indoors, she began to tidy the scrap of a room, thus trying to rout her terrors.

'Ned!' she cried, stopping suddenly (her father always called me so), 'I had such a curious dream last night. I dreamed that I went down into the little valley beyond the wood, and there I saw my father lying on the grass sound asleep—so sound that I could not wake him; whilst the clusters of wild-flowers sprang up so high that they hid him, and I heard the pines in the distance chanting a solemn kind of litany. I was crying when I woke.'

'You are too much alone, miss, and grow nervous.'

'Perhaps. And then—I am troubled about his journey to Goulburn to-morrow, and his taking so much value with him.'

Goulburn, as I suppose everybody knows, is the chief place in the southern gold-mining district; we all went there at times to get our gains weighed, or changed, or banked.

'My father has been very fortunate lately, has he not?' she asked.

'He has had some good finds, miss; and to-day he got hold of two jolly big nuggets.'

'I am glad. Will he bring them home this evening?—What's that?' and she sprang to the door, flinging it wide open, the shine of the lamp behind her. 'Dearest father!' she cried, 'is it you?' But she broke off, alarm in her voice: 'Ned! Ned!' for no father was there, but two of the worst of our lot—scamps for whom hemp was growing; the one a blackguard sailor; the other, a smartish, slimy chap, thin, dark, lying. His name was Phil Dawlish.

I remembered now, as I saw him by the flash of the light, that he, as well as I, had been near when 'the Squire' held up the two great nuggets; and it struck me—I'm quick at conclusions—that both scoundrels had not intended to come

up to the house, but were just lurking round—What for?

Miss Helen—I only knew her by her Christian name then—faced them steadily, though she had called me to her, and asked what they wanted.

'Why, nothin' in special, miss,' stammered Dawlish, lifting his ragged straw hat with swell-mob politeness, and a leer which made me tingle to kick him; 'on'y, is the old Boss at home? I—I mean your Pa, miss,' he translated.

'No,' she replied, holding her head high, to show she was not frightened; but I, being close to her, could hear her heart thudding like a hammer, whilst the blood flamed to her brows under the foul gaze roving over her. 'Why do you ask?'

'Just this, mum. Will you be so good as tell him that me and my pal's off to Hulton's Ranch for a short spell, and if he'd like to tramp over—why, 'tis a mighty 'andsome part o' the country, and he'd be welcome, that's all.'

'You must be in a hurry to go,' I said, putting in my oar, 'if you're trudging twenty mile for pleasure such a night as this.'

'Oh, we didn't know as *you* was in charge here,' with a british laugh; 'but the walk is our lookout; the lady can deliver a civil message, I hope!'

'I will give it,' interposed Miss Helen, 'as soon as my father comes in.'

'Much obleeged, miss; then theer's nothin' more to add; so we'll toddle.—Good-night, miss,' and he flourished his hat again.

She shut the door upon them, drawing a stout bar across it. 'Are those the men *he* works with?' she cried, flinging up her hands.—'Heaven help us!'

I tried to turn the subject, stirring the fire into a blaze, and pretending to do a lot of things, for I didn't care to leave her. 'Twas my belief the two blackguards were still hanging about. As for their invitation to 'the Squire,' it was but a lie invented on the moment.

I was casting round for another job, when she stayed me by asking if I would go to meet her father.

'But you'—

'Nay; I do not mind. The little house is secure. Why,' with a wistful smile, 'I am always alone from daybreak until dark.'

I knew it was the fact; so, bidding her open to none until she heard me or 'the Squire' whistle, I started on my errand.

Not very far had I to go, for I met him in that same little ravine of which his daughter had dreamed; it skirted the pine-wood. His pick was over his shoulder, his right hand in his pocket—feeling the nuggets, perhaps. He was singing a song in some foreign lingo, Italian or Spanish. He looked more content than I had seen him—more at rest, nodding to me in his patronising fashion. After a few stray words, I related what had happened, advising him to be on his guard.

'Thanks, I will,' he replied, haughtily amused at the scamps asking *him* to pay a visit in their company. 'But I've a secret to tell you, Ned,' he added. 'I have done with Green Valley Creek, and shaken off its crew. Luck has favoured me beyond my hopes; I can afford to turn my back upon it. I shall take my daughter

—she does not know it yet—with me to Goulburn to-morrow, where we shall remain for a short time, then go on to Melbourne; I have thoughts of settling there.'

As he spoke, the little tie of comradeship between us shattered: in a moment we were sundered as the Poles, so quietly he brushed it away.

'If you like to step round early in the morning and see us off, you can.—Why, my good fellow, you look quite down. Well, it is kind to be sorry to lose me. We shall meet the wagons at the end of the wood. If those scoundrels intend to dog my steps—I agree with you their trip to Hulton's is only a ruse—I should find your company useful; also, you could help to carry our few belongings. I paid up my rent to Johnson at the tavern last night; perhaps you'd kindly give him the shanty key?—Why, Straightways,' with laughing surprise, 'has my news struck you dumb?'

I felt as if it had, as if I were shot through and through; the earth swayed under my feet. He was condescendingly gratified at my troubled state, taking it all to himself; he was just the man to do it.

'You were always an honest fellow, Ned!—a trusty creature! Be sure that you come to-morrow; my daughter will like to shake hands with you before she leaves;' and he went on gaily through the rich, thick grass.

No rest was mine that night; evil was in the air. So, as I could not sleep, I got up and went out. Not being a fool—I knew I must keep my misery to myself; but my life was empty! empty! It held a vacant place that coul' never be filled—never again! never again! You see, I was hard hit, mate, like the donkeys. I stamped and stormed at myself for a mooning idiot. What was Miss Helen to me? What could she ever have been to me?—a lumbering, vagabond chap, not worthy to kiss the dust she trod on.

But I must go back and watch the house that covered her for this last night, so I returned to the ravine. In it were many little dells swarming with the wild-flowers of the grand Australian spring. Now, in one of these same dells what do you think I saw?—a dead man's face. Yes, I knew at once that he was dead; but so easily 'the Squire' rested on the wet moss, that the song I had heard him singing might still have been upon his lips. Raising his head, I found a blow aimed from behind had killed him. He had dropped and died at once. His pockets, turned lining outward, were empty. Snatching up his fallen pick, I tore on to the log-house, knowing well whom I should find there—my long sharp knife was in my belt. I raced round to the back—the little kitchen door was undone; the fiends in possession had small fear of interruption. They were in 'the Squire's' bedroom, making free with some whisky which he had kept in a cupboard. Gold was there also, as I knew. By their shouts, I fancied they had come upon it. But I let them be. Where was Miss Helen?

I found her in the sitting-room, tied in her chair, her lips bleeding over her white teeth; the cursed hounds had struck her. 'There are three of them,' she whispered; 'those two who came, and another man. They watched for my father,

and murdered him—they told me so.—Hark! they are coming. Ned, they have pistols, and will shoot you where you stand. Go away this instant—only—kill me first;’ and she lifted her white pillar of a throat.

‘Now, my beauty,’ roared a drunken voice through the thin partition, ‘we’re bringin’ you a cup o’ whisky to drink our ‘ealths in. Ain’t you longin’ for us to make love to ye? We’ll stow away the rhino first, and *then*—you shall have your turn.’

‘Be quiet,’ I whispered back to her, hacking at the cords with my knife; and in a few seconds I had her out of the chair, and we dashed out of the house together. Seizing her hand to prevent her from falling, I guided her as fast as possible from the crew who were now following after us with curses and howls. Fortunately the demons were too drunk to run very fast. A couple of bullets whizzed by us, striking the tree-stems instead of our heads. In our desperate haste, we stumbled and fell more than once over spreading roots, but were up again in a moment.

On and on and on until the last tree was at our backs. Then we made for a lane which led to Johnson’s tavern, leaving the yells faint in the distance; there we stopped, and there she told her tale.

News spreads quickly at the diggin’s, and Judge Lynch is for immediate action. Before noon, the stolen gold—including the two big nuggets—had been recovered, and a couple of figures dangled from an oak by the wayside; whilst the third villain, not guilty of bloodshed, shed plenty of his own beneath avenging blows. We had a habit of settling matters speedily at Green Valley Creek.

As soon as it was possible, Miss Helen started for Melbourne, whence she was to set sail for England, where she would join her mother’s relatives—very heavy swells indeed, I believe. And I followed her in secret every inch of the way, though she knew it not until I stood by her on the deck of the steamer, after I had helped to stow her boxes safely in the hold. Then I blurted out that I hoped she ‘would not be offended at my coming, but’—And then I shut up.

‘Ned!’ she cried, ‘brave Ned! dear, kind, good Ned! There are debts which can never be repaid, and I am your debtor always—always, Ned!’ and holding out her hands to me, she bowed her lovely head upon my big brown fists and sobbed.

‘Don’t you be a confounded noodle at the last, Straightways,’ I said to myself *of myself*; ‘you’ve pulled the reins in fairly well up to the present; pull tight, my man, pull tight;’ and I did.

‘You are very welcome, Miss Helen’—I spoke with a quiet voice. ‘I wish—I wish—I could have been a gentleman for just a little while, so that I might have served you better.’

‘A gentleman!’ she cried, lifting her face, and looking full at me, and then she raised these hard fists of mine to her soft lips and kissed them. Yes, she kissed them—and I!—how was I to help it?—the touch of those soft lips broke me down smash. Away went all my self-control, as if the winds had blown it, and up from my heart, like a pent stream bursting its bounds, rushed the strong surge of love and adoration,

which—having broken loose at last—wouldn’t be driven back. I can’t remember clearly what I said, though I’ve tried—often; the whirl and tempest within me were too much. I didn’t *plead* with her; no, no—I knew better than that, even then in the midst o’ my madness. I didn’t dare even to touch her with one of my rough fingers, but I think I made her understand somehow that my heart and my life had gone out to her for evermore. Then I stopped, sudden, my chest heaving, my voice choking, my sight blinded by a mist that didn’t come from the sea. I stopped because of the great start of surprise that shook her from head to heel, and because of the red colour flooding up to the roots of her hair. Yet she was not angry—nor offended. She put out her little hands to me again, meaning—I knew it—both to silence and to comfort me. She did not speak—for what could she have said?—what could any stately lady such as she have said?—besides, the steamer’s engines were puffing, and time was up. She laid her head down on my arm a moment, and then left me with a rain of pitying tears.

When the vessel had passed completely out of sight, and its long smoke-line had died out from the sky, I hurried back to Green Valley Creek, and took up my work again—hard work is the best friend life has for us, sometimes.

But I have never forgotten Miss Helen—I never shall forget her; and I’ve trudged to the old spot often and stood before the empty house. And when the sun flamed down behind the pines, and the shadows crept longer and longer across the grass, I’ve had a fancy that I still could see her at the open door—watching for her father.

That’s my story, old chappie; we’ve each our own, of one sort or another.—Fill up your glass, and let’s have a pipe.

THE LITTLE FEET.

A MOTHER’S VILLANELLE.

Across the lonely chamber floor,
And down the passage, through the hall,
The little feet resound no more!

There cometh through the open door
No merry voice, no laughing call
Across the lonely chamber floor;

But where the sunlight flashes o’er
Gray tapestry and pictured wall,
The little feet resound no more!

Perchance upon a distant shore
They wander now—no more to fall
Across the lonely chamber floor.

Why comes the summer to restore
Bright hollyhocks and lilies tall?—
The little feet resound no more!

Alas for Hope’s deceptive lore!
Her words are desolation all;
Across the lonely chamber floor
The little feet resound no more!

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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WHY BANKS FAIL.

THE recent series of banking failures in Australia is beyond doubt one of the most grievous financial calamities on record, and a severe blow to the prospects of the great colonies affected by it. In the course of a few months we have seen more than a dozen banks—amongst them some of the leading financial institutions in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland—obliged to suspend payments; banks possessing an aggregate of over eight million pounds of paid-up capital, and owing to the public in the colonies and at home about seventy million pounds in deposits. This is a disaster as to the magnitude of which there can be no question, and the widespread consequences of which must be felt for a long time to come. We may hope, however, that in the end the losses involved may be much less than would appear to be threatened by the wholesale nature of the breakdown. If time be granted, reconstruction or, if necessary, liquidation may prove that many if not most of these banks have twenty shillings in the pound, and something over, for all their liabilities; but this is for the future to show. In the meantime it would be a pity if the calamity were taken to be a mysterious dispensation, instead of an object-lesson as easily grasped as it is instructive.

Of all great trades, banking is one of the simplest in the principles that regulate it. The intricacy and multiplicity of detail involved in the administration of a large bank in modern times does not at all affect the great rules which, if kept in mind, will ensure safety. Prudence and common-sense, as well as shrewdness, judgment, and decision, may be said to sum up the whole mystery of bank-management; a high degree of skill is not always demanded, whilst a bold and enterprising spirit may be out of place. Yet our own time has furnished many instances in which the most ordinary precautions have been neglected, and well-understood conditions of security have been ignored, with the most ruinous results. No species of commercial failure may be avoided

with more certainty; nor is there any that is fraught with more serious trouble to the community at large. This is a good reason for studying the lessons of such events, and reiterating the plain principles which should suffice to obviate them.

The development of the crisis in Australia has been accompanied by a panic of the worst kind, carried to a degree of madness unusual even at such periods, and the whole brunt of it has fallen upon the banks. It may therefore appear sufficient to some to affirm that these wholesale suspensions are in no way due to the wise or unwise policy followed, inasmuch as no bank could stand under such a violent and unforeseen attack. Although there is not only plausibility but a certain amount of truth in this plea, it is by no means the whole truth. For we have to inquire, first of all, how the crisis originated, and whether the banks themselves have had any share in bringing it about. In our own country we have only too good reason to understand what may be called the natural history of a commercial crisis. During the last seventy years, financial convulsions have recurred with great frequency, and the course of events has on each occasion been almost invariably the same. There comes, first of all, a period of unwonted prosperity, during which prices rise, trade expands, savings accumulate, and the supply of floating capital available for investment is more than usually plentiful. The cheapness or the abundance of money seeking fresh outlets paves the way to new enterprises and projects. An investing or speculative mania ensues, by which the abundant supply of available capital is speedily exhausted and turned into a scarcity. When this point is reached, reaction is at hand; prices fall, credit collapses, and all that has been unsound and factitious in the previous inflation is disclosed. Before this process has gone very far, it becomes intensified by alarm or panic, assuming the shape of an overwhelming demand for actual cash, the possession of which is rendered an imperative necessity, both for merchants who have obliga-

tions constantly falling due, and for bankers who owe to their depositors large sums that are liable to be asked for, in coin or some form of legal tender, at any moment. This is the final stage of the crisis, attended by the bankruptcy and ruin of those who have not in due time made ample provision against its dangers.

Commercial crises may sometimes pass without any considerable banking failures; but whenever they arrive, it may be taken for granted that many banks suffer severely, and that not a few of them have contributed to the inflation of business by the undue facilities which they have afforded in the time of excitement. Banks can do much both to check and to foster the mania. By refusing to extend credit unduly, or to advance on shares of speculative concerns, they can effectually discourage over-trading and gambling; on the other hand, should they catch the fever themselves, they may enlarge the mischief indefinitely. In countries like our own, where the credit system is highly developed, banks are the reservoirs in which the floating capital of the country is stored, and it is from them the supply must be drawn for any great extension of trade, whether legitimate or otherwise.

One risk which besets all trades is peculiarly dangerous to banking—the risk arising from eager competition. A community may have too many banks, for a number in excess of real wants must lead to the too ready acceptance of questionable business. It is not only possible for banks to foster over-trading in others; sometimes they themselves sail much too near the wind, and crowd on every inch of canvas. In the stress of competition, moreover, it is too frequently forgotten that the banks have common interests, which can only be properly safeguarded by mutual agreement and combination. Australia is decidedly over-banked. Not only is the number of banks excessive, but the deposits entrusted to their keeping at high rates of interest appear to be larger than can as yet be profitably employed in the development of legitimate enterprise. 'Raw haste, half-sister to delay,' has been the characteristic of trade in the Australasian colonies for some years past, and we fear it is not too much to say that it has appeared also in the financial policy of the colonial Governments. The latter have not entirely escaped the discredit involved in recent events. During the last ten years, particularly in the amount of their borrowings for public works and other objects, they have outrun even the rapid growth of colonial resources, and thereby inflicted damage, which it may be confidently hoped is merely temporary, upon their own credit.

The special feature of the Australian trouble has yet to be mentioned. The speculative mania, the collapse of which we are now witnessing, spent its chief energy upon landed property. It was a 'land-boom'; real estate in its various forms was the security upon which the funds of the banks were largely advanced, and it is that in which they are now locked up. This, of course, is against all the recognised rules of sound banking. It may be considered an accepted axiom that real estate is not a proper 'banking

security,' because not readily convertible into cash, and that no bank can safely advance upon it except to a most limited and carefully guarded extent. The National Banks in the United States, for example, are actually forbidden by law to lend on real property, the only case in which they are permitted to deal with it being where they receive it as collateral security for the repayment of a bad or doubtful debt. All these considerations were probably familiar enough to the directors of the colonial banks, but it has long been their practice to advance on mortgages of all descriptions. They held great masses of deposits at interest, and if they were to earn a dividend, had to find profitable employment for the superabundant means which were constantly reaching their hands—a task the difficulty of which was much aggravated in recent years by the depression which narrowed the field of legitimate banking business. The obvious remedy was, instead of extending their sphere of operations, to reduce their rates of interest on deposits to such a point as would attract no more than could be profitably and legitimately used, and also to provide against the deposits held on 'demand' or at short dates an ample provision of ready cash and securities of the most 'liquid' description.

There is another cause of peril to the solvency of banks which has played a fatal part in most of the great bank failures that have taken place in our own country within living memory—namely, the absorption of an undue proportion of a bank's resources by a few overgrown accounts. The temptation of large accounts, easy to manipulate, but disproportioned to the means of the bank, has over and over again been the immediate cause of insolvency, and in too many instances has led to the falsification of balance sheets and to other forms of fraud. We have had painful occasion recently, in the deplorable case of the Liberator Building Society, to observe that it is not only banks that are liable to fall into this dangerous snare. The story of the collapse of the Western Bank of Scotland in 1857 is a typical example; four great firms alone, at the time of their insolvency, owing the bank nearly two million pounds, although the whole capital of the latter was only a million and a half. In the case of the Northumberland and Durham District Bank, which also failed in 1857, and which had a capital of about six hundred thousand pounds, there was one company amongst its debtors, the Derwent Iron Company, which owed the bank £947,000—a circumstance which found a somewhat sinister explanation in the fact that the managing director, who was the moving spirit of the whole bank, was also largely interested in the Derwent Iron Company. It was the same kind of error, aggravated by fraudulent and criminal dealing, that appeared in the ruinous breakdown of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878. So well understood has this risk of bank administration become, that in the United States it is guarded against by a statute which prohibits a bank from lending to any one individual, corporation, or firm an amount exceeding a tenth of the bank's paid-up capital. Whether the affairs of any of the Australian banks have been complicated by mismanagement of this kind has not yet been shown, but it will be a matter both for surprise

and congratulation if they have entirely escaped it.

In one respect the calamity which has just befallen the colonial banks is a striking and most necessary lesson to bankers everywhere, for it puts in a very clear light the obvious principle that where great deposit liabilities exist, the first condition of safety is the provision of a proportionate cash reserve, usually estimated at one-third of the liabilities. To avoid the expense of such a reserve, and to employ resources closely, will no doubt swell the dividends of a bank; but at the same time such a policy endangers the stability of the entire fabric. And this is especially a word of caution to British bankers, for the disproportion between their deposit liabilities and their cash reserve is enormous, and has vastly increased during the last quarter of a century. In banking administration, the first and last consideration should be *safety*. 'Slow and sure' may be a disagreeable motto in our impatient haste to be rich; but it is the only trustworthy counsel in building up a great banking business that is meant to be solid and lasting.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.—'THE PLAY'S THE THING!'

ISABEL speedily provided herself with a constant chaperon, by having one of her Aged to stay with her week by week. But the Aged did not give her so much countenance as her father's presence had given her to invite Ainsworth to tête-à-tête visits. Yet, as it happened, that mattered little; for Ainsworth was sitting very close to his desk to manufacture his play—his stake for success—and was little inclined to tear himself from it even to see and to speak to her who was the remote hope of his heart.

Ainsworth had been for months hard at work on the play. Soon after the departure of 'the chief,' Alexander joined him as an active coadjutor, while he lodged in the same house, in the second-floor back. He did not help to construct the drama or to write it, but he listened with flattering attention to the reading of scenes, and went forth into the byways of journalism and talked about them; and his acquaintance was, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, 'extensive and peculiar.' There was not a newspaper office, big or little, between Charing Cross and Ludgate Hill but he was on some kind of speaking terms with; he knew the men who wrote the paragraphs everywhere about everything; and he exchanged salutations with the frequenters of all the bars of the Strand and Fleet Street. So it came about that such greetings and expositions as these often passed when he showed himself in one of his favourite haunts.

'Well, Alexander, how goes the play?'

'The play! What play?' said Alexander, affecting absence of mind.

'Your friend Ainsworth's play! the masterpiece!'

'The play of Mr Ainsworth,' said Alexander portentously, 'is not to be lightly spoken of. It goes exceedingly well; and it will take the wind

out of the sails of one or two writers who believe themselves dramatists. The Great Panjandrum is, I believe, smelling after it; but he buys a play only to put it in a chest to grow mouldy and out of date. Mr Ainsworth and I understand business better than have dealings with the Panjandrum.'

It was not unlikely that Alexander himself was responsible for one or two of the paragraphs which appeared, for Ainsworth had turned him on to assist him in 'doing' the theatres, and had found that, with a little editing, his stuff passed as tolerable work-a-day journalism; and at the same time he had found him occupation as a purveyor of gossip on one or two journals—notably on that Lancashire journal whose staff he had once himself adorned. Certain (not all) of the paragraphs caught Ainsworth's eye, and he was very wroth.

'This must be from your gossip, Alexander!' he said. 'And I wanted the whole thing kept secret.'

'But, Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'the way to get your play forward is, first, to get it talked about. I flatter myself I have worked that very well. I am proud of the result.'

'I am not!' said Ainsworth. 'It may seem ungrateful in me, Alexander; but I am not. And I beg of you that you will henceforward say nothing at all about it; or, if you must say something, since you have begun, say something that will put people off the scent. Understand, please, my dear fellow, that I want the time and the place of its production—if it ever is produced—and its author's name kept secret. Don't be offended with me; but I have my good reasons.'

'My dear Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'I know them. You have not, if I may say so, ~~the~~ your flame under a bushel.' And he shook with laughter at his joke.

'What do you mean?' said Ainsworth, scarce knowing whether to be angry or ashamed.

'My dear Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'you know what I mean very well. I do not wonder at it. I only wonder that, after seeing her and knowing her, any man could take the smallest degree of interest in another woman. . . . What says Tennyson? "A daughter of the gods! divinely tall, and most divinely fair!" Even the miserable individual before you is subject to her fascination.—But do not be alarmed, my dear Ainsworth. I have no pretension to have engaged anything but her most friendly regard. I pay my homage from afar off, and beat upon my breast. I am not worthy of her; indeed, I am by no means certain that you are—or that any man is.'

'I thank you for that last clause, Alexander,' said Ainsworth: 'it soothes my vanity.'

'And, let me take the liberty of telling you, Ainsworth,' said Alexander, brimming over with his subject, 'that you have an immense amount of absurd vanity.—I venture to think,' he continued, with heavy emphasis, 'that I know a good deal of women; and I mean and I say that you do not understand Miss Raynor. You are vain enough to wish to get to her level of wealth by your play; and you do not understand that she is the kind of woman that thinks nothing of fortune!—you do not understand it, Ains-

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worth!—that if she were fond of a man she would follow him to the end of the world, though he had not a penny to bless himself with, and she would pour out all she had upon him with generous profusion.'

'I do not understand that?' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'I understand that only too well! That is why I stick to my play and hold my tongue; because I would not take advantage of her generosity. I will not be thought by any one to be a fortune-hunter. I shall go through with the play.'

'Very well,' said Alexander. 'I knew you were an obstinate mule. Lancastrian and Scotch make a bad cross,' said he meditatively.

There was one man of consequence who was moved by the paragraphs as to the new play. The manager of the Variety Theatre—himself an actor—was in desperate plight. For some time he had touched nothing that had paid him; he had lost faith in the established playwrights, and publicly sneered at them, and he had a great mind to try a bold—it seemed to his theatrical acquaintance a reckless—experiment: to produce a new play by a new writer! He had heard of this young man, Ainsworth, and he knew he was generally thought well of as a dramatic critic; he was aware—he had frequently proved it by example—that it was seldom a critic of the drama could write a play, but yet it was not conclusively proved that a critic could not; so one day he sat down in his room at the theatre and scribbled a note to Ainsworth:

'DEAR SIR—I have seen it mentioned that you are writing a play. You are acquainted with the requirements of this theatre. If you think your play is at all likely to suit my requirements, send it to me (type-written) when it is finished and I will read it.'

'Hooray!' cried Ainsworth when he read the note. 'Of course he promises nothing, and I know the chief requirement of his theatre is that a play should contain a part for him.—I think mine contains that, Alexander; and after all, it is an immense deal to get a spontaneous offer even to read it!'

'And yet,' said Alexander triumphantly, 'you entertained the opinion that my gossip was nothing but pernicious!'

CHAPTER XXIX.—RUMOURS OF EVIL.

It happened that on a certain evening at this time—while the two aspirants to her hand were both striving their utmost, in their own way and without her knowledge, to win her worthily—it happened that Isabel was invited to a political dinner at her uncle's. The dinner was going to be, her aunt told her, a very important affair—something in which the fate of parties or of ministries was involved; for the Suffields were now very important people. They were going on from strength to strength in the way determined by Mrs Suffield.

The dinner-party was large, so that the conversation between any pair was little likely to be attended to and taken up by the whole table: there was something of the privacy of a crowd about it. Lord Clitheroe had taken Isabel down to dinner, and presently—they had a frank and

friendly regard for each other—he began to speak of a matter that arrested her attention.

'It is lucky,' said he, 'that I was asked to take you down, Miss Raynor, for I wanted very much to talk to you; and it will be so much easier to talk now than afterwards, when people are dodging about, and in and out of the drawing-rooms. Don't, please, look startled or indignant with anything I may say: we don't want to attract notice or inquiry.'

'It should be something very interesting and piquant that you have to say,' observed Isabel, 'judging from your introduction.'

'It is more than interesting,' said he seriously: 'it is of the greatest consequence. Do you ever, may I ask, hear from your cousin George?'

'No,' answered Isabel with a blush, 'I don't.'

'Well,' continued Clitheroe, 'I have learned, quite in a private way, that he is concerned in very risky cotton speculations.'

'I know nothing about such things, of course,' said Isabel; 'but do you think that is likely to be true?'

'I know it is true,' answered he. 'The fact is, between ourselves, I have seen evidence of it with my own eyes. You know—or you may not know—that I am partner in the Lancashire bank which takes charge of the Suffield money, and I have seen large cheques and acceptances which leave no doubt that he is engaged in risky cotton speculation with one or two very doubtful foreigners. You will understand I am telling you this quite in confidence. Perhaps all the danger of it does not strike you; but he has no business to be engaged in speculation at all, and that particular kind of speculation is likely to be most ruinous, especially to a man who cannot give all his attention to it. It is even possible—if he goes on—that he may in a short time ruin his proper business and ruin his father along with it.'

Isabel looked at him shrewdly, and he blushed under her look.

'Do not, please, misunderstand me,' said he. 'I am not anxious on my own account. I would marry Phemy whatever happened—though I have no doubt I would have trouble with my people. I am anxious on George's account, whom I like—he is a very good fellow, though a little too strongly convinced of the accuracy of his own judgment—and on Mr Suffield's account, who is the best man in the world. I would speak to George myself about it, except that I am afraid of being misunderstood; and of course it would not be fair to speak to Mr Suffield. That's why I have spoken in confidence to you.'

'You think I should speak to him, or write to him about it?'

'I know,' said Clitheroe, 'he thinks more of your opinion than of that of any one else in the world.'

Isabel did not answer. She went home very soon, and entered her drawing-room.

'Don't go to bed just yet,' she said to the maid who had admitted her and who turned up the light; 'I should like you to run to the pillar-post with a letter in a few minutes. You won't mind, will you?'

She sat down at once to her writing-table to compose a letter to George. She found it a more difficult task than she had anticipated: to avoid appearing too warmly interested in him, and yet

be consily, affectionate, and frank; to express the fear that he was embarked in dangerous speculations, and yet not stir in him resentment and suspicion. She accomplished it, however, with tolerable satisfaction, and sent it to the post by her maid. But still she sat at her writing-table—sat with her chin in her hand, and the lace of her sleeve falling away, like foam of the sea, from her white, rounded arm. She was thinking closely, thinking of that matter which had occupied her ever since Lord Clitheroe had said that George's present course might end in her uncle's ruin. It had come on her at once like an inspiration—with the joy as well as the suddenness of an inspiration—that if that should happen, there was one clear thing for her to do. She would transfer to them the fortune which Uncle Harry had left her, and she herself would turn to again and earn a living for herself and her father; her Aged need not suffer, for there were many friends ready to help her to maintain them as they were. What should she do?—return to school-teaching? She was not fond of teaching. Alan Ainsworth had once told her she ought to be a novelist. Who knew? Perhaps she might become a novelist, or, at any rate, a writer of some sort. From that she fell to thinking of Ainsworth, and then of George; and so she went to bed.

Next day there came in a singular fashion a suggestive indication that Lord Clitheroe's suspicions of George's speculation were not astray, and that even George's father was somewhat troubled in his mind concerning his son.

A question had arisen respecting our administration of a certain part of India; and there was expected a debate in the House of Commons on Indian affairs. Suffield was to have spoken, but at the last moment failed to rise, and his friends were disposed to chaff him for his backwardness.

'To tell you the absolute truth, my lad,' said Suffield to Lord Clitheroe, as they walked out to their carriage, he leaning on Clitheroe's arm, while Isabel walked immediately in front of them, and so overheard his words: 'I went into the smoking-room for a whiff, and there was a man—one of the Liverpool members—saying that there are still strong suspicions down there that some person is trying on a "corner" in cotton, a foreign creature called Gorgonio—do you know him?'

'I? No!' answered Clitheroe.

'I thought you gave a start when I named him. George knows him, though—we met him in the summer in Douglas—and I wondered, if there is a "corner" likely to be on and he knows of it, why he hasn't told me. And if he doesn't know, he ought to know, to lay in enough cotton in time; for about th' end of th' last "corner" prices went up, so that I couldn't afford to buy, and had to put the mills on half-time.'

'Why don't you write to George about it, Mr Suffield?' asked Clitheroe.

'Well, I did write to him a month or so ago, when that article of M'Fie's appeared. And his answer was pretty much "Stuff and nonsense!" I don't like to write again in a worrying way; because, you see, he's young, and if you want a young horse to go well, you mustn't *tear* at the reins. But that bothered me, and I couldn't think of my speech. It was like a bit of grit got

into the delicate machinery of my brain, and it wouldn't let my speech unwind. I think I'll go down and see George: that'll be best.'

To Isabel, who was present, that seemed evidence of far stronger quality than it really was that the ruin of her uncle was imminent. 'Poor uncle!' she said to herself. 'To lose all that himself and aunt worked so hard and for so many years to get together! Dear, dear uncle! Oh, how glad I am!—how I thank God!—that I am able to do something for you!'

She wrought upon herself such a vivid impression that the voluntary surrender of her wealth was near and actual, that, when she reached home, she sat down by her drawing-room fire and considered the details: her father must be removed from his present retreat—her heart sank a little—and she must give up her pleasant home. In short, as the details rose before her, the surrender, though sweet and ungrudged, was painful. Was that strange? She was a good, generous girl, but she was quite human; and she had enjoyed the advantages of wealth for so short a time, that its novelty and attractiveness had not worn off. It is easy to commend the simple joys of hard work and contented poverty; and the wealthy man or woman who has worn himself or herself out with the cares of this world and wearied his or her appetites with their indulgence, may think with longing of rest from care in a little cosy parlour with a supper of bread and cheese. It is even easy to endure poverty with cheerfulness when you have never known aught else. But when you have known hard, thankless work, and eaten of poverty till its grit has set your teeth on edge, and then have passed away from them both—why, then it is a very painful prospect to surrender leisure and wealth when you have but tasted how sweet they are—how 'good for food,' how 'pleasant to the eyes,' and how much 'to be desired to make one wise.'

She looked round the room in which she sat. She liked it: it was comfortable, luxurious, and rich; it pleased her eye and her artistic taste, and it satisfied her fancy. She had got it all together herself; there was not a thing around her that she had not taken pains to choose, to discover, and to acquire. Everything—even the cushion against which her back rested—had a little history of its own. Must she give all these little things up, which had become like outlying fringes, tassels, and ornaments of her life? And these curious ornaments of rare Indian and Chinese workmanship in gold and gems which belonged to Uncle Harry, and which now adorned her neck and arms—must they be surrendered?

Was it strange that the expectation of losing all these things should cause her a pang? Was it not, indeed, right that it should, and yet that she should not hesitate, even in thought, in her intention of surrendering them? She said to herself steadily, 'They must go!' not once did she murmur, 'Can I not keep them?' The passion of sacrifice was upon her, and its pain only made it the more worthy and pleasing. At the same time its pleasure was enhanced by the thought that if she were once stripped of her wealth, Alan Ainsworth would cease to hold aloof from her, as he had persistently done of late—he had even excused himself from attending her uncle's House of Commons function, though she

had herself asked him—and might come to her with the magic glow of love on his cheek, take her hand and say, 'I need you now!'

She went and sat down at her writing-table, and moved by this ferment of thought and feeling, took from a drawer that journal of her uncle's which was his last bequest, and in which she frequently read. She opened the book at random now and prepared to read. But she paused, with her finger in the place, and thought how strange are the turns of circumstance, how unaccountable that element of surprise in life which men call 'The Irony of Fate!' Why, for instance, should it have so fallen out, first, that Uncle Harry's wealth should have come to her, and then that she should have to give it up after a few months' possession?

Thinking thus, she happened to fling the board of the book back to open it again. The board thus flung aside showed something she had never noticed before: that upon its inner side was a flap or pocket. She thrust in thumb and finger, and, to her surprise, drew out a sheet of note-paper—a few sentences of a letter which Uncle Harry had begun and addressed to herself. She read all the sentences again and again, but these stuck to her memory: 'It would please me much, if you can see your way, that you should marry George, as he and his father desire. He is a worthy young man, but obstinate and over-confident, and there is no woman can help him and guide him better than you.'

Coming at that juncture, the words struck Isabel strangely and solemnly—almost like a message from the tomb.

OCEAN CURRENTS.

OCEAN Currents exercise a very important influence not only on climate but also on commerce. The seas join the nations they divide, and the sailing-ship navigator's principal aim when remote from the land is to proceed along that much-desired track where a fair wind and a favourable current will probably be experienced. Ancient mariners who shuddered at the stormy sea were in blissful ignorance of the continual interchange that is imperceptibly yet surely taking place between the ice-bearing waters of the inhospitable regions adjacent to either Pole and the warmer waters which sparkle beneath the life-giving rays of a vertical sun. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the compass needle was uncertain and the chronometer unknown, hardy pioneers, on an unknown sea stretching westward for many a weary league, were not slow to perceive the insidious circulation of those currents of old ocean which traverse the North Atlantic like rivers of varying breadth, depth, length, and velocity. Columbus described the equatorial drift from east to west, and hazarded a crude conjecture as to its origin. A light wrought-iron utensil had been discovered among the natives of Guadeloupe, and he inferred that perchance this ocean waif might be of European fashioning, and obtained from some abandoned ship which the westerly motion of the tropical sea-surface had brought in all her loneliness from the far-distant shores of the Iberian Peninsula. Washington Irving has appositely remarked that if Columbus had but

steered to the westward, his tiny caravel would have entered the relatively warm water of that storm-breeder the Gulf Stream, and thus have been gradually drifted to Florida, or even to the northward thereof. A Spanish Roman Catholic population, instead of a later arriving English Protestant one, would in that event have made a home in North America.

Since then, seeds from the West Indies, and portions of vessels wrecked on the west coast of Africa, are asserted to have found a final resting-place on the Norwegian coast after a devious drift around the North Atlantic. The United States Hydrographer, Commander Richardson Clover, United States Navy, recently received information from several sources that a floating island had been sighted at sea; and the track of this nautical novelty was clearly indicated on the North Atlantic Pilot Chart for last November. The British steamship *Blue Jacket*, Captain Freeman, on the 28th of July last year, when in 39° 42' N., 64° 20' W., passed a floating forest covering more than a quarter of an acre. This moving mass was visible for a distance of seven miles, and its topmost branches were not less than thirty feet above sea-level. It was sighted also from the Italian steamer *Letimbro* on the 8th of August, in 39° 26' N., 65° 0' W.; and again by Captain Burgess of the British steamship *Roman Prince*, on the 26th of August, in 41° 49' N., 57° 39' W.; and lastly, by Captain Morgan of the British steamer *Ebro*, in 45° 29' N., 42° 39' W.

Water covers about three-fourths of the earth's surface to an average depth of two or three miles, although only a comparatively insignificant fraction of this distance from the sea's surface to the bottom is affected by currents, which are almost solely due to the prevailing winds driving the uppermost layers of liquid before them. Nevertheless, the effects of evaporation, the difference of temperature and specific gravity, and our planet's rotation on its axis, must not be altogether ignored even though their influence be most minute. The wilful wind does not pass without friction over the water on which it rests, but impinges on the surface of the watery waste, and drives it onward as a drift-current. When land, or occasionally another current, is approached, the slowly moving surface-water is deflected along a line of least resistance, and a stream-current is brought into existence. Hence it follows that the configuration of a coast not infrequently determines the direction in which a stream-current shall proceed.

The movements of the sea's surface and the superincumbent air resemble each other in many particulars. Both are fluids subject to the action of gravity; both expand with heat and contract with cold. The warmer air and warmer water follow similar indirect courses from the equatorial regions towards the Poles, while at the same time cooler air and cooler water are proceeding from the polar regions in the direction of the equator. Neither the air nor the water, however, flows due north or due south; as the equatorial-seeking streams lag behind and deviate to the westward, while streams proceeding polewards increase their velocity and deviate to the eastward. The effect of the earth's deflecting force is made manifest in several other ways.

In the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, in

the torrid zones, a continuous movement of the surface-water takes place from east to west. The South Atlantic equatorial current divides into two at Cape St Roque, the north-east corner of Brazil, flows northwards, meets the waters impelled by the north-east trade-wind to the westward, enters the Caribbean Sea, passes round the Gulf of Mexico, and, as the Gulf Stream, follows the trend of the east coast of North America as far as Newfoundland, whence it travels right across the North Atlantic in an easterly direction. The Gulf Stream, however, does not wash the American coast. A cold current comes creeping southward from Ballin Bay, and hugs the land closely even as far south as the orange groves of Florida. Some deny that the Gulf Stream actually extends from the New World to the Old; but their contention seems merely a matter of nomenclature, and it is perhaps preferable to abide by the time-tried theory until more definite information comes to the front. As the Gulf Stream nears Europe, it widens and becomes fan-shaped. The upper edge tends towards Norway; the central portion moves onward to the English Channel and the Bay of Biscay; while the southern edge flows, partly along the coasts of Portugal and Africa even to the equator, partly to the south-westward, past the Canary Islands and the Cape Verdes, reaching in course of time that portion of the equatorial drift due to the north-east trade-wind, and thus completing the circuit of the North Atlantic in a direction similar to the hands of a watch.

The current setting on to the coast of Portugal and into the Bay of Biscay is more especially to be dreaded when strong westerly winds have blown for several days in succession, and many terrible shipwrecks have taken place in the vicinity under such conditions. Her Majesty's ship *Serpent* was totally lost near Cape Villano, Spain, on the 10th of November 1890, owing to this insidious set on to the land. All on board but three perished out of one hundred and seventy-six officers and men. Years ago, the Peninsular and Oriental Company gave definite instructions, compelling their commanders to give Cape Finisterre a wide berth by keeping well to the westward thereof; and the current is carefully laid down on every chart worthy of the name, yet several steamships of various lines have within the last two or three years met their fate on that coast while attempting to round the cape too closely in thick weather.

The Gulf Stream is essentially a warm-water current, and therefore of the greatest importance from a climatological point of view. It has a beneficial effect on the climate of our islands, and keeps open the harbours to the extreme north of Norway. Dundee whalers have reached the 74th parallel on the fourth meridian of east longitude; while at the same time less favoured ports of North America were closed by ice even as far south as the parallel of Bordeaux. Its course is marked out by a deep blue colour, and a well-defined ripple is plainly perceptible on the margin of the stream in fine weather. During the American Civil War, a blockade runner left Wilmington, North Carolina, one dirty night. Next morning a Federal cruiser caught sight of the law-breaker, and gave chase; but her captain providentially noticed the ripple, kept his ship

away into the favourable current, and gradually left his puzzled pursuer far astern.

Mr Everett Hayden, of the American Hydrographic Office, drew up a chart setting forth the wanderings of the schooner *W. L. White*, which was abandoned by her crew near Delaware Bay during the blizzard of the 13th of March 1888, and drifted ashore at Haskeir Island, Hebrides, on the 23d of January 1889. In this interval she traversed a distance of more than five thousand miles, and was reported by forty-five ships. The Gulf Stream brought her right across the Atlantic; and several similar instances might be quoted. Mr Paul Lange, of the Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association, when off the south of Iceland in July 1890, threw overboard a bottle containing a letter, which was returned to him some months later, having been picked up in a fjord of the Lofoden Islands. In six and a half months it had drifted eight hundred and ninety miles in a north-east direction. There is a rumour that a pair of oil-skin trousers picked up on the west coast of Greenland helped to determine Dr Nansen's route in his proposed Arctic expedition. This driftage is asserted to have come from the ill-fated *Jeannette*, abandoned in Behring Sea while under the command of the gullant De Long of the United States Navy, who lost his life with many of his officers and crew in an attempt to penetrate the icy fastnesses adjacent to the North Pole.

Between the equatorial current due to the north-east trade-wind and the similar current developed by the south-east trade-wind, there exists a complementary current setting from west to east. This unites with the current coming down the north-west coast of Africa, which is known as the Guinea Current. Captain A. Fry, in a lecture delivered at Liverpool some months since, gave an interesting example of this current, which indicates the importance to seafarers of an accurate knowledge of winds and currents. A captain took his ship to sea, intending to sail from one port on the west coast of Africa to another only nine miles distant. The land-breeze died away, but was not replaced by the expected sea-breeze. Down below the boundary-line of sea and sky receded the shore; and in a few hours great depth of water precluded any attempt at anchoring. She was swept along by the Guinea Current at the rate of five miles an hour, and after several days the land hove in sight near Badagry. Then Prince's Island was raised, and eventually Cape Lopez. She got the south-west monsoon; and proceeded along the equator, turning gradually to the northward and eastward, until the port was again reached from which she had sailed seven weeks previously. Owing to the adverse current, she actually traversed three thousand miles to no purpose.

In the South Atlantic, a current sets round the Cape of Good Hope in a westerly direction, gradually turns northward, and follows the west coast of Africa up to about the tenth parallel of south latitude, where it meets the Guinea Current proceeding in the opposite direction. The resulting body of water moves to the westward as the South Equatorial Current until the Brazilian coast is reached about Cape St Roque, where it divides into two portions.

One branch makes its way into the Caribbean Sea, the other moves down the east coast of South America; and after proceeding thus for some distance, sends off a stream to the eastward, forming in this way a complete whirl of waters, as in the North Atlantic, but in an opposite direction. The main current continues down the coast to Cape Horn, which it either goes round or mingles with the Antarctic current setting from Cape Horn to the Cape of Good Hope, which drifts huge masses of ice from the southern ice-barrier directly into the track of homeward-bound ships.

Last year, the icebergs in this part were both numerous and of exceptional magnitude. The first report was received from Captain E. H. Andrew, of the Aberdeen sailing-ship *Cromdale*, bound from Australia to London. On the 4th of April last year, a large iceberg was seen right ahead only just in time to clear it; and at daylight, an hour later, the whole horizon was found to be studded with enormous icebergs. The largest of them was one thousand feet high! The *Urania*, in about the same position, afterwards sailed one hundred and fifty miles along solid ice in which no opening could be perceived. Captain Hatfield of the *Gladys*, from Iquique to Hamburg, on the 4th of July, passed an ice island bearing traces of having at some time served as a refuge for a shipwrecked crew. A place of shelter appeared to have been formed in an icy cave, and five dead bodies of men lay near. This barque sailed for four successive days between icebergs, and fears for her safety precluded a closer search being made. No similarly prolific season for southern icebergs has been known since 1854.

An equatorial current about three thousand miles wide moves to the westward in the North Pacific. It forms two branches near Formosa; and one of them, called the Kuro Siwo, or Black Stream, keeps north-eastward until Japan is reached, and then proceeds due east for the coast of Oregon. Here it curves, follows the coast to the southward, eventually turns westward, and forms a South Equatorial Current like that of the Atlantic. In fact, the Kuro Siwo has many points of resemblance to the Gulf Stream. In the North Pacific, as in the North Atlantic, there is an equatorial counter-current about three hundred miles wide, setting east between the Northern and Southern Equatorial Currents. Attention was specially drawn to this fact by Captain J. McKirdy, R.N.R., who was wont to avail himself thereof, in order to shorten his eastern passage, while in command of a steamship in those waters. The warmer water of the Kuro Siwo penetrates the Arctic Ocean by way of Behring Strait. A cold south-seeking counter-current hugs the eastern shore of Asia after the manner of the Labrador Current, on the east coast of North America.

The circulation of the South Pacific follows the same laws as that of the South Atlantic. The water of high southern latitudes sweeps off the east up the west coast of South America some as north as Arica, where the configuration of the coast sends the stream westward. This herlonch Current is recognised by its low temperature of sixty degrees Fahrenheit in close apposition to the sea-surface temperatures of over

eighty degrees. Thence it proceeds westward, and apparently curves gradually south, south-east, east, north-east, and north, to complete the circulation, although the drift on the western side is not so marked as in the other oceans. Two good examples of the equatorial drift are afforded by ships left to their fate under its influence. The *Ada Iredale*, bound from Ardrossan to California, was abandoned about nineteen hundred miles east of the Marquesas, on the 15th of October 1876; and was picked up by the French cruiser *Seignelay*, on the 9th of June 1877, near Tahiti, after a westerly drift of nearly two thousand five hundred miles. South of Australia runs an easterly current, due to the prevalence of north-west and south-west winds.

North of the equator in the Indian Ocean there is not found any well-defined circulation of the sea surface-water, for the monsoons and fickle breezes produce currents of variable direction and strength. South of the equator, however, the whirl is somewhat similar to that of the South Atlantic, or the South Pacific. The south-east trade-wind drives the sea's surface to the westward in about 10° S.; until, near Madagascar, it trends southward. There it divides into an easterly branch, which closes the circuit by turning northward on the west coast of Australia until the equatorial current is reached; and a south-westerly branch well known to seamen as the Agulhas Current, a warm-water stream, in the vicinity of which great changes of sea-temperature are experienced and violent storms frequent.

In either hemisphere there is a marked tendency for interchange between cold polar waters and warmer equatorial waters. The discovery-ship *Fox* drifted eleven hundred and ninety-four miles down Baffin Bay in two hundred and ninety-two days. Sir Edward Parry in his attempted sledge-journey to the far north found his intentions frustrated by the fact that the ice on which he travelled moved bodily to the southward faster than progress could be made over it to the northward.

Towards the central part of the North Atlantic is an area of high barometric readings, light winds, and variable currents. Sargasso weed, the abode of myriads of small crustacea, is met with there, but not in such extraordinary quantities as some assert. Vessels abandoned there make very little headway in any given direction. The American schooners *Wyer G. Sargent* and *Fannie E. Wolston* were abandoned in a water-logged condition in about 35° N., 72° W., on the 10th of June 1891 and the 15th of October 1891 respectively. They drifted eastward merrily in the Gulf Stream; but somehow got into the centre of the North Atlantic whirl, and were quite recently reported as having been passed afloat, but breaking up. The danger to shipping from derelict vessels of this nature cannot be over-estimated.

Many other instances might be given of the long drifts of derelict ships and bottle-messengers; but sufficient has been written to illustrate the fact that ocean currents are more especially dependent on the action of the prevailing winds and the configuration of the coasts. An accurate knowledge of ocean currents when remote from the land is not so important to

steamship navigators as their brethren in sailing-ships, yet they may not be utterly neglected when safety and a quick passage are deemed above all things necessary.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER II.—THE SURPRISE.

THE first thought that came into Jessie's head was to call her father; but a moment's reflection convinced her that if her supposition proved correct—if the stranger at the gate was the hunted convict—he would show him no mercy. He would deliver him up to justice, or drive him back into the foggy marshlands whence he had come. It was even more probable, she thought, that he would forbid her to unbolt the door. It might be unnatural to think so meanly of her own father; but his attitude towards her—the suppression of facts, that so deeply concerned her, for his own selfish ends—justified her opinion of him. She was not surprised; his conduct had only confirmed her in her estimate of his egotistic nature. He had lacked the moral courage to apprise her of the trouble that had overtaken John Upcraft, lest by so doing he might jeopardise his own comfort! How could she hope to win his pity for the desolate or distressed?

While she still stood there, doubtful how to act, the knock was repeated. It was louder, and showed signs of impatience. Jess no longer hesitated; she unfastened the door and looked out. It was Jim. His face was wild with excitement, and he was splashed with mud up to the eyebrows. He stood in the white mist, which he seemed to be breathing, so cold was the night-air. The light from the kitchen fire caught him where he stood outside, and showed Jess his strange appearance.

'What's the matter?' Jess put her hand upon his arm as she spoke, drew him into the kitchen and closed the door. The boy snatched off his cap and thrust it into his pocket; then he knelt down before the welcome blaze to warm his fat red hands. As soon as he could recover enough breath to speak, which it took him some effort to accomplish, he gasped: 'I ain't pretending now, miss. I ain't a-playing at convicts. It's a real game, this is!'

For a moment, remembering what Jim's mother had told her, Jess feared that her promising pupil had gone out of his mind—that the sound of the signal-gun had done violence to his youthful understanding. She placed her hand upon his curly head, and stroking it soothingly, replied: 'Why, Jim, you must be dreaming! How could your mother trust you out of doors on such a foggy night?'

'Mother don't know. You'll not tell her, miss; will you? I hasn't been home yet. I've been out on the marshes, and—and I've found him!' While he spoke, the look of wild excitement came back into his face. This strange look, and the still stranger words, set Jessie's heart beating fast.

'What can the boy mean?'

'It's true, miss—true as I'm a-kneeling here. I've found him!' Jim reiterated. 'And if you don't believe it, why, come alonger me and see

for yourself! It ain't very far—down in the marshes—just beyond the fust gate. He's a-lying beside the dike—that's what he's a-doing—half in, half out. He's a-lying with his face to the ground. I spoke to him, but he wouldn't answer. Then I got a fright, thinking of a sudden like that he was dead. I ran away. And seeing the light in your window, I ran—I ran.—You won't tell mother, miss, will you?'

The girl made no answer. She stood looking down thoughtfully into the boy's face. Presently she spoke: 'Are you warm now, Jim?'

The boy nodded.

Jess looked still more thoughtful. 'Do you think, Jim,' said she, 'if I were to go with you, that you could find the spot where you saw this man?'

'The convict?' Jim nodded emphatically.

'You'll never speak—never breathe one word of this to any one; will you, Jim?' whispered the girl, looking anxiously over her shoulder towards the study door.

'No fear, miss! They'd tell mother.'

Jess made a sign to the boy to keep still beside the hearth; then she turned the handle of her father's study door and went in.

Mr Bryce sat reading in his armchair, under his shaded lamp. He was smoking his pipe in his comfortable way. There was not a line in his face that betrayed anxiety about his daughter's great trouble. The whole affair would appear to have gone from his thoughts.

'Mrs Gilkes's boy is here,' Jessie began.

'Well, what does he want?' said her father, with impatience, as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe.

'He has got lost in the fog,' said Jess, 'and he's frightened—afraid to go home alone.'

'You are not going to take him, are you?'

'Yes. Mrs Gilkes will be getting alarmed. Besides,' said Jess, 'it's long past the boy's bedtime; and if he hasn't caught a chill'—

'The young scamp!' said Mr Bryce. 'There—take him home. There's always something amiss. I shan't get my supper before midnight. I know what it will be!'

Jess did not stop to argue this point. She took a flask of brandy from her father's cupboard and hastened out of the room. Jim stood near the kitchen door, eager to start on the expedition.

Jess wrapped herself in a thick cloak, and drew the hood of it over her head; then she took down an old lantern that stood on the mantelpiece—this she lit at the kitchen fire. 'Now, show the way,' said she.

Jim raised the latch, and they went out together into the fog. A lazy wind still crept up from the river, chilly and damp, over the marshland that lay before them. There was an indescribable sense of glimmer in the dense mist, as it seemed to Jess, when she became accustomed to the darkness. It was like a ghostly dream of moonlight. Jim carried the lantern: it cast limited rays of light before them. Presently Jessie felt the boy's disengaged hand groping into her own. They went forward in silence. Jim never showed any sign of hesitation; he led the way across the high-road, and into a bypath at the edge of the dike. The stagnant water was lit up in flashes from the lantern as the boy swung it to and fro. Presently they came to

a white gate over the centre of a small arched bridge across the dike. Here Jim stopped. 'That's where I saw him,' he whispered, and Jess felt his hand tighten in hers.—'There!—t'other side of the ditch—down there!' He swung the lantern as he spoke to illuminate the spot indicated.

'Give me the light,' said the girl. She pushed open the gate, and went forward with the lantern raised above her head. Jim held back, seized with the old fright; but a word from Jess encouraged him, and he went over the bridge at her side. Suddenly she felt the clutch of his fingers on her arm; she looked round, and saw him pointing into the dike. Jess crept to the edge of the bank and looked down. The light from the lantern fell upon the prostrate figure of a man with his face to the ground, as Jess remembered the boy to have described him. His clothes were torn and slimy; so were his hands. Jess knelt down to lift his head. The boy had seized the lantern eagerly, for his curiosity had dissipated all fear. He directed the light upon the man's face.

He was a young man; and his face was possibly handsome; but the features were so plastered with mud that a real mask would scarcely have hidden them more effectually. Jess uttered a suppressed cry as she raised the head upon her arm. No wonder, thought the boy, for surely such a dirty face was enough to scare any one. Jim also observed, as the girl hastened to lift the brandy flask to the man's lips, that her hand shook.

There was an anxious pause. Jessie's look never went from the man's face while she did all in her power to revive him. He drew a deep breath at last, opened his eyes, and stared blinking at the lantern. Presently he raised his eyes to the girl's face: Jim had turned the light full upon it; and instantly the man gave a great start and tried to rise to his feet.

'John!' She held him to her in her strong young arms. In spite of the marsh mire with which he was bespattered from head to foot—in spite of the ragged prison garb in which he was clothed, Jessie knew him! It was John Upcraft. He had covered his haggard, grimy face with his hands, and the white mist was creeping between their faces, as if to hide him more completely from her eyes. But she knew him, and held him closer to her—closer still. It was for him that the signal-gun had been firing, for the man she loved! She took his hands caressingly in both her own to reassure him, and said: 'You didn't think that I had condemned you?'

He bent his head and made no answer.

Meanwhile Jim stood before them with open-mouthed astonishment, directing the light from one face to the other, as if trying to read in each a rational explanation.

Jess found a footing on the slippery bank, and helped Upcraft to rise. He shivered with the cold. The girl took her cloak from her shoulders and threw it over him. 'Look, John! Do you see that light across the marsh?' said she, supporting him with her arm.

'Yes. But you mustn't give me your wrap'—

'I'm warm enough,' she interposed. 'We are quite near home. The light comes from our cottage window.'

Her words seemed to give Upcraft strength. Jim went ahead with the lantern and held open the gate; and then they stepped forward, by the way they had come, along the edge of the dike. They made slow progress; for Upcraft nearly fell to the ground more than once from fatigue before they came out upon the high-road. They were presently entering at the side-gate, Upcraft still leaning upon Jessie's arm, when a shadow flitted across the kitchen window-blind. They all three came to a sudden stand-still. Jim looked up into Jessie's face with a sudden gasp, and then took to his heels, carrying the lantern away with him.

'Rest here a moment,' said Jess; and Upcraft sank down against the low wall. 'That boy will ruin everything if I don't catch him and bring him back.' Jess soon overtook him. 'Frightened at a shadow, Jim?' said she. 'For shame!'

'It's mother. And—and,' said Jim, catching his breath—'she's come n'ter me!'

'If it's your mother, Jim,' said the girl, 'you shall run home as fast as you like. But wait till I've made sure.'

Jim accepted this compromise, and they hastened back to Upcraft. She led him to an arbour at the end of the garden and then went indoors.

'Why, miss, how white you look! Has anything happened to my Jim?' Mrs Gilkes—for it was she who spoke—was laying supper in the kitchen. She looked eagerly at the girl for a reply.

Jess quickly reassured her. 'Jim is all right. You'll find him safe in bed—I hope,' said she, 'when you get home.'

Mrs Gilkes overwhelmed Jessie with expressions of gratitude. Mr Bryce's voice presently interrupted her.

'See what father wants,' said the girl.

The moment Mrs Gilkes's back was turned, Jess looked out at the kitchen door. Jim was waiting there impatiently.

'Run home!' said Jess.

Her next thought was to send Mrs Gilkes home too. There was no need to detain her; and as soon as Jess had given the boy time to get well on his road to Little Thurrock, she despatched his mother in the same direction.

It was their custom to take supper in the kitchen. There was no help for it; her father came and took his seat at the table, and for once his egotism did good service. He never glanced up from his plate to study his daughter's face. Had he done so, her look must have roused his suspicions. She made a great pretence at eating, but not one morsel passed her lips. She was thinking—thinking—until she could hardly refrain from blurting out the whole truth. How Upcraft must be suffering, exposed as he was to the damp, chilly night! The very sight of the kitchen fire was a torture to her while he was debarred from sharing its warmth and brightness with her.

If her father had actually known that Upcraft was shivering in the cold outside—if he had tacitly planned to increase Jessie's agony—he could hardly have behaved with greater cunning; so at least it seemed to her. He always was a slow eater, and his appetite seldom failed him. But to-night—as it appeared to Jess—he ate at

a snail's pace and with the appetite of a hungry huntsman! And then—when he at last put down his knife and fork—he drew his chair towards the kitchen fire and began slowly to fill his pipe. Surely some mischievous demon had whispered the suggestion into his ear to settle himself here instead of retiring into his own sanctum! it was such an unusual action on his part. Was it because she had made the kitchen fire look so bright? It was with no thought of him, but of another to-night, that Jess had stirred it into so cheerful a blaze.

Mr Bryce, while still occupied in loading his pipe, looked round abruptly at Jess, and said: 'Well—what has Upcraft got to say for himself?'

Jess caught her breath, as if she had received a stab. Her face had betrayed her, she thought. Her father had guessed what had happened. She could not speak; she could only stare at him in blank amazement.

'What's amiss now?—Keep your eyes to yourself!' cried Mr Bryce angrily. 'Haven't you read the man's letter yet?'

'John's letter? I—— No, father; not yet.'

'Make pipe-lights of 'em! That's the best thing you can do.—Come!' said he, pointing to his meerschau; 'don't you see I'm waiting for a light?'

She struck a match and handed it to him without a word.

And now, as it still seemed to Jess, her father smoked with more deliberation than he had even exhibited when plying his knife and fork. He smoked, and fell into meditation, and knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and smoked again, until her power of endurance was nearly spent. The clouds of tobacco-smoke that lingered over his head interminably contained the very essence of his tantalising mood.

Having at last finished his pipe, Mr Bryce began to show signs of drowsiness. He had a habit at times of falling asleep over the fire after his evening smoke. This prospect was more than the girl could bear. She began to make a great clatter with the supper plates, as she washed and stood them up in the rack. This noise had the desired effect; for her father presently rose from his chair and, gruffly bidding her 'good-night,' betook himself to bed.

Jess only waited to hear him close his door; in another minute she was at Upcraft's side. 'Did you think I had forgotten you, dear? You must be half dead with cold.' She led the way into the house.

When Upcraft had washed the mud from his hands and face—had exchanged his prison garments for a discarded suit of her father's—and had eaten and drunk of the best that Jessie could provide, he finally rose from his chair beside the fire and held out both his hands. 'Good-bye, Jess—good-bye!'

She looked up entreatingly. He was a handsome young fellow, with dark resolute eyes. He spoke with an earnest, appealing ring in his voice.

'Jess! if I don't get clear of this neighbourhood before daybreak, I shall be taken. Think what that means!'

A look of anguish crossed her face.

'You shall have tidings of me—I promise

that,' he went on.—'Don't be down-hearted, Jess. What is my trouble now—now that I know you never thought me guilty? I had begun to despair—to lose all courage—when no consoling word came from you. But I have something to live for now!'

Jess could not speak; she could only cling to him in her grief at the thought of parting. She realised what it meant—or at least what she dreaded it must mean. She might get tidings of him, though she scarcely knew how. But to-night they had met for the last time! Her brain reeled at the thought.

She sat shivering before the dead kitchen fire, half dazed, until the cold gray dawn was looking in. She stared about her, and gradually the whole scene of the night that was past rushed vividly back into her memory. She went to the window, and, drawing aside the curtain, peered eagerly out. John Upcraft was gone.

MOSES IN LITERATURE.

It has been said that the earliest historical allusion to moss in any writing is contained in that reference in the First Book of Kings to Solomon's botanical knowledge: 'And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;' where it is conjectured that hyssop signifies moss. Pliny the younger in his book on Plants writes on the subject of mosses, and one moss he singles out, and gives it a name, the *Polytrichum*, which, from its golden-haired calyptra, he called maiden-hair; and this name he tells us it bears 'because it tinges the 'air, and is for this purpose boiled in wine with parsley-seed and plenty of oil, which renders the hair thick and curling, and keeps it from falling. It is always green, but never flowers. It delights in dry places, and is green in summer, but withers not in winter.'

Cowley refers to this little plant, and extols its virtues in one of his poems:

I being the chief of all the hairy state,
Me they have chosen for their advocate
To speak on their behalf. Now we, you know,
Among the other plants make no small show;
And fern, too, far and near which does preside
O'er the wild fields, is to our kind allied.

And so the poet goes on, crowding a very quaint and singular poem with the conceits for which he and most of the poets of his time were famous.

John Gerarde, in his *Herball*, on the subject of mosses, says: 'There be divers kinds of mosses, and those differing for the most part in their native places; some grow and are fastened to trees; others spring from the superficial or uppermost part of the earth; there be others also that grow in the sea.' And then he goes on to describe very learnedly and with much delicate discrimination the various kinds of mosses.

In his strange treatise called *Sylva Sylvarum*, Bacon writes concerning moss: 'It is true that moss is but the rudiment of a plant, and, as it were, the mould of earth or bark. Moss groweth chiefly upon ridges of houses tiled or thatched, and upon the crests of walls. And that moss is

of a lightsome and pleasant green. The growing upon slopes is caused, for that moss, as on the one side it cometh of moisture and water, so on the other side the water must but slide and not stand or pool. And the growing upon tiles or walls is caused, for that those dried earths, having not moisture sufficient to put forth a plant, do practise germination by putting forth moss.' He gives many interesting facts relating to mosses, which, however, we cannot here transcribe.

Our object in this paper is not scientific; it is not to trace the history and classification of mosses, or to point out the different species of the plant, their structure and characteristics; but it is a much simpler and more agreeable one, namely, to show how frequently they are referred to in our best literature, and what loving treatment they receive at the hands of some of our greatest writers of prose and poetry. It is only rarely that mosses are mentioned in literature by name. The famous African traveller, Mungo Park, will always be associated with the *Fissidens Bryoides*. He was five hundred miles from any European settlement, in the midst of savages, plundered of his clothes, hungry and depressed in spirits, but the sight of this little moss in flower cheered his heart and inspired him with new courage.

Our greatest living prose writer has abundant references to moss. In the *Lamps of Architecture*, Mr Ruskin writes of the 'company of joyful flowers' in the Jura, 'all showered amidst the golden softness of deep, warm, amber-coloured moss.' In the *Notes on the Turin Collection*, the 'moss arabesques of violet and silver' are among the 'wonders of the real Swiss foreground.' In *Modern Painters* we have quite a detailed description of mosses: 'On the broken rocks of the foreground in the crystalline groups, the mosses seem to set themselves consentfully and deliberately to the task of producing the most exquisite harmonies of colour in their power. They will not conceal the form of the rock, but will gather over it in little brown bosses, like small cushions of velvet made of mixed threads of dark ruby silk and gold, rounded over more subdued films of white and gray, with lightly crisped and curled edges, like hoar-frost on fallen leaves, and minute clusters of upright orange stalks with pointed cups and fibres of deep green and gold, and faint purple passing into black, all woven together, and following with unimaginable fineness of gentle growth the undulation of the stone they cherish, until it is charged with colour so that it can receive no more; and instead of looking rugged, or cold, or stern, as anything that is a rock is held to be at heart, it seems to be clothed with a soft dark leopard skin, embroidered with arabesque of purple and silver.' In another place this wonderful word-painter endows with a kind of moral influence or instinct the mosses and hepaticæ which we meet in our daily walks, representing them as 'full of pity, covering the scarred ruin and the old wall with a strange and tender honour.'

Tennyson is also very happy in his allusions to this subject. His mosses, it has been remarked, always give the very image that is needed. He begins his *Mariana* with the lines:

With blackest moss the flower-pots
Were thick encrusted one and all—

an image which at once sets before us the neglect of the garden which surrounded the disconsolate lady in 'the moated grange.' Again, he says in the same poem:

About a stonecast from the wall
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marsh-mosses crept.

The same faculty which enabled him to draw such subtle subjective pictures of womanhood as Adeline, Isabel, and Eleanor, enabled him to see, and therefore simply to describe, in one of the most distinctive of his earlier poems, how

The creeping mosses and clambering weeds,
And the willow branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the sighing reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
And the silvery marsh flowers that throng
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

Nothing could be so soft as 'the cool mosses deep,' in which, as on a couch, 'the mild-eyed, melancholy lotos-eaters' dreamed away the happy hours:

Here are cool mosses deep
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Keats in like manner conveys the idea of repose by the use of the word moss. In his *Ode to Psyche* appears the exquisite stanza:

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branched thoughts, new-grown with pleasant
pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind;
Far, far around shall those dark clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep.

In his *Endymion* he shows us the 'enmossed realms' of Pan, and 'little caves' wreathed

So thick with leaves and mosses that they seemed
Like honeycombs of green.

And again:

A jasmine bower, all bestrown
With golden moss.

He carries us along 'winding mossy ways' to see the 'violets bind the moss in leafy nets,' and says:

Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet in her mossy nest.

Shelley tells us that the streams and rivulets

Between the close moss, violet interwoven,
Have made their paths of melody.

In the garden where grew his 'sensitive plant,' there were 'sinuous paths of lawn and of moss.' And there, too,

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow
Paved the turf, and the moss below.

From the pages of Wordsworth we may glean a whole literature of mosses. He is the poet of Nature; and the little things as well as the great—we may almost say the little things more than the

great—are glorified by his genius. In his poem of *The Thorn* we meet with the following description :

And close beside this aged thorn
There is a fresh and lovely sight,
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss
Just half a foot in height.
All lovely colours there you see,
All colours that were ever seen ;
And mossy network, too, is there,
As if by hand of lady fair
The work had woven been ;
And cups the darlings of the eye,
So deep is their vermilion dye.

Writing of the little mountain-flower called the Alpine Catchfly, he says :

There cleaving to the ground it lies,
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss.

How exquisitely he sings of 'mossy stones' in his poem of *Nutting* :

I saw the sparkling foam,
And with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep,
I heard the murmur, and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease.

Amongst the mountains and lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland, where Wordsworth's inspiration was quickened and purified, his neighbour, Hartley Coleridge, observed and studied the mosses with the eye of a friend and lover. When in the town he yearns 'for the brook with moss-girt fountain welling.' Moss in winter seems to have a special charm for him, and he is even jealous lest the spring flowers should supersede it in the love and admiration of any. With a kind of impatient regret, he says :

Now the old trees are striving to be young,
And the gay mosses of the Christmas days
To the fresh primrose must forego their praise.

And again he writes of winter mosses :

Though night and winter are two gloomy things,
Yet night has stars, and winter has the moss,
And the wee pearly goblets that emboss
The lumbering wall on which the redbr. ast sings,

The chalice mosses and the velvet green
That clothe November with a seemly dress,
As furry spoils that warm the red-haired Russ
Shield not the poor from blasts unpitoeous.

Childe Harold carries us back to the days when woods were haunted and every streamlet had its myth. In describing the fountain of Egeria, Byron says :

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops : the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years uncrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green wild margin now no more erase
Art's works.

Hood's midsummer fairies

Enrich gray stems with twined
And vagrant ivy ; or rich moss, whose brown
Burns into gold as the warm sun goes down.

In a charming volume of Essays, now almost forgotten in favour of newer though by no means fresher books, Alexander Smith says in his description of Dreamthorp : 'Never was velvet

on a monarch's robe so gorgeous as the green mosses that beruff the roofs of farm and cottage when the sunbeam slants on them and goes.' Again he says : 'Every fissure has its mossy cushion, and the old blocks themselves are washed by the loveliest gray-green lichens in the world, and the large loose stones lying on the ground have gathered to themselves the peacefulest mossy coverings.'

Eugénie de Guérin as she moved about over the plains of Languedoc longed to know botany, that she might enter more closely into 'the herbs, the flowers, and the mosses that she knew by name.'

Caroline Southey in portraying the occupations and pleasures of English country-life describes a

Rustic rough-hewn bridge,
All bright with mosses and green ivy-wreaths.

And she tells us of a shallow, sparkling stream, a favourite fishing-haunt of her father's,

Where the green moss
Sloped down to meet the clear reflected wave,
That lipped its emerald bank with seeming show
Of gentle dalliance.

Mrs Browning alludes to the softness of the plant when she says in *The Lost Bower* :

As I entered, mosses hushing
Stole all noises from my foot.

Milton rests Adam and Eve on a 'mossy seat ;' and makes the lady in *Comus*

Awake the courteous echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch ;

while for himself he prays :

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

A contemporary of Milton, Francis Quarles, has the following quaint image :

And stormy blasts have forced the quaking trees
To wrap their trembling limbs in suits of mossy frieze.

Spenser often uses imagery derived from moss ; but his moss is often nothing but lichen, as on the 'two goodly trees . . . with gray moss overcast ;' but in the lines,

As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
The mossy branches of an oak half dead,

he seems to call it by its right name.

Cowley speaks of 'the mossy brooks and springs, and all inferior beauteous things.' And Dryden reminds us of the uses to which moss was put by our forefathers :

Houses then were caves, or homely sheds,
With twining osiers fenced, and moss their beds.

In the lovely lament over Fidele's grave, Shakespeare says :

With fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave : thou shalt not lack
The flower, that's like thy face, pale primrose : nor
The azure harebell, like thy veins : no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,

Out-sweetened not thy breath : the ruddock would,
With charitable bill

bring thee all this;
Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.

And in connection with this allusion we are reminded of Collins's lovely *Dirge in Cymbeline*, which has the verse :

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

From all that has been here said, it will be seen that moss, insignificant as it may seem to ordinary people, has occupied no little space in the pages of literature.

UNDER THE CHERRY-TREE.

THE STORY OF A SUMMER DAY.

By DOROTHEA GERARD.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

'THIS is what I call something like a decent cherry year!' soliloquised old Mother Resi while she busily tied up the groaning branches. 'It's ten summers and more since I have seen them so big and red and juicy. We shall have full baskets, I warrant; and full baskets for the like of us means full pockets. Gracious! where should I be without my cherry-tree! Not its equal to be seen for miles around.—But, bless me, is this a visitor for me?' And shading her eyes with her hand, Mother Resi gazed along the glaring high-road which climbed its way towards the little Tyrolese village, in the neighbourhood of which is laid the story of this particular summer day.

A white sun umbrella was rapidly approaching; and presently, from beneath its shade, there emerged a spruce, muslin-aproned young person, who, her eye being caught by the red gleam of the cherries, came to an abrupt stand-still. 'Good-day to you. Are these cherries yours?'

'Yes, they are mine.—Your question warrants you new in these parts. Every child hereabout knows my cherries.'

'Why, then, you must be Mother Resi.—Now listen, Mother Resi. I am Frau Netti, the wife of the confectioner in the town, and I have walked out through a mile of dust to taste these renowned cherries. Let's see if they are as good as their name.'

With every cherry that she critically swallowed, the features of the confectioner's wife softened. 'What perfume! what aroma!' she murmured, well-nigh ecstatically. 'The very thing for my *compotes*.'

'How many pounds can I serve you with?'

'No pounds, my good woman—trees, if you had them; but, as it is, this one treeful will have to do. I will pay market price.'

'But I am a poor widow, a very poor widow indeed.'

'Well, well; let's say two kreuzers beyond market price.'

'Fairly spoken, Frau Netti. Gracious! where

should I be without my cherry-tree!—Now, let those rascals so much as squint at the fruit, if they dare!'

Frau Netti inquired whether there were thieves in the village; upon which Mother Resi plaintively explained that everything between five and fifteen was a thief—that every boy in the place had his fingers itching and his mouth watering after her cherries, and that—taking up the corner of her apron—they had robbed her summer after summer, poor widow as she was, with nothing in the world but her cherry-tree and her Sepperl.

'Well, well,' broke in Frau Netti, who did not care for tears. 'No doubt it is very sad; but I must be gone. Mind you keep a careful watch on the cherries until they are gathered. Think of our bargain. I must have all, or I will have none.' And Frau Netti tripped off again, the way she had come, leaving Mother Resi in a state of blissful bewilderment. Two kreuzers beyond the market price! And all sold in a lump! No tiresome dragging to market, no danger of bruised fruit at the bottom of the baskets!

'I always said that all my luck was in my cherry-tree,' she chuckled, as she tied up the last branch. 'And now it's time to be stirring the mid-day soup. Sepperl must look after the cherries meanwhile; it's about all he's good for.—Where has the silly lad hidden himself? Sepperl! Sepp! Seppi!'

It was not until his name had been shouted out in several more varieties, that the long and lanky son and heir of the house slouched into sight, with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his elbows and a broom in his hand.

'Take time, take time. Is it me that's wanted?'

'Sure enough, for want of a better. Is it to sweep the cobwebs out of your silly pate that you're holding the broom?'

Sepperl looked sheepish. 'No; it was for the dust on the parlour floor, and I was thinking that as the neighbour's Mirzl said she would look in upon us this afternoon'—

'Everything else might go its own way, ha? Have you not managed to get that girl out of your head yet?'

It was with a very resounding sigh that Sepperl gave answer: 'I haven't tried.'

'Moonshine—nonsense! Now then, sit down here, you and your broom. Shut up your mouth and open your eyes. Do you see the cherries there?'

'I should think I do. They would make a fine cherry tart, and Mirzl dotes on cherry tart.'

'Cherry tart indeed! Bread, dry bread, that's all that grows on cherry-trees for the like of us; and we won't get even that much unless you sit still here till I'm back again, and never turn an eye from the cherries.'

'But Mirzl dotes on cherry tart.'

'Well, well, if you mind the cherries and keep the village rascals off with your broom, I'll bake you a cherry tart for your Mirzl, but a small one, for I am a poor widow.'

'Hurrah!' shouted Sepperl, left alone under the cherry-tree. 'Next week, Mirzl and I shall eat cherry-tart, and next year we shall dance at our own wedding.—Oho! you good-for-nothings!

Is it my cherry tart you'd be after? Wait a bit; I'll tell Mirzl!' and with his broom, Sepperl made a dash at a couple of school-boys with obviously questionable intentions. Returning somewhat heated to his post, he was astonished to perceive a fair-haired young lady in a fashionable cream-coloured dress—at least Sepperl concluded it must be fashionable since he had never before seen the like of it—approaching along the pathway on the other side. She walked slowly, with her eyes on the ground.

'But what can she be looking for?' reflected Sepperl. 'There are no cherries on the ground,' he remarked aloud as the cream-coloured dress drew near. 'It's higher up you must look; but if you touch them, I'll tell Mirzl.'

The young lady raised her head with a start. 'What is the man talking about? Cherries? Ah, I see. Make your mind easy, my good lad; it is not your cherries I am after, but my lost locket. I know I dropped it on this path.'

'Locket—locket? What's that?'

'A thing one wears round one's neck.'

'Aha, a sort of keepsake thing, I take it to be.'

'I missed it while I was walking over the meadow with my aunt, and ran back to look for it, but could find nothing. Next, I hurried after my aunt, and could not find her either; so here I am now without locket and without aunt, and with aching feet that refuse to carry me farther.'

'Come, come,' said Sepperl good-naturedly; 'very likely by this time your aunt has found your keepsake, and then you would have both back again.'

Sepperl, who had wished to say something especially comforting, was astonished to see the young lady turn pale. 'Good gracious! I had never thought of that! But it would be too terrible; it must be prevented.'

'What's terrible about it?'

'My good lad, it's a long story, and you would not understand. There is something inside that locket which my aunt must not on any account see. Oh, to think that while I am wasting my time here, it may be in her hands already! I must go on hunting—if only my feet did not ache quite so badly.—Listen, lad: are you inclined to earn a florin?'

'I should rather think I am. A florin will buy an apron for Mirzl at the fair.'

'Then go and look for my locket.—But run, run, before my aunt finds it.'

'Take time, take time,' said Sepperl, doubtfully scratching his head. 'It's all about the cherry tart, you see. Mother said I wasn't to turn an eye from the cherries.'

'If that is all, you can go with an easy mind; I shall watch your cherries meanwhile.' And quite regardless of her pearl-gray Swedish gloves, the young lady resolutely took the broom from the hands of the astonished Sepperl.

Sepperl still lingered and still scratched his head. 'But supposing she beats me'—

'I will give you two florins if you go this minute.'

'Hurrah! That will buy earrings as well as an apron.—I'm going, I'm going; but take time! And mind you watch the cherries, or else my back will be aching to-night. Don't forget that

the tree belongs to a poor widow, who else will have no bread for herself and her children, and no cherry tart for Mirzl and me. Think of that, and sweep the rascally village children off with the broom.'

'Yes, yes, yes! I promise everything; but only go.'

At last he was really gone; and pulling off her wide hat, the young lady looked round for a seat, and, finding no better, sat down, broom and all, in the shadow of the cherry-tree.

The pretty face wore an anxious frown, as it was easy to see, now that the jealous shade was removed; and in truth Countess Angélique Lilienburg had grounds for looking anxious, for she was in what is vulgarly termed a 'fix.' That lost locket, which ever since the last carnival she had clandestinely worn round her neck, contained the secret of her hero-worship. It was a foolish thing to do, and, above all, a thing not at all up to date, for although hero-worship is likely to survive the nineteenth century, the fashion of wearing the hero's portrait in a locket, and, above all, of dropping it unawares, has long since given way to more practical contrivances. The only excuse that can be made for the sentimental foolishness of this young lady is that she had grown up within the walls of an ancient feudal castle, in the shadow of the blackest of pine forests, and under the care of the crossdest of old aunts, all of which elements—the aunt included—were wonderfully conducive to the growth of romantic sentiments.

'The very instant I have the locket again,' she now bitterly reflected, 'I shall certainly take out the picture and tear it to shreds, or else burn it to ashes—or else lock it away in a safer place.'

And then she fell to wondering whether he would ever come back from his travels, and where he was spending this day. Perhaps at the North Pole, perhaps at the equator. She hoped he had plenty of furs and a good sun umbrella; but she hoped it rather drowsily, for she had walked far and the day was hot.

'If only that lad would make haste! So it is to a poor widow that the tree belongs, and she looks to it for bread for herself and her children. I fancy he said something of the sort. Poor woman! How strange that there should be in the world people heartless enough to rob a breadless widow! I shall watch—her—cherries—very—faithfully.'

Countess Angélique was asleep in a bower of cherry branches, with her head against the tree stem, very much to the satisfaction of various small villagers of both sexes who had been on the watch for ten minutes at least.

Another ten minutes, this time of perfect enjoyment to the marauders, had passed, when they were scared off by the appearance of a tall gentleman, who with one hand was mopping his forehead and with the other vigorously using his hat as a fan.

'So I am not mistaken; it is a cherry-tree! As good as a dessert table spread for my own especial benefit; and a thirsty wayfarer will surely be absolved of his sins even if he swallow some half-dozen cherries, which, strictly speaking, belong more to his neighbour than to himself. Nectar and ambrosia! I must have some more!'

And, suiting the action to the word, the stranger gave a vigorous shake to the tree.

Among the patter of falling cherries, he seemed to hear something that was like a yawn, and a cream-coloured cloud moved in the shadow of the branches.

'Some one here?—Is it you, Countess Angélique?'

'Baron Blasewitz!' stammered Angélique, rising dazed from her mid-day siesta. 'How—where have you come from? I thought you were in Africa!'

'And I thought you were at Ostend.—But, pardon me, what can you be doing here? And with that broom?'

'I am guarding this cherry-tree; therefore, beware of my broom! You must know that the tree is the property of a poor widow, who together with her three little children—I think he mentioned three children—is reduced almost to starvation point. And imagine the base wickedness of the world, Baron Blasewitz—dishonest people prowl about and watch for the moment when they can pillage the branches unseen. Is it not incredible that such unscrupulous wretches should exist?'

'Quite incredible,' assented Baron Blasewitz, furtively wiping his mouth. He was not afraid of facing either lions or ice-bears; but the courage to proclaim himself one of the unscrupulous wretches afore mentioned failed him at this moment.

'And now that you know my business here, you might satisfy my curiosity by telling me what yours is.'

'Mine? It is nothing, really not worth mentioning; at least—that is to say.'—

'He is not shy usually,' reflected Angélique. 'I wonder what makes him so embarrassed all at once?'

'I saw this tree from afar, and as I noticed that it had such fine cher'—

'What?'

'Such a fine shade, I thought I would rest here a little while.'

Angélique thought she began to see clear. Her aunt was always talking about the flippancy and frivolity of this young man—supposing she should be right, after all. This spot under the cherry-tree was the very place for a rustic *rendez-vous*, and there were some very pretty peasant girls in the village—commonplace, of course, but that would not matter to a frivolous man. What treachery! And after all that had passed between them on that last carnival day! No wonder he was embarrassed.

'Well, there is the tree, Baron Blasewitz,' said Angélique aloud, in the iciest tones she could command, 'and there is the shade. I hope you have found what you looked for.'

'Oh, I have found far more than I ever would have ventured to look for! How could I guess what a treasure was hidden among these branches!'

'Baron Blasewitz!' stammered Angélique, stepping back.

'Your pardon, Countess Angélique; but the delight of this unlooked-for meeting has gone to my head.'

Angélique dropped her eyes and played with the handle of the broom. The chances were that

her aunt was quite right about the flippancy and the frivolity; and yet how his voice trembled, how earnest his eyes looked!

'Ever since last carnival I have carried your picture in my heart.'

'And I lie in my locket,' whispered Angélique to herself.

'My uncle sent me on my travels to amuse me; but it was no use. Give me but one word of hope, and no sacrifice will be too great to win you by, no labour too hard. All will go well, even if your aunt'—

'My aunt!' And with a start she seemed to come to her senses. 'If my aunt were to come upon us now! She never would believe that this meeting was a chance one.—Oh, Baron Blasewitz, leave me; I must go; my aunt may appear at any moment—I must go.'

'And the cherries? And the poor widow with the five children?'

'Good gracious, I had forgotten them! What shall I do? Ah—a happy thought: I resign my post to you.'

'To me?' almost gasped the Baron.

'Yes, precisely—to you. Why do you look so amazed? You talk of sacrifices and labours, and yet refuse the first trifle I ask of you.'

'For your sake, Angélique, I am capable even of guarding cherries. I accept the post; pray, hand me the bayonet—I mean the broom.'

'Here, take it quickly. Be watchful and wide-awake; I shall come again, but with my aunt.'

And in another minute the Baron was standing, broom in hand, alone under the cherry-tree.

'Thus far, therefore, has Love brought me,' he dreamily soliloquised—'even to a cherry warden. It is I who am responsible to her for these cherries. What bliss that she should deem me worthy of so much confidence! This broom which I received from her hands, how ravishing it appears to me! I could almost press it to my lips, if only it were somewhat less grimy.—Halloa! Here come the unscrupulous wretches at last. Let me show myself worthy of my post.' And half-a-dozen village urchins, with lips and fingers richly smeared with red, flew shrieking before the broom.

TOWARDS THE NORTH POLE.

A WONDROUS glamour veils the frozen sea
That guards the region of eternal snow;
A voice seems ever crying, soft and low,
'Come, sons of men, unlock the mystery,
And set the door of knowledge wide and free;'
And many hearing, may not choose but go:
The bones of brave men strow the way, they know,
Still forth they speed, to find the long-sought key.

Oh, gallant spirits! whom the Northern Pole
Draws, as a magnet, to the realms of night,
Where nature lies in desolation's blight—
Sail on, undaunted, to the distant goal,
For Fame's refulgent crown awaits the soul
That seeks death's gloom, to win the world more light.

c. a.

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CROMER CRABS AND THEIR COUSINS.

As Everton is noted for its toffee, Burton for its ale, Melton-Mowbray for its pork pies, and Yarmouth for its bloaters, so Cromer, on the coast of Norfolk, is renowned for its crabs. Other places, to the right and left, have a share in reaping the crustacean harvest on the North Norfolk coast; but they do not give their names to their spoil; the crabs which their fishermen catch are 'Cromer Crabs.' The fishing-ground is a rocky area extending for twenty miles along the coast, and for about four miles out from the shore. There are eight miles of it to the west of Cromer, and twelve to the east.

Both the crabs and their cousins the lobsters are caught by means of traps called 'pots,' familiar objects to visitors at those seaside resorts, where this branch of fishing is pursued. These pots are quite a modern invention, having been introduced between twenty and thirty years ago. Before that time, hoops were used, weighted with lead, and with a net stretched beneath, into which fell any crab or lobster engaged with the bait when the hoop was hauled up. The work was very laborious, for, as long as the tide served, the hoops had to be continually examined. As soon as the last of the series had been raised, back the men went to the first. When the tide ran too strongly for the hoops to be worked, they were brought ashore. As they did not imprison the fish, it was useless to leave them in the sea.

The traps of to-day are one foot nine inches long, by one foot three inches wide at the bottom, which is a frame of heavy iron bars supporting bows of wood, over which is stretched thick string netting of home manufacture. A funnel-shaped aperture in each side conducts the crab or the lobster to the interior of the cage, while a side-door, which can be easily let down, provides for the withdrawal of the captives. The pots run away with a considerable portion of their owners' hard earnings. They cost about six shillings each by the time they are fitted up; the netting has to be renewed every year, and not a few are

carried off or cut adrift by passing ships. The Cromer men are more liable to this misfortune than their neighbours at Sheringham, as their ground is more in the track of vessels. Occasionally lines which have been cut by ships and steamers are seen at low tides, and the pots to which they are attached are recovered; but in spite of this, many lose from twelve to twenty pots in a single season.

The men work in couples, and the two partners will own between them from sixty to eighty pots. These are taken out to sea a few at a time, and unless damaged, are not again brought to shore until the end of the season. To each pot is attached a stout line ten fathoms (sixty feet) in length, and to this line are affixed a number of cork-floats, looking like so many dirty ship biscuits. On the float nearest the free end of the line are cut the initial letters of the owner's name.

The pots are not sunk close together, but are separated by a considerable space, so that ships may have a chance of passing between the floating lines. To an ignorant landsman, it would seem a matter of great difficulty for the fishermen to recognise the spot where their pots were deposited, and to single out their own property from that of their neighbours; for, in the height of the fishing season, the surface of the water is so dotted with floats that sufficient room for additional pots can scarcely be found. The task, however, is less like that of looking for a needle in a bottle of hay, than the uninitiated would imagine. By carefully noting, when the pots are laid, the relative position of prominent landmarks, the men are able to find their own lines with comparative ease. The pots can be examined only during slack tides, because when the water is high the floats are covered and out of sight.

While in some respects lobsters and crabs are identical in their habits and manners, there are other points in which they greatly differ, and these have to be regarded by their would-be captors. As is not unfrequently the case with relatives, it is better that they should dwell apart,

and, as a rule, this fact is recognised by them, the lobsters keeping near the shore, while the crabs are mostly met with farther out. A crab which ventures within reach of a lobster does so at the peril of his life. If seized by his aristocratic cousin, he will assuredly be killed by him, and not only killed, but eaten. No crab is allowed to enter a pot into which a lobster has made its way; and if one should be there when the lobster arrives, there will soon be nothing left of him but the shell. These empty shells are sometimes all that remain to tell the fishermen what they might have had if their visit had been more fortunately timed.

The lobster is much more agile than the crab, and having eaten whatever food he can find within a pot, clambers about the netting until he discovers one of the ever-open apertures in the sides, and then he passes once more into freedom. When fishing for lobsters, it is therefore necessary for the men to examine their pots as frequently as possible. Crabs, being slower in their movements, do not so readily escape, and an extra good haul is anticipated if the pots are unraised for a longer period than usual.

Lobsters are not only evilly disposed towards crabs, but, sad to say, they do not bear goodwill to one another. As soon as they are safely landed, their formidable nippers are encircled with a piece of string to prevent them mangling their neighbours. They are most pugnacious creatures. If two happen to meet in a confined space, they will at once 'make for' each other's eyes. In the words of an ancient mariner, 'they fight like men.'

Perhaps it is because crabs are less active than lobsters that the pots, into which it is hoped the former will crawl, must be moved to fresh ground every time they are examined, otherwise few or none will be caught. On the other hand, the pots for lobsters may be dropped on the very spot from which they were raised, without the subsequent catch being thereby lessened.

In the matter of food, our crustacean friends have dissimilar tastes, and this fact is manifested in the character of the bait used. The crab likes his meat to be quite fresh; while the lobster, in spite of the avidity with which, as we have seen, he will clean out the shell of a newly-killed crab, prefers flesh that is decidedly 'high.' Indeed, the staler it is, the more tempting it is to his appetite. The bait is placed between two leathern thongs, and is kept in its position by a sliding button. It formerly consisted mainly of portions of small flat fish, locally called 'butts,' which were sent in great quantities from Lynn and Yarmouth. These, however, are much less plentiful than they were, and therefore plaice, codlings, or any other fish that happen to be handy, are used.

Along the North Norfolk coast, large open boats, which carry a small, dark-coloured sail, are used in this fishery. They are much too heavy to be brought upon the beach, or even to be launched by the two men who form the little crew of each; but, by the men of several boats helping each other, the difficulty is easily overcome. Instead of the rowlocks being formed in

the usual way by the insertion of pegs in the gunwale, they are holes in the sides of the boat. These have the great advantage of preventing the oars being lifted out of their places by heavy seas, and also of affording convenient means of conveying the boat high and dry upon the beach. On the return to land, when the boat has grounded, oars are run through the rowlocks, and being grasped by men on either side, the vessel is carried to a spot where it will not be floated by the advancing waves.

The Cromer fishermen are not a numerous body; all told, they do not now number quite seventy, and are gradually becoming still fewer, for their sons do not, as a rule, take to the sea. Most of the Cromer men have therefore long passed the heyday of youth. The fishing population of the neighbouring village of Sheringham is more than four times that of Cromer, and is increasing, for it is the exception there for the boys of a fisherman's family not to follow their father's calling.

Crabs may be caught all the year round. There is no close-time, but the regular fishing season generally begins at the end of March, and lasts till September or October. Occasionally, it begins in February. The weather is the principal factor in determining when the pots shall be laid down and when they shall be removed.

Long before the end of the season, the pots become thickly covered with long weeds, through which imprisoned fish can with difficulty be seen. Vegetation also attaches itself to the lines, and makes them slippery. They have therefore to be brought ashore from time to time and cleaned. The professional way of doing this is to make the line into a coil, leaving two or three feet at one end free, and then, seizing the end, to repeatedly swing the whole overhead and forcibly dash it upon the wet sand, over which it is dragged by continuing the circular motion of the arm. When the line is judged to be sufficiently cleansed, it is hung up to dry, and at the end of a week is fit to replace another that has become too foul.

Lobsters are protected for a month—from June 25th to July 25th, the height of the hatching season. When the fishing for lobsters begins, they have just changed their shells, and are so hungry that more are then caught than at any other time of the year. As soon as they get firm and strong, they 'take the ground'—in other words, go into holes, and then the catches are smaller. Lobsters under eight inches in length may not be brought ashore. Those of the minimum size weigh half a pound, and usually leave this world from the supper and dining tables of the local hotels. At those establishments, lobsters weighing from one-half to three-quarters of a pound are greatly preferred to any others, and none scaling over a pound are willingly bought. The fishing-ground off Cromer produces plenty of lobsters reaching the respectable weight of three and four pounds, and some manage to escape capture until they weigh from five to six pounds. Very large fish cannot get into the pots, but reach the bait from the outside, and are hauled up while thus pleasantly engaged, or are caught on the hooks when the men are 'line-fishing.'

The protection of the law is to some extent thrown over crabs of tender age, for those which

are less than four and a quarter inches across may not be brought ashore. Those landed vary from half a pound to a pound and a half in weight; but the larger ones are not numerous, three-quarters of a pound being the average weight of the individuals sold in the course of the season. Crabs of this size are too small for the London markets, although they find a ready sale elsewhere. Cromer crabs are disposed of chiefly in Norwich and Yarmouth. They are sent thither alive. In cool weather they will live for three days after being drawn from the water; but in hot weather they do not survive twelve hours.

The number of crabs captured annually on the north coast of Norfolk is almost incredible. Mr Frank Buckland calculated that the fifty Cromer boats of his time would, even if the luck was bad, catch a thousand daily, which would give for the season a total of 158,000; while for a good season the captives would amount to 1,422,000. It is mainly the weather which makes a season good or bad. When the temperature is low, the creatures remain in their holes. Warm weather tempts them to wander abroad, and then it is the fishermen have a chance of entrapping them. In winter-time it is no unusual thing for good crabs and lobsters to be found on the beach after a gale. A rough sea 'scores' or destroys their beds, and some of the animals so disturbed get washed ashore. Many years ago, cartloads were picked up after one exceptionally heavy gale. The men feared that the ground had been depleted; but the following season was one of the best they ever had.

It is more than probable that a large buyer, ignorant of the peculiar arithmetic adopted by the captors of Cromer crabs when disposing of those dainties, would be somewhat surprised at the number he received in response to an order, say for a hundred. For some inscrutable reason, two crabs are counted as one, the two being called a 'cast,' and six score of these is called a hundred; so that the buyer of a Cromer hundred actually gets two hundred and forty. This strange method of computation is not followed in the case of lobsters; they are counted in the ordinary way.

Mr Frank Buckland's attention was officially directed to the fishery on account of its deterioration through the destruction of little crabs and of lobsters full of spawn. His Report resulted in the legislative enactments to which reference has been made. The Cromer fishermen, at any rate, would welcome the imposition of further restrictions. As the law at present stands, crabs which, by reason of their diminutive size, may not be sent to market, may be used as bait.

The Cromer men profess to release all the immature fish which they draw from the sea, and declare that any of their number who used little crabs for bait would suffer a greater loss of pots than could be attributed to the accidental cutting of the lines by passing vessels. Similar damage would befall any Sheringham man who ventured to try his luck on the Cromer ground. 'They have spoilt their own ground,' say the Cromer men; 'but they shan't spoil ours.'

When the crabs and lobsters have gone into their winter-quarters, then the herring-fishing begins. Terrible work this is, for the poor men have to remain at sea all night in their open boats.

Long-line fishing also is followed during the autumn and winter months. To each line are attached some eight hundred hooks, which are baited with mussels, an operation which occupies a good five hours, as the protecting shells of each mussel must be forced open before the fish within can be impaled.

But there are times when fishing is not the most profitable employment that can be pursued. Many of the Sheringham men have every year a spell of agricultural labour; while, during the height of the visitors' season, most of the Cromer fishers are engaged with the bathing-machines and pleasure-boats.

If the reader is a lover of lobsters, may it be his or her happy lot to visit Cromer when the fishermen are rejoicing in good luck, for then the price falls as low as sevenpence a pound; but even when the catches are not particularly good, the hawker's cry may be heard: 'Here's some rum uns; here's some big uns, all fresh boiled, and only sixpence each. Here's a treat this morning.'

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAP. XXX.—TANDERJEE RECEIVES A CHEQUE,
AND DANIEL FINDS A KEY.

GEORGE SUFFIELD was troubled by Isabel's letter, and by a gentle note from his father which he received about the same time—his father said he had heard disquieting rumours about cotton, but he would leave them to be talked over when he came down for Christmas, unless George thought there was anything of pressing importance to communicate—for they both had heard, 'on good authority'—matters, in fact, of which he had hoped that no one outside them suspected the existence. Yet it was characteristic of George that the fact of his proceedings being guessed at or suspected scarcely made him doubt the sufficiency of the means he had taken to keep them hid: it did little more than make him angry with the 'good authorities'—whoever they were—who had been so prying as to guess or suspect. So he merely wrote to his father that he had nothing disquieting to communicate; and then he wrote to Isabel with reassurance and fervour—and in the heat of the reassurance and fervour he went on in the course to which he was committed, and from which he saw neither reason nor necessity for departing.

For the cotton business was rapidly coming to a head—coming to such a head and gathering of offence as the trusting George did not suspect. All things seemed going well. Prices had gone up and down, just as Gorgonio and George had hoped they would. And that cargo of Indian—for which George had given Tanderjee an advance—had arrived, and had proved a conspicuous success. It had been of good quality, and had helped to raise the reputation of Indian in the market; and since there was the rumour of more of as good quality from the same quarter, it had sent down prices sufficiently to enable Gorgonio to make many more large purchases with the view to

cornering. And yet prices kept pretty much at a steady level in their careless way; for, though many believed that Gorgonio was trying to corner, no one believed that he could—that he had either money or experience enough—but especially not money enough—to carry him through.

George was thus in very hopeful mood when, one day early in December, Tanderjee came to him in the city office of the Suffields. He carried in his hand a roll of sample cotton, which, after a brief word of greeting, he opened out before George. 'It is good—is it not, Mr Suffiel?' he said. 'It is clean, soft, long. It is excellent cotton—think you not, sir?'

'It is very good, certainly,' said George, after examining it. 'Indian, I suppose?'

'It is Indian, of course, Mr Suffiel.'

'And you want me to do something with it, I suppose?'

'My people is very poor, and Mr Suffiel' is very rich: it is what the wise say—the rich man have the advantage. My people will gladly sell you at reduced price, on the old terms, as before, again.'

'How much is there?'

'There is sufficient, Mr Suffiel', to fill two steamer.'

'That is a great deal. I don't think I can do anything without consulting Mr Gorgonio: I must ask him how it would affect our other business.'

'That is all quite correct, Mr Suffiel'. Send for Mr Gorgonio at once: the telegraph will bring him.'

So George sent a telegram to Gorgonio, inviting him to come over at once from Liverpool on business, and Tanderjee departed for an hour or two. Gorgonio came with speed and a look of expectation, though he already knew all about the business, and had been waiting in his Liverpool office for the arrival of the summons. George set the matter before him, and he appeared to consider the carpet very deeply and closely. Then he raised his head and spoke. He begged Mr Suffiel' to observe that the business was like this: The cotton would in any case come to Liverpool; for their purpose they did not wish more cotton to come for some weeks; but cotton *would* come. What then? Was it not better that he should have the control of it from the beginning, than be compelled to reckon with it, deal with it, and perhaps fight with it when it came?

'Buy it, then, Mr Suffiel', said Gorgonio—'buy it, and let me receive it for you, and warehouse it, and sell it gradual, by parcels, at the top price.'

Finally, George agreed to that suggestion; and when Tanderjee came in to receive his answer, he said he would buy the cotton on the former terms, and that Tanderjee might tell the Bombay people to draw on him at once for three-fourths of the amount. But Tanderjee urged a further request, with a low bow and his hand on his heart.

'My people, Mr Suffiel', is very poor, and you are very rich; they have advise me that some money which they must pay me I will pay myself if I get the money from you. It will save the exchange from English into Indian, and from

Indian into English again, and it will be very much more convenient for me in time. So, Mr Suffiel', if you give me cheque now for them, I pay myself, and it is quite correct.'

The statement seemed obscure, but George thought it was probably all right, and that its obscurity was only due to Tanderjee's constrained English; moreover, he had done business a good many times with Tanderjee and had always found him straightforward and correct; and, therefore, being on the whole a simple, honourable, and kindly Englishman, he wrote out a cheque for seven thousand five hundred pounds, with which Tanderjee departed, leaving the air musical with his profuse thanks.

Next morning, Daniel Trichinopoly, while his master was occupied at the works, found he had business to do on his master's account in the town; and when in town, he called on Mr Tanderjee. Mr Tanderjee received him in his private office.

'You have come, my son,' said Mr Tanderjee in Daniel's native tongue. 'It is well, yea, twice well; for all is ready on my part. What of yours, my son? Do you in deed and in truth bring the plans in your bosom?'

'I have searched all places, and all drawers in the office and in the house of my master, O worshipper of the sun, but I have found nothing!'

'Ah, still nothing, my son! Still nothing, and nothing, and nothing!' said Mr Tanderjee, pacing up and down and waving his arms, while his spectacles gleamed with distraction. 'Is this, my son, the realm of Chola that we two dwell in, or is it the realm of deceit? You permitted the son of a dog and a pig, the Gorgonio, discover our secret of the plans, so that he has demanded his share of the reward! He has said, "The knife should be applied where there is flesh!" It is shameful to tell it, and painful to weep over it! And now—now!—there are no plans! And all things else are ready!' Tanderjee looked as if he could 'tear a cat' in his despair.

'There is still time, O worshipper of the sun,' said Daniel sweetly. 'It is impossible that we should go away until the Festival of Christmas is upon us. And there is still one place to search and examine; but it is difficult.'

'Oh, let not difficulty make your heart faint, O cunning one! For is not the way to wealth difficult, and the door-step to riches slippery? What is the one place still to search, my son?'

'It is the great box of iron that is called "Safe," that stands in the office like a shrine. No man, as I hear, has ever seen it open, and when my master opens it he locks the outer door. Methinks there dwells in it the demon or spirit that brings the Sahib Suffield and Sahib George their luck!'

'You are but a fool, my son Daniel. You have learned the religion of the English Sahibs as a deaf man listens to a song. You are still in the bonds of your native ignorance. The safe is but a strong box. See; I have one, and there is no demon in it.'

He opened the door of a very small safe let into the wall over the fireplace, and let Daniel look in. But Daniel seemed scarcely reassured.

'That box, O worshipper of the sun,' said he, 'is only a toy compared with the box I have

seen. And, moreover, how know I that a little demon does not dwell in your box when it is shut up for the night?

'The successful man knows no fear,' said Tanderjee. 'Be you successful, and you will laugh at the demons. The safe of Sahib George opens with a key, my son: where does the Sahib George keep that key?'

'It is that key, I believe, O worshipper of the sun, which the Sahib keeps in the pocket of his trouser, and fastened with a chain round his waist. Sahib George would defend that key with his life.'

'You must get possession of that key, my son.'

'I cannot do violence to my master,' answered Daniel. 'Moreover, if I offered violence to my master, which of us would prevail?'

'Your wits are becoming dull, O cunning one,' said Tanderjee. Then suddenly bethinking himself, and frowning, he stepped up to Daniel and shook all his fingers in his face. 'We dwell in deceit, my son! You hide your meaning under green leaves of stupidity! When the jackal becomes fat he can hunt no more: is it not so, my son? The English Sahib feeds the dog well, and it longs to dwell with him—is it not so?'

'Is it good to cut a man's throat after gaining his confidence?' said Daniel sulkily. 'Is it well to betray a man who has fed you with his bounty? The Sahib George has given me his confidence, the Sahib has fed me with his bounty: you may take the key of safe yourself, O worshipper of the sun: I will not!'

Daniel was turning to the door, but Tanderjee intercepted him. He shook his fingers in Daniel's face; he threatened; he cursed—in Tamil—and finally he whined, for Daniel stood calmly listening to all his moods.

'Why will you make me frantic, O cunning one?' said Tanderjee. 'You mean it but for a pleasantry—do you not?—that you may see I need you as much as the carpenter needs a saw. Think you the reward I have promised is not enough, O cunning one? Is it so?'

'If a man sells his honour for a Cash,' asked Daniel, 'can he buy it back for a Crore? I will sell my honour only for a Crore, O worshipper of the sun, so that I may have wherewithal to buy it back.'

'You are a hard bargain-driver, O cunning one,' said Tanderjee. 'But I will increase your reward to half of the money which I have received when you put into my hands the plans.'

'Copies of the plans, O worshipper of the sun.'

'Be it so—copies of the plans.'

Then it was arranged between them that Daniel should find means as speedily as possible to handle the key of the safe, and to take a wax impression of it, which he would give to Tanderjee, and that Tanderjee would thus get made a copy of the key, which he would give to Daniel. It was for some time a point of contention whether or not Daniel when he had discovered the plans should bring them to Tanderjee for aid in the copying; Tanderjee thought he must; but Daniel—clearly distrusting Tanderjee—thought he need not: he was clever enough to do the

copying himself in the place where he should find them.

It was now necessary for Daniel to tell first of all what key was the key of the safe. That very evening, when George sat alone at dinner, Daniel made an attempt.

'With regard, Mister George,' said he, with simple guile, 'may I be permit to ask the question: what you keep at the end of the chain which chain you like a prisoner?'

'A key, Daniel,' answered George carelessly.

'Nothing but a mere simple profane key, Mister George?' exclaimed Daniel. 'If I am not very troublesome to mention, the same time I must say it is singular and strange, etcetera, for a gentlemen to wear a key tied with a chain to the middle of his body. With regard—I beg to excuse, Mister George—why that key do not it hang on its respected nail like other key? But it would not be an astonishment to know that it is a pet key, a key of worship, a key of gold.'

'It is in a sense a key of gold,' laughed George, taking the bright little steel instrument from his pocket, 'for it is the key of the safe.'

'Ah,' said Daniel. 'The key of safe? And may I beg to know? "Safe" is called that great box of iron in the Sahib's office?'

'That's it,' said George, tired of the subject.

It was not difficult for Daniel—in spite of his contrary protestations to Tanderjee—to find an opportunity to hold the key a few minutes in his hand in the frequently recurring aid he gave to George in dressing or undressing; and when a copy of the key was made, it was not difficult for Daniel—not very difficult—to open the safe, and to search for the plans, in spite of the genius of the Suffields which resided there; and when the plans were at last found, it was not beyond the powers of Daniel—had he not been carefully taught reading, writing, ciphering, and drawing by good Englishmen?—to make excellent copies of them.

On the whole, then, there is no room for amazement that Christmas had not yet come, though it was at hand, when Daniel sent a note to Mr Tanderjee, containing these words only: 'All is ready. Prepare.'

THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

THE great scheme of an iron band to connect the extreme eastern with the extreme western boundaries of the giant Empire of Russia is at last in process of being carried out. The Trans-Siberian Railway bids fair to become an accomplished fact before the British public realises that it has been begun—much less the possibilities which it enfolds. But when St Petersburg is joined by rail with Vladivostok, a new era in the intercourse between West and East will begin. Such a railway has long been the dream of Russians—certainly since the days of the Crimean War; and several years ago a Committee of Experts was appointed by the Czar to consider the various routes proposed, to decide upon the best, and to determine whether the line should be continuous from end to end, or only constructed to unite

the navigable rivers. In 1890 this Committee reported in favour of a continuous line, starting from Ufa, on the European side of the Ural Mountains—already connected by rail with Samara and the Volga Basin—and running through Slatoust, Tomsk, Krasnoïarsk, and Nijni Udinsk to Irkutsk, should thence be carried along the line of the Amur River to Vladivostok, the outermost outpost of Russia in the east, and her naval and commercial emporium in the Sea of Japan.

A glance at the map will show that by this selection of route the railway will skirt the northern frontiers of Mongolia, and thus have a chance of drawing traffic from the Chinese Empire—not to mention the strategic value in the event of possible quarrels with that rival Asiatic power. But there were other good reasons for the selection. For instance, the entire length between the two termini indicated is 4900 miles; but the Samara Railway has already been carried through Ufa and across the Ural Mountains to the gold-mining town of Miarsk, a distance of some one hundred and twenty miles. By so much, therefore, is the construction of the Trans-Siberian line shortened, although one hundred and twenty miles is but an insignificant proportion in nearly 5000. But, again, the first of the three sections into which the experts have divided the line, that from Slatoust to Tomsk, is through a flat country, in which construction will be easy, which is well peopled, and which, by a small branch, can draw considerable intermediate traffic from the region of the Altai, as well as secure the increasing traffic of the valleys of the Obi and the Irtysh. This section, indeed, will drain what many people regard as the future granary of the Old World. We are too much accustomed to think of Siberia as a barren, inhospitable region of frost and ferocity; but as a matter of fact there are three Siberias—frigid, temperate, and torrid. And the railway is designed for the most part to traverse the temperate and most productive belt.

The second section, between Tomsk and Irkutsk, has probably not much to expect from the products of the soil; but, on the other hand, this is, perhaps, the richest auriferous region of Siberia. The third section, from Irkutsk to Vladivostok, is the most difficult and expensive of all, having to run through a country very thinly populated, in parts, indeed, one might say uninhabited, with an inhospitable climate, and presenting many engineering difficulties. This will be the most costly part of the line, both to construct and to maintain.

It is proposed that there shall be stations every thirty miles or so along the whole line, and that the wider rivers shall not be bridged, but crossed by steam-ferries. The probable cost is variously estimated at from thirty-five to fifty-five million pounds; but judging by experience of the work so far, it is more than probable it will exceed the higher figure.

Some Russian critics have rather objected to a route having been chosen which for a considerable distance exposes the line to risk of damage by Manchurian bandits, if not of interference under the ægis of Chinese officials, who, as a class, are by no means yet favourably disposed to railways. But the advantages are held to outweigh the dangers; and, moreover, it is understood that Russian diplomats have arranged a satisfactory understanding with the authorities at Peking.

The Report of the Committee of Experts above referred to was in due time followed by the issue of an Imperial ukase ordering the construction of the railway. It is said that the Czar's advisers were much divided on the subject, owing to the immense sum of money involved, and that it was because of these differences of opinion that the Imperial order was not given until May 1891. One does not hear that any of the Czar's advisers pleaded for the expenditure of the money in a way much more calculated to improve the condition of the Russian peasantry—namely, by the extension of railway communication in European Russia. The matter was regarded as a military one, the opponents of the railway contending that the money could be better applied on fortifications and so forth; while the advocates of the railway contended that it would be more useful than fortifications, and certainly not less valuable in the defences of the Empire.

And here it should be mentioned that the idea of a railway across Siberia was first suggested by General Mouravieff, the governor of East Siberia during the Crimean War. It is, perhaps, not generally remembered now that one of the first operations of the allied forces was an attack upon the Russian outposts in the Pacific; and the narrow escape which Russia had on that occasion of being permanently shut off from the Eastern seas, led to a great development of her military arrangements in Siberia. It was then that the danger to which the Czar's Asiatic dominions are exposed by their separation from the base of supplies suggested a railway. Like the Trans-Caspian line—which, by the way, there is a plan to run northward to join the Trans-Siberian line at some future date—the Trans-Siberian railway is political and military in origin and design.

The line is being built from both ends, but most effort is in the meantime being directed to the eastern and most difficult section. About the middle of 1891 the first sod was cut at Vladivostok by the Czarewitch; and since then the work has been steadily prosecuted. For about two hundred and fifty miles from Vladivostok the line passes through what is styled the Ussuri section, being the country watered by the Ussuri branch of the Amur. This is an undeveloped region of great mineral wealth, but so diversified in its physical aspects as to provide many tough engineering problems. Wherever practicable, tunnelling is being avoided by detours, the engineers even preferring to build an embankment on which to carry the line round a hill than to cut through it. In the same way, a deep narrow inlet of the sea near Vladivostok is not being bridged, but the line is taken round it. One can under-

stand the avoidance of tunnels on the score of cost, but what saving can there be in the case of the bridge? None whatever, but the reverse—only military authorities declared the bridge too open to attack from a hostile fleet.

Some six thousand men, mainly Russian soldiers and Chinese labourers, are employed on the Ussuri section, which is expected to be open next year. It has cost, so far, about thirteen thousand pounds per mile, on which basis the entire railway would cost not thirty-five or fifty-five, but nearer sixty-five, millions sterling. But, as we have said, this eastern section is the most difficult, and will be the most expensive part of the work. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the present railways in Russia have cost on the average about seventeen thousand pounds per mile, and that, although Siberia is exceptionally level, and is well supplied with timber, &c., yet the inhabited districts are widely separated, and climatic conditions must tend to serious interruptions of work. Of course the dispensing with bridges on some of the wide rivers may reduce the first cost; but this cannot be regarded as a permanent saving, as the bridges will sooner or later have to be supplied.

It is a mistake to suppose that Russia possesses great facilities for big undertakings in Asia in the way of free convict-labour. As a matter of fact, the convict problem is not less difficult in Siberia than in America, where, as has been seen, there are constant revolts against the employment of prison labour in competition with free labour. The introduction of convicts on to the works of the Trans-Siberian Railway led to complete disorganisation and frequent scenes of violence. Neither the Russian free labourers nor the soldiers would work along with them; and although, we believe, about a thousand convicts are still employed on the works, they are rather a source of trouble and anxiety than of profit to the Government.

From the western end, the Samara Railway is being actively pushed forward, and is expected to reach the Tobol River—on which is situated the city of Tobolsk—in the course of next year. From there it must reach Tomsk to complete the first section. It is a far cry from Tomsk to Irkutsk, while beyond Irkutsk the Ussuri section is but a small portion of the third great section. From Tomsk to Irkutsk is about eleven hundred miles; and from Irkutsk round the southern end of Lake Baikal, and by way of the Ussuri to Vladivostok, is about double the distance. At the present writing, there are about four thousand miles of railroad still to build. At the rate of progress of the last two years, the Trans-Siberian Railway will not be completed from end to end for other twelve years or so.

And then? Will it ever pay? That is not the question which troubles the Russian Government, any more than it affected the decision of the Czar when he applied the ruler to the map to show the route to be taken by the St Petersburg and Moscow Railway. But it must have some interesting results.

For instance, Vladivostok must become a great port; and already lines of steamers are being projected to run from there to America and Japan. In a recent Report to the Foreign Office on the trade of Corea, Consul Hillier refers

particularly to the future of Vladivostok. The port is already a place of great commercial importance, and its trade must be largely increased by the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway. Apart from the actual and potential traffic in Siberia itself, Consul Hillier points out that most of the brick-tea, which at present finds its way overland via Tientsin, will be sent by steamer from Hankow to Vladivostok for distribution through Siberia by railway. The sparsely-inhabited districts of the country will be occupied and utilised as the line is opened up, and a great increase of traffic with Corea is predicted. For four months of the year Vladivostok is ice-buried; but notwithstanding that, the natural advantages of its position, with railway communication with the west, will make it one of the most important places in the Far East. It is already a great naval station, and is strongly fortified, and as the great stronghold of Russia in the East, it will be the centre of constantly-growing activity.

But what is not generally known is that within fifty or sixty miles of Vladivostok has been discovered, and is now being developed, a particularly rich vein of anthracite coal. At present, this coal is being worked by English machinery and Chinese labour, and is sent down by lighters to Vladivostok. But a short branch will be constructed to connect the mines with the Trans-Siberian Railway; and, moreover, the whole Ussuri country is believed to be full of coal-fields. Here, then, is a great prospective source of traffic in itself, not to mention the solution of the fuel problem for the locomotives, and for the Russian steamers in the Pacific.

The whole region of the Amur is known to be rich in minerals, and gold, silver, and platinum have for years been mined, under disadvantageous conditions which the railway will remove. So long ago as 1858, there was quite an acute gold-fever in Russia, and an extensive rush took place to the Amur diggings.

It is now five years since the first train entered Samarkand, nine hundred miles from the Caspian Sea. This was accounted a great enterprise; but both in extent and in cost it does not represent one-fifth part of what is involved in the Trans-Siberian Railway, which, roughly speaking, will be about double the length of even the great Central Pacific line of the United States.

It is not reasonable to expect any great revenue to the railway from any through-traffic with China. In a few words, this expectation can be disposed of. Thus, experience in other countries has proved that railway transport under the most favourable conditions cannot be carried on with profit at less than one halfpenny per ton per mile. Let us, for the sake of argument, take eight thousand miles as the distance between Vladivostok and London, and let us assume that tea or silk could be delivered at Vladivostok as cheaply as at Hankow or Shanghai. Yet the railway rate would be, in round numbers, about seventeen pounds per ton, as against about two pounds per ton by steamer. There is thus no possibility of competition.

So much, however, has been done by railways in the opening up of the American Continent, that great things may reasonably be expected in Asia, only the autocratic system of government

is not in favour of rapid industrial development. That Siberia is capable of becoming a highly-productive country there is abundant evidence, and within the last year or two several travellers have referred in sanguine terms to the very great agricultural resources of the southern belt of the country.

Besides the great potential wheat-growing area, Southern Siberia has large tracts of land which seem specially marked out for stock-raising, and Siberian ranches are amongst the possibilities of the future. The actual gifts of nature ready to be grasped are in the trackless forests, in the bosom of the earth, and in the wealth of fur and of fish, the realisable value of which depends on accessibility of markets. A very large quantity of grain is already grown in Siberia, but as no present means exist of sending it to market, it is mainly used for distilling alcohol.

A good deal of manufacturing goes on in Siberia, recent statistics showing there are upwards of two thousand factories, such as tanneries, tallow-factories, distilleries, &c., in the provinces of Tobolsk and Tomsk alone. Siberian manufactures are for the most part sold in Asia; but markets could be found for much more in America and Europe were the railway completed. The imports of manufactured goods—almost entirely from Russia—amount to about fifteen millions sterling per annum; and of course the more the country developed internally, the more would it require the manufactured products of Europe. We have seen it stated that at Yakutsk, sugar sometimes rises to two shillings and sixpence per pound, and that valuable furs are often to be had in exchange for a little whisky!

Eastern Siberia, which includes an area of about three million square miles, and a population of one million and a half or so, has been heretofore almost entirely dependent on China for cotton, woollen, and silk fabrics. Yet this is the great mineral area of Northern Asia, the California of Russia, yielding several millions' worth of gold every year.

Whether the great wheat-lands of Siberia can ever be utilised for the supply of hungry Britain is a problem for the future to solve. But looking at the immense distances over which grain is transported by rail in America, it is not unreasonable to look at Asiatic Russia as a probable source of food-supply.

That the line can flourish, or even pay the interest on cost of construction, from local and intermediate traffic, unless there be immense agricultural and industrial development, need not be expected. Roughly speaking, there is at present in Siberia only one person to each square mile of territory. Now, in the United Kingdom the average amount of traffic is equal to about eight tons per head of the population; and in Germany to three and three-quarter tons; but in European Russia to only half a ton. On the same basis, and for the population within reasonable reach of the area of the railway, the local traffic would not amount to a million tons per annum.

In conclusion, it may be said that the distance by rail from St Petersburg to Vladivostok is computed at about six thousand miles, and that the time required for traversing this distance by train will be about sixteen days. In something

like three weeks, then, one should be able by the Trans-Siberian Railway to run from London to Yokohama, and within a month be amid the antiquities of Peking, or amid the wilds of Kamchatka or Corea.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER III.—TIDINGS.

THREE years went by. It was winter again. The marshlands lay beneath a thick coating of ice; the dikes were frozen pathways to the Thames; the pollards had grown white-headed with rime; and the only signs of life were the gulls coming in from the sea with their plaintive cry for food and shelter.

It was holiday-time. Jess was still a teacher at the village school. But she no longer felt ready to dance home along her path; for the promise of tidings which Upcraft had given her had never come. The girl had lost all hope. And yet she went about her duties cheerfully; the old routine of village life continued to run its uneventful course; and it was seldom that any one—unless it were her little friend Jim—detected a line of care upon her face.

One dismal afternoon—Jess having gone to spend the day with friends at Thurrock Hall—Mrs Gilkes sat warming herself over the kitchen fire. Mr Bryce was having his after-dinner nap, the only time when the woman got any rest at the cottage. Jim knelt upon the hearth-rug at his mother's side, rubbing his fat hands together, just as he knelt and warmed them upon the night of his expedition with Jess across the marshlands three years ago. Suddenly he touched his mother's arm. 'There's the firing agin!' said he, his small keen eyes glittering with excitement. 'Don't you hear it, mother?'

'Never mind the firing, Jim; get to work!' said Mrs Gilkes. 'It makes me downright queer to look at you when the convicts is abroad. It's high time you was a-growing out of it, and now you've begun to earn your own living too.'

Jim was on the point of replying, and not without impudence, to judge from his look, when there came a loud knock at the front door. He hurried down the passage to answer it. On the doorstep, under the porch, stood a tall man in a great fur coat. There was just enough light left in the gathering mist to see his face. Jim stared at him for a moment, and then gasped, as though he had received an unexpected blow in the back.

'Is Miss Bryce at home?'

'No, sir!'

'Mr Bryce?'

'Yes; he is. What—what name?'

'Tell him,' said the visitor, 'that a gentleman has called to see him.'

Jim rapped at the study door, and receiving an order to 'come in,' instantly obeyed.

'What's it all about?'

Mr Bryce sat upright in his armchair and looked sternly over his shoulder at the boy. Jim delivered his message.

'Why don't you show him in?' said Mr Bryce.

'I'm a-doing of it, ain't I?' And Jim opened the study door to its full extent.

The visitor stepped in. Having closed the door behind him with a jerk, Jim groped his way back to the kitchen as though he had been struck blind.

'Bless the boy,' cried Mrs Gilkes, catching her son by the shoulder as he leaned against the wall, 'how pale he is!'

'No, I ain't!'

'You are, Jim. You're as pale as if you'd see'd a ghost! It's all alonger the firing. You're a-worriting your head agin about them convicts,' said Mrs Gilkes. 'It ain't no good a-contradicting me.'

Jim made no further attempt at contradiction. He thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and stared wonderingly into the fire.

Meanwhile, Mr Bryce, who had been startled out of his nap, could make nothing of the visitor in the uncertain light of the afternoon.

'What do you want with me?' said he gruffly.

'Nothing. I've come,' was the reply, 'to see your daughter.'

The man's voice, and the dim outline of his face and figure as he stood between him and the light, brought a sudden look of hatred and indignation. 'Upcraft! Why, you are surely mad!'

'I'm perfectly sane.—Are you expecting her home?'

Mr Bryce got up from his chair and stood upon the hearth-rug with his back to the fire. 'I am expecting her home. But you had better not wait,' said he, in a significant tone. 'If you were a millionaire, and without reproach, you could not marry her now. You are supplanted—forgotten! Do you know Colonel Woodward? He lives at Thurrock Hall. That's the man she's going to marry. Do you doubt me? Ask the first village gossip you meet if it's not true!'

Upcraft went out without another word. Mr Bryce walked to the window and peered after him into the fog. He saw him pass into the high-road and turn his steps towards Thurrock village. Then he began to pace restlessly up and down his room. At intervals an elastic flame lit up his face; it was full of craftiness and fiendish thought. He had been scheming for years to marry Jess to Colonel Woodward of Thurrock Hall; and suddenly this man Upcraft became again an obstacle in his path!

A decanter stood on the table. He emptied the last drop out of it into his wine-glass, drank it off and then rang the bell. And now he stood grimly smiling, with his face half-turned towards the door; and he seemed as though listening to the signal-gun, that still boomed across the marshes like an ominous voice.

John Upcraft heard it too. He stopped abruptly, and pressed his hands to his ears to shut out the sound. It carried him back to that terrible night, three years ago, when he was out upon the marshlands, a miserable convict, shivering with acute ague. Surely he was still the convict—surely it was for him that the gun was firing! The old sense of horror recurred. He shook from head to foot; and it was only by repeatedly touching his fur coat and passing his hands over his limbs that he could convince himself that he was no longer in prison garb, no longer hunted. In his grief and overwhelming despair, he began to wish that Jessie Bryce had left him

to die in the marshes where she had found him. It would have been kinder, a thousand times kinder, than to have recalled him to life in order to subject him to this misery. For the moment he was sorely tempted to strike across the marshlands and reach the river-side, where with one leap he could end it all. But his better judgment soon prevailed. He conquered the momentary weakness, and went on towards the village with a growing strength of purpose in his step. There was no sense of shivering now, no thought of bending to destiny. The lights of Thurrock village had come in sight. He was erect and determined; and he presently walked into the village inn—an inn called the 'Old Hulk'—with little trace of the recent suffering to be seen in his resolute face. But the crowning test of Upcraft's moral strength now awaited him.

The bar-parlour of the 'Old Hulk' was small and cosy. There was a table in the centre, around which a number of men were seated. Some had drawn their chairs close to the board; while others sat back against the wall, seeming to prefer a more distant view of the glass or tankard to which they laid claim. The company had raised a pretty thick fog, in opposition to the fog outside, with their tobacco-smoke; and Upcraft, by way of making it denser, lit a cigar, after taking a vacant seat near the window. A light resembling an old ship's lamp hung from the ceiling. But Upcraft had no dread of being recognised, for this was almost the first time he had set foot in Thurrock village.

A silence had fallen upon the company when Upcraft came in, but only for a moment. An elderly man with a closely-shaven face soon took up the thread of talk. He gave a nod before he spoke, as if to challenge contradiction. 'So I say. He's a gentleman.'

'Ay,' chimed in a middle-aged, hook-nosed man—'and a rich un too! What more do a girl want?'

'Look at his age!' said a youth, disparagingly. 'He's older than she be, yer see, by twenty year.'

'They haven't settled the day,' said a wrinkled person in the chimney corner, whom Upcraft took to be the sexton, 'have they?'

Before an answer could be given, a carriage drove up to the inn door, and all eyes were directed towards it. The landlord was seen to hurry out. Then the window of the carriage was let down, and a face appeared there in the light of the carriage lamp. It was Jess.

Upcraft's first impulse was to go out to the door and greet her. How beautiful she looked! A great yearning possessed him to hear her voice. He longed to touch her hand once more. But the impulse was quickly mastered. He sank back in his chair. She was in Colonel Woodward's carriage, and of course he was at her side. The taproom gossip had fairly confirmed old Bryce's words. She was Colonel Woodward's fiancée. It was too late!

Jess had stopped at the inn to inquire after a sick child. At the moment the horses were about to start off, she caught sight of Jim. The boy was flushed and out of breath. She stopped the carriage and looked out. 'What is it, Jim?'

'Let me in!' was his answer, as he raised his arm, trying frantically to reach the handle of the carriage door—'let me in!'

Jess opened the door: Jim scrambled up the step; and the carriage went on, by the marshland road, towards the cottage.

The boy's whole look and manner alarmed her. She drew him to her side, for they were alone in the carriage, and she waited impatiently for him to speak. In the silence, the boom of the signal-gun struck upon her ear for the first time to-night and set her heart beating fast.

'Look here, miss!' said Jim, the moment he recovered breath—'you know that convict? He's escaped agin!'

She caught him distractedly by the arm. Her face was now more eager than his: 'Tell me—quick! Have you seen him?'

'Seen him!' said Jim, with a wondering look. 'You know what dark eyes he's got? I know'd him agin the moment I met his eye. Don't yer remember? I never see'd his face, rightly speaking: it was covered with mud; weren't it? His eyes was what I see'd. I was a-holding the lantern, and he opened 'em on me.—Look 'ee here, miss! He opened 'em on me this a'ternoon at the front door just the same.'

'Not at the cottage, Jim? He can't have been there!'

Jim nodded. 'He didn't stop long. He had a word or two with master; and then I heerd him go out. Then master rang his bell; and while mother went to answer it, miss,' said the boy, 'I slipt away. I ran down the road; I caught sight of him, though I couldn't catch him up. But I followed.'

'But why,' said Jess desperately, 'why have you lost sight of him now?'

'I haven't, miss. He's at the inn—at the "Old Hulk." Didn't you see him a-staring at you out o' the bar-parlour window a moment ago?'

A cry of delight was Jessie's only reply. She lowered the carriage window and put out her head. She could see a light in the cottage, shining dimly through the mist; and in another minute the carriage drew up at her home.

'Jim,' said she, laying her hand on his shoulder, 'stay where you are. I want you to take a letter to him instantly. Not one moment must be lost! The carriage will put you down at the inn. But not a word to any one—remember that! The letter I'm going to give you must be trusted to nobody. Place it yourself in his hands. Do you understand?'

'Yes, miss.'

Mrs Gilkes opened the door. 'You didn't happen to meet my Jim along the marshland road; did you, miss? He's at his tricks agin!'

'You needn't worry yourself about him,' said Jess. 'He's in the carriage, and he's going on an errand for me.' She entered the study while speaking, and finding it empty, sat down at her father's desk and wrote on a slip of paper: 'DEAR JOHN—Come back to me!—Jess.' This she put into an envelope and sealed; then she went out and handed it to Jim at the carriage window. 'You'll give it to no one else?' she reiterated—'or speak of it to a living soul?'

Jim promised; and the carriage drove away. Jess watched it out of sight; then she turned to

Mrs Gilkes, who still stood at the front door: 'Where's father?'

'Gone up to London, miss. He left a letter for you on the study table. Didn't you see it?'

'Gone to town?' said Jess, mystified.

The letter consisted of a couple of hurriedly-written lines: 'A matter of importance takes me to London. I shall not return to-night.'

That was all. There was no word of explanation. What could have induced him to take so sudden a step? He could only have one motive, as she thought: he had seen John. Angry words had passed between them: he had driven Upcraft from the house with gibes and insults; and now he had gone to London to give information against him—against the man she loved—the escaped convict.

It was pitiable. But the thought of her father's unkindly action did not greatly distress her to-night; her heart was too full of happiness. She sat down beside his study fire, rejoicing to think that he would be out of the way when Upcraft came. She would make up to him for her father's insults with loving words. She stirred the fire into a cheerful blaze; then she began to listen for his coming. He could not be long now. He would be sure to outstrip Jim, in his haste to reach her side, the moment he had read her message.

The minutes went by; but neither John nor the messenger appeared. Presently Mrs Gilkes came in with the tea-tray. Jess was sitting with her head between her hands, looking vacantly before her.

'A bit lonely, ain't you, miss?' said the woman soothingly. 'Well, it ain't to be wondered at. You'd like me to stop and sleep here to-night, maybe?'

'Yes, please, Mrs Gilkes.—How long has Jim been gone?'

'A good ten minutes,' said the woman.

'Not more?'

'Not a minute more by the kitchen clock,' said Mrs Gilkes, 'I do assure you.'

'It seems like an hour to me,' said Jess. Then she added, looking round at the tea-tray: 'Would you bring another cup? I am expecting a friend.'

The little brass kettle on the hob began to sing. John would soon be here now. In another ten minutes she might safely count upon hearing his step upon the road. Her heart beat faster at the thought. She would hurry out and call to him by name, and see his arms held out to take her to him at last.

It was getting late. The ten minutes had stretched into an hour—an hour into two—and still there was no sign of John Upcraft's coming. What could the reason be? If the boy had not found him at the inn, he would surely have returned to tell her of his failure long ago. She became filled with the dread that something had happened. Mrs Gilkes's restless step in the kitchen told Jess that Jim's mother, too, was getting anxious. She could stop indoors no longer. She drew on her hooded cloak, and went to the kitchen in all haste.

'I'm going down to the village, Mrs Gilkes,' said she, 'to look for your Jim.'

'Thank 'ee, miss! I am a bit worried about

him,' said the woman tremulously; 'though he's old enough now, you would think, to take care of himself; wouldn't you?' While speaking, she lit the lantern. Jess took it from her, and stepped out into the cold and heavy mist.

She was painfully reminded, as she groped along, of that night when out upon the marshes three years ago. But the air was keener to-night, and the mist far denser. But she went bravely on towards the village, stepping upon the rays from the lantern as fast as they fell in her way. How silent the marshlands seemed—how desolate! Nothing audible but the pattering of her own hurrying feet upon the frosty ground. The noise of the signal-gun had ceased at last.

But presently the pattering of other feet caught her ear. She stopped to listen, thinking that the sound might be the echo of her own. But no: they still came on—nearer and nearer.

It was Jim's step! She recognised it now. She raised the lantern above her head and called to him loudly. She received no answer, except a quickening of the pattering feet; and in another moment Jim—hot-faced and horror-stricken, as he looked—came within the narrow circle of light.

'Jim! What is it?'

'I—I've found him!' said Jim distressfully.

'Where? Wasn't he at the inn?'

'No, miss, he wasn't.'

'Is he there now?'

'No, no, miss.'

'Then where—where is he?' said Jess.

Jim burst out crying. 'Mur—murdered,' sobbed the boy, in a frightened whisper, 'in Thurrock Wood.'

THE GENIUS OF LEONARDO DA VINCI.

It was in that golden period in the history of art, the few years between 1490 and 1520, when the greatest painters whom the world had ever seen were living and working together, that Leonardo da Vinci flourished. Bright, indeed, were those days for Italy which saw Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, Giorgione, Benvenuto Cellini, and Titian. The son of a notary at Florence, and called Da Vinci from the place of his birth, Leonardo, who was born in 1452, created for himself a name that can well be placed in the list of his most illustrious contemporaries. He was at once painter, poet, sculptor, anatomist, architect, engineer, chemist, musician, mechanic, and philosopher, although his fame now rests on his accomplishments as a painter. While young he was placed under Andrea del Verrocchio, a painter and sculptor of some note, who employed the youth to execute one of the angels in a picture of 'The Baptism of Christ.' This he did with so much softness and richness of colour, that it far surpassed the rest of the picture. Verrocchio, when he saw this, was so struck with mortification, that he never again took up his brush, and confined himself to his sculpture, 'enraged that a child should thus excel him.'

It happened about this time that a peasant on the estate which his father owned brought him a circular piece of wood cut from a fig-tree, and desired the young painter to make him an ornament for his cottage. His father urged the boy

to grant the request, and a most unlooked-for production was the result. The boy gathered from the neighbouring swamps all kinds of hideous reptiles—adders, lizards, toads, snakes, and many other repulsive crawling creatures—and from these models he compounded a monster, which he depicted as about to issue from the shield. When finished he led his father into the room, and his terror and horror proved that the boy was successful. This production was afterwards sold by Leonardo for a hundred ducats, and subsequently found its way to the ducal palace at Milan; but was destroyed in a looting raid as an object of horror by those who did not appreciate art. The poor peasant lost his promised shield, but was satisfied by another on which the boy painted the simple subject of a heart pierced with a dart.

When Da Vinci was about twenty years of age he became a member of a guild of painters, and began work as an independent artist at Florence, where he executed many pictures of great credit, in which the universality of his genius soon appeared. He was by far the greatest physiologist of his time, and the first who made a study of anatomy as connected with art. He wrote a book on the Anatomy of the Horse, and afterwards made an almost exhaustive study of the human frame. He was well skilled also in optics and geometry, was a good carver, had an excellent voice, and invented a species of lyre for himself, to which he would sing his own verses and music. He had a well-formed person, and delighted in manly exercises; was dexterous in the use of arms, and loved well to manage a high-nettled steed. The fame of Leonardo da Vinci soon spread all over Italy, and the Duke of Milan invited him to his court; and having formed a design of supplying the city of Milan with water by a new canal, Leonardo was entrusted with the management of the affair. This canal is two hundred miles in length, and is a masterly piece of engineering.

After serving the Duke in the capacity of architect and engineer, Leonardo was requested to exhibit his skill as a painter. His celebrated 'Last Supper'—his chief work—was the result. It was painted on the wall of the refectory of the Dominicans. The work took him a very long time, for he would wander about the city searching for models to serve for the various persons he wished to depict, and whenever a group or an attitude struck him he drew it on his tablets. All was finished with the exception of two persons—the one was the figure of Christ, and the other was the disciple Judas. He had wandered far, and had searched high and low, but could not find a presence noble enough for the one, or a physiognomy base enough for the other.

A year elapsed, and still the picture remained unfinished. At last the prior of the convent complained to the Grand-Duke of the unnecessary delay of Da Vinci in completing the picture. The artist in defence pleaded that he worked at the picture for two hours every day.

'May it please your Highness,' said the overbearing prior, 'he has not entered the convent doors for a year.'

'It is true I have not entered the convent,' said Leonardo; 'but it is also true that I have worked

at the picture for two hours every day. I have at last succeeded in finding a head which will serve as a model for the greatest and the most noble being that ever trod the earth. The head of Judas remains to be done; and I have for six months past frequented daily, morning and evening, the Borghetto, where the lowest refuse of the population live. I have not yet found the features I am in quest of. These once found, the picture is finished in a day. If, however, I am not successful in my search, I shall rest satisfied with the face of the prior, which would suit my purpose excellently well, only that for a long time I have been hesitating about taking such a liberty with him in his own convent.'

From the fact that it was painted in oil upon plaster that was not dry, this great picture was, unfortunately, very short-lived. It was finished in 1498; in 1540 it is spoken of by Armenini as half effaced; and Scannelli, who examined it in 1642, wrote of it as 'a thing that once was.' Its beauty was not improved by the improvements of the Fathers, who, in order to reach their kitchen the easier, cut a doorway clean through the middle of the picture. In 1726, with singular vandalism, the order employed an artist, Bellotti, who pretended to restore the lost colours, but who really painted the whole picture over again; and finally, in 1770, one Mazza scraped off most of the few outlines that remained of the original, and inserted heads of his own, with the exception of three, when he was stopped by a new prior, who revered art and the name of Leonardo da Vinci.

The history of this unfortunate masterpiece is by no means ended, nor the chapter of accidents at all completed. In 1796 Bonaparte forbade any military use to be made of the chamber, but soon after one of the generals, ignoring the order or not knowing of its existence, knocked down the doors and made a stable of it. The dragoons amused themselves by adding to and embellishing the picture. For some years the room was used as a military store; and in 1800 a flood penetrated into it and covered the floor a foot deep with water, which was suffered to remain until it dried up of itself.

Such is the history of Da Vinci's 'Last Supper.' Happily, however, Francis I. had a copy taken of it, which he placed at St Germain; and numerous contemporary copies exist, although the great original is mouldering away on the wall of the convent of the Madonna delle Grazie.

In 1505, after Da Vinci had been driven out of Milan by the disturbances in Lombardy, the Florentines commissioned him to paint, together with Michael Angelo, the Council Chamber of their city. A jealousy arose between the two artists, and each having his partisans, they became open enemies. About this time the young painter Raphael came to Florence to see the wonderful works of the great Da Vinci, and they made so strong an impression upon him as to produce a change in his own style of painting. In 1513, Da Vinci left Florence to proceed to Rome, where Leo X. resolved to employ him, upon which the artist set about distilling oils and preparing varnish with which to cover his pictures. Leo, on hearing of this, said, that 'nothing could be expected from a man who thought of finishing his works before he had begun them.'

In 1516, Leonardo visited the court of the young French king, Francis I., who bestowed upon him a yearly allowance of seven hundred scudi and a residence near Amboise. Here the great painter expired, 2d May 1519, aged sixty-seven years.

The genuine works of Leonardo da Vinci are exceedingly rare. In the Louvre is a celebrated production of his, 'St Anna;' and in the National Gallery is a good specimen, 'Our Lady of the Rocks,' where it will be observed that though his figures are graceful and expressive, his rocks in the famous picture are 'literally no better than those on a china plate.' Most of the pictures now attributed to him were wholly, or in part, painted by his scholars or by imitators from his cartoons. Of nine pictures in the Louvre attributed to him, three only are considered genuine. In the Royal Library at Windsor there are three volumes of manuscripts and drawings, containing a vast variety of subjects—portraits, heads, groups, and single figures; fine anatomical studies of horses; a battle of elephants, full of spirit; drawings in optics, hydraulics; plans of military machines, and musical airs noted in his own hand. The Royal Library at Paris contains several of his philosophical treatises, one of which, the *Treatise on Painting*, has been published, and is the foundation of all that has since been written on the subject. His manuscripts are very difficult to decipher; the letters are formed in a most fantastic manner; and, moreover, the writing reads from right to left, and was written by the author backwards, and with his left hand, though to this day no one knows the reason why.

UNDER THE CHERRY-TREE.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

IN such full cry was the hunt, that when half-way round the tree the Baron came upon a lady whose approach he had not observed, it was all he could do to lower his weapon in time. During the moment of mutual amazement that followed, the lady's elderly countenance settled into an expression of displeasure mingled with disgust.

'So the African cannibals have *not* dined off him.' Something in this strain would have run her thoughts, if put into words. 'Back again, like the worst penny that ever was!'

'My deepest respects to you, Countess!'

'Good-morning to you, Baron Blasewitz. Would you mind telling me—ahem—what you are doing with this—this broom? Have you brought it back from your travels?' Here the Countess had recourse to her eyeglass for the purpose of a closer examination. 'I presume it is an African specimen?'

'Pardon me; it is the vulgar European broom. I take the liberty of introducing myself as cherry warder.'

'As what?'

'As cherry warder. This broom is the badge and sceptre of my office.'

'I don't believe a word of it, of course,' reflected the Countess. 'There is some deeper meaning here. I have always said that he is a most dangerous and undesirable person.'

'Up there, Countess, hangs the prosperity of

a poor widow who has a quantity of children—six or seven; I don't remember exactly how many.'

'A poor widow? I am a widow myself, and therefore I have always a most particular sympathy for widows.'

The severity of the Countess's features relaxed. After all, there seemed to be some truth about the matter; yet, notwithstanding, she felt convinced that the man was on Angélique's track.

'Have you not happened to catch sight of my niece, Baron Blasewitz?' she inquired, very craftily, as she considered.

'Your niece? Yes; that is to say, I saw her from a distance.' (There was no need to specify how short that distance had been.)

'He is trying to deceive me,' was the Countess's wrathful reflection.

'And where was my niece, pray, when you saw her—from a distance? I have been searching for her for this last hour in vain.'

The Baron's reply was very quietly but firmly to hand over the broom. 'Permit me, Countess.'

In her surprise, the Countess actually took it between two fingers. 'What is the meaning of this?'

'I shall be back again in five minutes; I am going to look for your niece.'

'Wait, Baron Blasewitz—stop! That is not what I meant.'

'I understand perfectly what you mean,' called back the Baron, already started on his quest. 'Make your mind quite easy, Countess; I am sure to find her.'

'Wait, Baron Blasewitz!' cried Angélique's aunt in an agony. 'I am coming with you—I am coming after you!'

'Think of the cherry-tree and of the poor widow with the eight children!' were the Baron's last words as he vanished over the curve of the hill.

A poor widow with eight children—to be sure; the Countess had almost forgotten that part of the matter. After all, one could not be so heartless; that is to say, supposing there was any truth in the story. But, all the same, the situation was highly vexatious. If only Angélique were back again! It was absolutely certain that that scamp of a Blasewitz knew where she was; he had smiled so diabolically. Yes, that Mephistophelean smile enlightened her. It was all a plot. It must be baffled; but how? To follow them would be to leave the tree unguarded, and that probably meant starvation to the widow and her eight children!

'In Heaven's name, help! help! help!' burst from the Countess's agitated lips.

An apple-cheeked, cherry-lipped village maiden was the first to answer the cry. 'Where is it you have hurt yourself?' she asked, a little breathless from the pace at which she had come.

'Nowhere, my dear child; it is only my fears, my excitement. I must be off; but you, my child, remain here; take this broom. Think of the widow with the nine children; do not leave this spot.—Oh Angélique, Angélique!' And pressing the broom into the new-comer's hand, the Countess turned and fled down the pathway.

'I don't understand a word of it,' was the buxom maiden's conclusion. 'A widow, did she say she was? And has got nine children? And I am

not to leave the spot? Well, I don't mind staying, since there are plenty of cherries to eat, and I know that Sepperl wouldn't grudge them to me. But I can't get the broom to fit in at all. Nothing particular to be discovered about it, either, turn it round and round as I may. Well, I shall not let my hair grow gray over it; I shall just tell Sepperl. Oh, the sweet cherries!' And tossing aside the broom, the latest arrival under the cherry-tree set to work upon the branches.

She had been most pleasantly occupied for more than five minutes, when Baron Blasewitz reappeared over the brow of the hill, not in the best of humours, for he had failed to catch even a glimpse of Angélique. 'I am inconsolable, Countess,' he began; but here the branches rustled, and a laughing face looked out from between the leaves.

'Ha, lass! what are you doing there?—Hold, I say!—Heavens! My promise to Angélique, the post which she entrusted to me!—Leave the cherries alone, I say!'

'Mind your own business.—What can such a fine gentleman have to do with the cherries, pray?'

'Unlucky creature! what brought you here?'

'A lady, a very fine lady indeed, gave me that broom there, and said she was a widow with ten children.'

'The children seem to be multiplying in proportion as the cherries are decreasing,' reflected the Baron within himself, at the same time that he angrily possessed himself of the hand full of cherries which the girl was attempting to hide from him.

'Don't be rude, or I'll tell Sepperl,' she laughed, turning away to stuff cherries into her mouth with the other hand.

'The other hand! Give me the other hand!' cried the Baron, too absorbed in the object of the moment to heed the light step which was drawing near over the grass.

It was fortunate for Countess Angélique that Mother Resi's precious cherry-tree was not the only one which grew upon this patch of ground, for without the support of a friendly stem, it is not improbable that this much-tried young lady would at this juncture have fainted. As it was, she had to rub her eyes and look again. No, there could be no mistake; he was holding the creature's hand. Then she had guessed aright; it was a *rendez-vous*. 'And, oh dear, she is pretty, very pretty,' groaned Angélique at the bottom of her palpitating heart.

'Countess Angélique!' and, with a start, the Baron let go the hand he was holding, the owner of which ran off, still laughing and still in possession of the plunder. 'Countess Angélique, you perceive my embarrassment!—'

'I perceive it,' assented Angélique in a voice which unluckily was not quite so steady as it was chilly.

'What can I say in my defence?'

'Pray, do not trouble yourself; I neither expect nor wish to hear any defence.'

'Angélique, why this cruelty?'

'Who has given you the right to call me by my name?'

'But ten minutes ago I did so!—'

'Ten minutes ago! Ten minutes ago I was foolish and blind. Ten minutes ago, you had

not abused my confidence, abused it most unworthily'—

'But after all'—

'Oh, I can keep my calmness no longer. Answer me plainly: do you confess yourself guilty—yes or no?'

'Unfortunately, my guilt is too staring to be screened.'

'What flippancy!' she thought aghast. 'He says it to my very face!'

'Angélique, you are crying!' For in truth she had pulled out an exquisite morsel of lace and *batiste*, and was gasping for breath behind it. Of the two, the Baron was undoubtedly the most thunder-struck; nothing had prepared him for the stolen cherries being taken so tragically. 'What a heart she has!' he reflected, in a mixture of agony and admiration, and quite oblivious of the fact that the tree was being meanwhile plundered at leisure by the very scum of the village street. 'She is mourning for the poor widow with the dozen children!—Angélique!' he pleaded, 'calm yourself; it is not such a very bad case.'

'It is bad enough. Go away, Baron Blasewitz, go back to Africa; let me never see you again. My aunt was right; I should have believed her sooner.—Ah! here she comes!' as the Countess emerged upon the pathway with bonnet somewhat awry and a flounce hanging in a loop from her skirt.

'Here I have them at last!'

'Dearest aunt!' sobbed Angélique, throwing herself into her aunt's arms, 'you were right; he is a worthless man; I wish never to see him again.'

'I always told you so,' gasped the Countess, still somewhat short of breath.

'Sepp! Sepperl! Seppi!' rang out from the background; and before any more words had been exchanged, Mother Resi appeared, armed with a long-handled wooden spoon. 'Sepperl, the soup is in the basin.'

But here her eye fell on the broken branches, the torn-off bunches of the pillaged tree, and she stood still in consternation. 'So that's the way my cherries are looked after! Wait a bit, you good-for-nothings!' This time it was the wooden spoon that swept the coast clear. 'Sepperl! Sepp! The wretched boy is right enough to hide himself.'

'Take time, take time; I'm coming.' And laden with something wrapped in a red cotton handkerchief, Sepperl emerged from between the trees.

'Look at the tree!' screamed his mother, taking him by the arm. 'Where are the cherries gone to? Ha?'

Sepperl looked and rubbed his eyes. 'Well, anyway I didn't eat them, and I didn't leave them alone either. That young lady took the broom away from me.'

'And I gave it to Baron Blasewitz.'

'And I handed over my sceptre to Countess Lilienburg.'

'And I left that most objectionable broom in the hand of a pretty peasant girl who was passing at that moment.'

'What? All these have watched my cherries, and that's all that remains of them!'

'There isn't more than one pretty peasant girl for five miles round,' decided Sepperl. 'That

can't have been any one but Mirzl.—Here she comes, by good luck.—Mirzl, let's hear what you did with the broom?'

'The broom?' laughed Mirzl, as she joined the group. 'Why, I let it lie on the grass, to be sure. One doesn't require a broom for eating cherries.'

'My cherries!' cried Mother Resi. 'Even she robs me!'

'Make your mind easy; I hadn't the chance of robbing you half as much as I should have liked, for scarcely had I begun, when all at once there rushes up that rude man there and tears away my hand from the tree.'

'Rude man?' Did Angélique's ears hear aright? Could that have been the reason?—

'I could not do otherwise, my good girl. The tree had been entrusted to my care, and I was responsible for the cherries.'

A mist seemed to be rolling away from before the young Countess's eyes. She began to think she had been very stupid.

'What have you got inside that handkerchief?' inquired Mirzl, who meanwhile had been coquetting with Sepperl's red bundle. 'Is it anything for me?'

'Take time. It's something for the young lady there; but her aunt is not to see it.'

'My niece has no secrets from me,' said the Countess quickly.

'Oh, you are the aunt, are you? Then it's you who aren't to see it.'

'I am lost,' breathed Angélique in an agony, just as the well-meaning Sepperl nudged her elbow and slowly opened the red handkerchief. 'Is this your keepsake, perhaps?'

'Goodness! can that be my locket?'

'Well, it's a bit smashed up, to be sure; but that comes from the nails in my boots; but anyhow, the picture is in one piece, and do you know what I'm thinking?—

But what it was that Sepperl was thinking never came to the light of day, for at that moment Countess Lilienburg, looking over her niece's shoulder, almost shrieked out, 'Baron Blasewitz!'

The events that followed upon the Countess's exclamation came at so giddy a pace that nobody understood what was happening until it had actually happened. The Baron in reply to what he took to be a summons, sprang forward just in time to pick up a small object that had slipped from Angélique's trembling fingers.

Had he seen? was the question which dyed her cheeks redder than the ripest of the cherries that grew upon Mother Resi's tree, as she put out her hand for the morsel of paper. One terrified glance at his face was enough for the answer: yes, he had seen.

'And that locket was yours, Angélique? I may call you Angélique now, may I not?'

'I—I don't know what to say.'

'Do you find it so hard to pardon my want of vigilance as cherry warder?'

'Oh, bother the eternal cherries! That was not what put me out of temper; it was'—

'What, then?'

'That girl over there—you were holding her hand.'

'Oh, bother the clumsy girl; to me she was only a cherry-eating machine.'

'He calls her clumsy!' rapturously reflected Angélique, and in the same moment she was aware of her hand being taken.

'I may do it now, may I not?'

'No, you may not,' interposed the Countess excitedly, recovering from a momentary attack of stupefaction. 'Questions of that sort are put to the aunt first, and to the niece afterwards.'

'Take time,' advised Sepperl soothingly. 'It's too late in the day to begin scolding now. They'll have to get their own way, you see.'

'Dearest aunt'—

'A pretty business indeed! But it can't be helped now, I suppose. That unlucky cherry-tree!'

'Oh, that lucky, lucky cherry-tree!' the Baron ventured devoutly to murmur under cover of his moustache.

'Take him, then, for goodness sake, and see if you can turn this madman into a sensible husband.'

Aunt and niece had been in each other's arms for at least a minute, when the attention of the bystanders was diverted by the reappearance of the same spruce, muslin-aproned young person whose visit had surprised Mother Resi earlier in the day.

'I have come back again on account of those cherries,' said Frau Netti, going up to Mother Resi. 'You had better gather them at once, for there are thunder-clouds rising. Wet fruit won't keep a month.'

'They're gathered,' said Mother Resi, wringing her hands, 'but by other fingers than mine.—There, look at the tree!'

Frau Netti turned and looked, and in her amazement almost dropped her sun umbrella. Was this poor battered and stripped caricature of a cherry-tree indeed identical with the richly-laden specimen which had rejoiced her connoisseur's eye scarcely an hour ago?

'Those good-for-nothing village rascals,' sobbed Mother Resi, disappearing behind her apron. 'But as for its being my fault'—

'Whose fault, then? In truth, there is no putting trust in these peasant folks!—Good-evening; I shall buy my cherries elsewhere. A very good-evening to you!' And the confectioner's wife lounced off with her sun umbrella at a distinctly aggressive angle.

'Two kreuzers beyond market-price,' came in gulps from Mother Resi. 'I'll never get such an offer again.'

'What was the value of the cherries?' asked Baron Blasewitz, feeling that this was not a day on which he could with any patience bear the sight of tears.

'At least forty florins.'

'I shall give you fifty.'

'And I as well,' Angélique hastened to add.

'You may put me down for the same sum,' said the Countess with a tolerably good grace.

'A hundred and fifty florins!' Mother Resi's broad countenance reappeared from behind the apron. 'Well, well, to be sure, it's a better cherry year even than I thought. I don't remember having seen its like in all my living days.'

'Nor I either,' unhesitatingly assented the Baron.—'What say you, my love? Have you

ever known such ravishing cherries as grow upon this tree!'

The question was put in an undertone, and Angélique's answer is not on record.

A LINK WITH THE PAST.

BEFORE me lies an old pocket-book, bound in faded red leather, with silver clasps. I have counted the leaves of old yellow paper and find there are two hundred of them. It is an ungainly-looking article for a lady's pocket-book, but this one belonged to my great-grandmother, and pockets *were* pockets in her day. (If anything was lost in her house, her sons would say, 'It must be in Noah's Ark,' meaning one of her pockets. She always wore two, one on each side.) The latest date in it is 1775. Her firm handwriting, the slowly, carefully formed letters, show the serious business that using ink on paper was in those days, and even now the ink is black as jet.

A pocket-book should show the character of the possessor. This one tells the tale of a life; for there are more medical recipes in it than any others, though I find many cookery recipes, such as, 'My Aunt Betsy's Way of making Mince Pies,' &c.; and other entries, as 'John Hunter came to pay me one year's rent for his cottage at Wild Moor, Two pounds fifteen shillings, September the 22d, 1769.' Or, 'Paid my maid, Febe Barber, fifteen shillings for one quarter's wages, 14th day of March 1772.'

My great-grandmother was the widow of a doctor, who had settled down on his marriage in a country cottage in North Hampshire, on an open tract of common land, surrounded by moorlands and water-meadows, often half-flooded over by the river that ran through them, desolate enough in winter, but lovely beyond description in summer. Her short married life, as I have been told, was a very happy one. Her husband's love, till the grave parted them, was that of a devoted lover. He died, leaving her with two boys, one four and the other two years old.

After she had braved the first days of sorrow and the nights spent in grief, her boys would creep into her room in the morning and lay their heads on her pillow, wet with her tears. Then hope would come back. Amongst her neighbours she was counted rich, for she had fifty pounds a year of her own. And who in the whole country-side could distil waters as she did, or know more of herbs and medicine than she?

A few nights after her husband's death, a man came to her in great trouble. He was the tenant of the Court Farm—a man who wore leather gaiters, a long green linen smock-frock, and a straw hat of home-platted coarse straw. He knocked at her door, and, with trembling, courteous words, begged to be excused. 'But our little Ben is taken with the croup, and no one to help him now but you, dame! If you will come and see him before he dies, it will be some comfort to poor Jeannie.' He would put her on Jock, her husband's white cobby.

She straightway donned her wimple and old brown Spanish merino cloak—in her day merino

came from Spain—a full cloak, fuller than the skirts of these days. It was neatly gathered into a yoke. A black, velvet-lined tippet reached the waist. It was tied with strings at the neck, and fastened down the front with clasps. It had large arm-holes to pass the arms through. Her saddle, or pillion, was covered with thick gray quilted cloth, and hung in an inner room of her house.

When Farmer Maynard came to the door with the old cob, her maid appeared with this structure, which was hurriedly put on the back of the docile animal; and Dame Baker mounted, with the assistance of her maid Febe, who at the same moment hung a small reticule basket of white and black squares of platted straw on her arm, containing a silver spoon and a bottle of simple emetic; and then the dame started with her guide to the Court Farm, two miles distant. The Court Farm was an old red brick building standing within fifty yards of the parish church, the lychgate of which they passed by in the moonlight, and the churchyard where her loved husband now slept. A firm resolve came into her heart, that henceforth, as far as she could, she would do his work amongst those who called upon her for aid or help.

On entering the house, they found Mrs Maynard sitting by an old oak crib, in which lay little Ben, throwing himself about in an agony, with the hoarse croupy groans following fast one on the other, his poor little face black and swollen. Dame Baker gently lifted him on her knee and poured out into her silver spoon a dose of her emetic, and then she asked for mustard. Alas! none was in Mrs Maynard's store. 'Bring me the kettle; we must use hot water.' She took from her neck a silk handkerchief, and after carefully rolling it up into a tight ball, she held it on the child's throat, and with her steady hand poured enough boiling water to raise a small blister. She then turned the child, and proceeded to do the same just at the nape of the neck. A short time of suspense, and then the false membrane was thrown off; then came relief, followed by a deep sleep; and shortly, health returned.

From that day, my great-grandmother took her husband's place. No doctor lived within twenty miles. Often at night she might be seen—sometimes with a stalwart form beside her, lantern in hand, leading her pony—making her way to some out-lying home. Or in the dark days of winter, when the new hedges are set in the fields, an anguished worn face, with an arm in a sling, would come to her, with the cruel, poisonous blackthorn embedded in the poor burning inflamed palm, or deep between the fingers; and with gentle, soothing words she would immerse it in some cooling cataplasm, and extract the poisonous thorn. In those days the country folk were still superstitious, and they believed she knew some charm; but, to use their own words, they would say the dame 'whispered it out.'

She never took any fee; but the farmers would send grain from their granaries to her; the Squire, game and fish; the parson, a choice plant, or tree, or fruit from his garden. The poor people would bring the herbs and roots that she asked them for; the children, nuts and berries.

In her turn, she gave liberally from her stores wherever she saw a case of need.

On the occasion of the only visit the Squire and his lady ever made to London, they brought her a beautiful pair of pattens with embroidered leather straps. (All ladies wore pattens in those days.) The Squire and his lady ordered silver rings to be put on hers, for the old Squire said, 'She deserved to walk on silver. Hadn't she cured their only son of an ague?'

Her two sons grew up good and handsome, and settled on farms of their own near her. She lived to be a little over fifty years old; but after one of her long night journeys in the snow of winter, that took her past the old gray ruins of Silchester—a place that filled her with strange mystic fancies, as she said—on her return to her home she went to bed; and when morning came, they found her calm and placid in her last sleep. They buried her beside her husband in the old churchyard, close to the red brick Court Farm. Her generation passed away, and another since. The old church and the old farmhouse are still standing, and looking the same now as they did then. But all that is left of my great-grandmother are the old recipes in her quaint handwriting in the old pocket-book with the silver clasp.

TOM AND I.

THE meadow with its clover sweet
Stretched far before our view,
The daisies grew beneath our feet,
The hyacinths were blue.
I saw o'erhead a merry band
Of purple swallows fly,
When we walked through the meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

The linnet piped amid the sedge,
The blackbird's notes were gay,
On hill and plain, on bough and hedge,
The happy sunshine lay;
He questioned as he held my hand
I murmured a reply,
As we walked through the meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

And oft the spring has brought since then
The bloom to pear and peach,
The violets to the lowly glen,
The green leaves to the beech,
And scattered with her fairy wand
The gray mists from the sky,
Since we walked through that meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

And we have had since that spring day
Our share of good and ill,
And now, though old, and bent, and gray,
We're fond, true lovers still.
In perfect faith, and hand in hand,
We wait the parting night,
Since we'll meet in the better land
Together, Tom and I.

M. Rook.

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A WEIRD CRATER LAKE.

It is not commonly known that the little West Indian island of St Vincent can boast one of the finest craters in the world (Souffrière), and indeed one that may be classed among the largest; for, though some craters have considerably larger apertures measured round the top, they dwindle to a small vent below; while here you can look down a ring of awful cliff, nowhere short of a thousand feet high, into a circular lake beneath you, and this lake is no less than three miles in circumference. Had you lived two centuries ago, you would have beheld a very different sight: no lake, but a vast cone of ashes rising from those depths, and tapering gracefully upward till it towered many hundred feet above even the lofty surrounding lips. This cone had become one of nature's gardens. It was studded with a profusion of trees and flowers; and the echoes of the cliffs resounded to the songs of many birds which found a happy home there—among others, the souffrière bird, peculiar to this mountain, and hence its name.

But one fine day towards the close of 1718 the giant below turned in his sleep, and every vestige of the cone, with its living adornments—birds, trees, and flowers—was blown into the skies. How long it took to effect this transformation-scene into its present condition, there is no record; only it is known that the next visitors to the heights found the lake there; though whence its waters come is still a mystery, as there is no higher land to drain into it save its own steep edges; and there must of course be considerable evaporation beneath the tropical sun. Some years ago a boat was got down to the lake, and soundings were repeatedly sought, but no bottom could be found. In 1785 the crater was again active; but it was not till 1812 that what is known as the 'Great Eruption' took place. For two years previous, a tremendous internal pressure upon the crust of the earth had been seeking some outlet, and causing earthquakes of terrible violence over an area larger than half Europe, including within its bounds the Azores, the West

Indies, Venezuela, Colombia, and the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohio. The last of these unsuccessful struggles took place beneath the city of Caracas, in Venezuela. It was Holy Thursday, 1812, and the troops were drawn up and the processions formed to honour the day, when in an instant the soldiers were crushed to death by the fall of their own barracks, the worshippers by that of their churches. Humboldt puts the number of deaths at ten thousand, many others at twelve thousand. A month later, a sound like heavy artillery was heard in the mourning city, and preparations were made to resist an advancing enemy. Little did they know that these were the sounds of their deliverance from all further danger. For it was the mountain at St Vincent that had opened again, and relieved the pressure with a three days' eruption which is among the most remarkable of the century. More than Egyptian darkness reigned on the island, but the wonderful thing is how the black dust could get in the teeth of the easterly trade-wind to Barbadoes, eighty-six miles away. But it did so. The day after the eruption was over, the Barbadians could not even distinguish their own trees at mid-day, but they heard their boughs snapping all around beneath the dense silent rain of impalpable volcanic dust.

Again, as in the past century, the mountain had prepared a little surprise for the first visitors who should come to pay a call after the eruption. They found the grand old lake calmly sleeping below, as if nothing particular had occurred; but by its side was blown out a brand-new crater, so close to the original one that the wall of partition seemed to me less than a yard across at its top for a considerable distance. Evidently the subterranean passage to the lake had become so firmly blocked that even this mighty outburst could not force it.

The mountain seems to have been able to plan only one more surprise, which it put into effect in the form of the 'Little Eruption,' as it is called, of 1814, when it refused the crater opened two years before, and, with much less force at

its disposal, came through where the Great Eruption could not. The only written account extant is from the diary of a gentleman living at the foot of the mountain; and this was published in the 'St Vincent Government Gazette' of the 6th of May 1886:

'January 9th, 1814: At fifteen minutes after one p.m., a cloud of smoke was observed issuing from the Soufrière, a part of which appeared to roll down the side of the mountain towards Wallibon; and a large column shot upright to a great height. It continued to rise for upwards of half an hour, when it became detached from the mountain, and proceeded in a compact body in a direction nearly opposite to that of the wind at the time. At about five o'clock it had reached the eastern horizon, and by six had entirely disappeared. During its passage overhead the heat was excessive. This eruption was preceded by loud noises similar to those from the discharge of distant artillery.—January 12th: The craters were to-day visited by Mr Cummings and Mr Jennings. The eruption of the 9th proved to have been from the old crater, from which large rocks were ejected to considerable distances, some having been found upwards of a quarter of a mile from the edge of the crater. There is but little alteration in the appearance of the crater, but the water in it is boiling with great violence. The new crater remains unaltered. Much smoke has been seen to rise from the old one, and there is a heavy rumbling noise to be heard from the rim of it.'

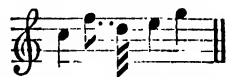
And now at last came my chance of seeing this mighty Soufrière, with whose erratic history I was long familiar—one precious day in St Vincent, to be made the most of. At five in the morning four of us started on horseback, paying only three dollars each for the day. William, the midshipman, had made a rapid survey of the Admiralty chart, and pronounced the distance we had to go to be about ten miles. This was a mere nothing. But when we had gone more than twelve, there was a mutiny in our little band, and two of them indignantly rode back. William, who had so cruelly misled us, vowed to stick to me, and I declared I must do it or die. And we did it. Sixty-six miles under a burning sun did we accomplish that day; and I would go through it all again to-morrow for the sake of one hour by the side of that weird lake, whose memory will be like an inspiration to me till my dying day.

Had we known it, we could have hired a sailing-boat and gone a much shorter journey by the other side of the island. As it was, after a ride of twenty-seven miles, we left our horses when the ascent of the mountain—four thousand feet, as high as Snowdon—became impracticable for them, and toiled on foot six miles more—thirty-three in all to get there, and thirty-three to return.

Up and down, up and down—down, only to have to ascend the more afterwards—we plodded; while William's very new riding-boots were reducing his heels to something like pulp. Brave little William! It went to my heart to refuse him a drink of the last table-spoonful of water in my flask on the summit. I wanted it for my water-colour sketch.

Up through luxuriant forest for two hours did

a negro guide lead us, and then came a region wild and windy, cool and rainy, treeless, but lavishly clothed with ferns, with small red-blossoming scrub, and rich grass, whose broad blades are coated underneath with a silvery powder that comes off to the touch. Beneath were yielding cinders, and before us somewhat unyielding black snakes, which offered to dispute the passage; but though they bite, they are not poisonous. From the skirts of the forest there arose, clear and sad, the oft-repeated song of some wild bird, singing in perfect tune—



Two huge flat oval slabs—say two hundred feet long and thirty high, bedecked with a wild profusion of ferns—stand as twin sentinels of the chasm from which they were blown; and then it is but a step and the whole marvel of the volcano bursts upon you at once, not spoiled, as so many fine sights are, by being given to you in instalments beforehand. Oh the rapture of that sight!—the lake of brimstone-and-water shimmering more than a thousand feet below in the bright sunshine, with gleams of an incredible grass-green upon its bosom, and waves crested with snowy foam advancing dead against the wind, while never a whisper of their distant breaking reaches the ear; and all the stupendous sides that drop sheer into the fearful abyss are one glorious fernery, broken for about a mile on the south by a forest of small trees, all leafless, black as ink and dead; telling that it is not always peace here, and that the giant who has roused himself so lately to work this havoc may wake again.

Yes! his lair is overlaid with a fair memorial circlet of ferns, ever fresh and green; and here where the furious fires roared, where the red molten flood seethed forth, and huge rocks were shot up like so many pebbles into the sky, while the earth trembled with the thunder of the explosions—here there seems to be a funeral wreath deposited on the grave of a departed giant; but write no epitaph thereon, for if any were written it should be *Resurgam*, 'I shall rise again.'

The new crater has a smooth bottom of grass higher in level than the lake; and a triangular pond of transparent water, fed by a tiny stream, lies toward its eastern margin; but its sides are for the most part black and charred. We tried to pass between the two craters, but when midway, encountered a cloud coming on with such a furious charge and such a hurricane behind it, that we had to lie down to avoid being blown off the narrow ridge into the lake, a fate which we barely escaped. I have heard that 'the Indians'—that is, Caribs, who in 1735 numbered over ten thousand, but by the census of 1881 only one hundred and ninety-two—use this passage as a short-cut in carrying fish from the leeward coast; and there certainly seemed to be some trace of a path as far as we got; but even if I saw the thing done, I am not sure that I should accept the testimony of my own eyes.

We lay on the ridge until the storm abated; and glad men were we when that took place, and the fierce wind and rain and the dense fog cleared off enough to let us get back to safer ground. Thence we obtained a view of magic

beauty over the farther rim of the new crater. It was the Morne Garon, rising into the clouds from a verdant plateau intersected by a zigzag river. The perpendicular wall which the Morne presented to us was scalloped into vertical columns, across which ran alternate strata of bare dripping purple rock and vivid verdure of luxuriant ferns.

And now came the hour of reluctant adieu. One mile, and we had left the cool and rainy region behind, and were in the burning tropics again. But many miles were before us ere we could return to our ship; and it was not till three o'clock in the morning that, with the delightful sense of 'something attempted, something done,' we stretched our wearied limbs, I in my bunk, William in his hammock, to wake four hours later to a stiffness never experienced before, and to the indignant consciousness that every one laughed at us, and no one believed that we had really been to the Soufrière.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXI.—ISABEL IS WAITED FOR.

'No woman can help him and guide him better than you.'

Isabel repeated these words again and again, with a certain solemnity, the morning after she had first read them, and every time she repeated them she murmured, 'There is no mention of Love.' She was going to surrender her wealth—that idea was still vividly present with her—out of love and gratitude to her uncle and his family: must she now also surrender herself? The passion of sacrifice was, as I have said, strong upon her; but yet she was not then fully prepared to make the second surrender that seemed to be due from her. She felt herself drifting into contemplation of its possibility, because, though strenuously confident the evening before, she was now very doubtful of holding on to the hopes Alan Ainsworth had created.

She went to the Home of her Aged, and partook of lunch with them; then she drove to Victoria Station to take train for the Surrey hills to visit her father. The day was bright and warm, and she found him enjoying the December sun on a southward slope of the grounds of his abode, with a blotting-pad upon his knee, busy with pen and paper and a bagman's ink-pot. He was so engrossed with his 'Defence of Transcendentalism' that he had little to say to his daughter, and presently she left him.

When she returned to town, she found a letter awaiting her from George, in answer to her own. He wrote absolutely a lover's letter; he could not (he said) possibly be offended by anything she might say to him: it was the ambition of his life to have her always saying all kinds of things to him; he was running some risk, of course; all business was surrounded with risks; but he had no fear of results, and what he was doing was entirely for her: he was only striving to have a fit provision for her on the day when she would answer him and put her hand in his,

he hoped. Would she not come down at Christmas? He was expecting her.—That generous and confident epistle necessarily had its effect. It toned down her anxiety about her uncle's future, and it rendered the prospect of obedience to what she regarded as Uncle Harry's dying request a trifle more possible and attractive. The attention and attitude of her mind were still further changed that evening. She dined at her uncle's again—this time it was a literary dinner—and her uncle was so jovial and seemed so void of care, and the affairs of the household seemed to be so much on their usual generous basis, that—taking also into account George's letter—she felt that she had been somewhat 'previous'—as our American cousins pleasantly say—in her passion of concern about her uncle's affairs. 'How absurd of me!' she thought, 'to be so very fast! I believe there is nothing wrong at all!' And the more inclined she had been to think ruin at hand, the less inclined was she now to believe there was any likelihood of ruin: it was the natural reaction of strong feeling and vivid fancy.

But the most moving thing for her was the presence of Alan Ainsworth. Her heart leaped on seeing him, regardless of all considerations of neglect, forgetfulness, or misapprehension, and then it went out to him when she noted how pale and thin he looked, as if worn with work and sleeplessness.

'You look ill,' said she. 'Have you been working very hard?'

'He's not burning the candle at both ends,' said her uncle with a laugh.—'but he's fair melting it, like th' lad that put his farthing dip into th' oven to keep it warm. He's shutting himself up too much with his writing. This is th' first time I've seen him for months, I think.'

'What is the reason?' asked Isabel with anxiety. 'Is it the play that has been wearing you out? How is it going? Why don't you read it to me? I am sure I could help you with suggestions. I think I might be at least as useful as Molière's housekeeper or Dumas' fireman. You might try it on me as one of the average public, and if I went to sleep or slipped away, you would know that that particular passage would not do.'

'You would be of no use, Miss Raynor,' said he very soberly: was he cold to her, she wondered, or was he only tired?—'as a representative of the average public, I am sorry—and at the same time glad—to say. You would be too critical; you wouldn't be content to let my effects touch you or move you: you would want to know how the effects were produced; and if they didn't touch you, you would want to examine why they didn't. Altogether, you would be too curious, Miss Raynor, and would wish to take the machinery to pieces.'

'There's a character to give me!' exclaimed Isabel to her uncle, 'which, he says, he is both glad and sorry to give!'

She spoke lightly, but she was deeply hurt by his words and by his manner of saying them: if his eyes rested on her an instant, they wandered away again, as if in search of another with whom he had rather be talking. That was in the drawing-room before dinner; and later, she was

more deeply hurt still. At dinner she did not sit near Ainsworth, but afterwards they came together without his appearing to seek the encounter. They had an opportunity for confidential talk, of which he did not avail himself. Indeed, he spoke to her little more intimately than to a casual acquaintance.

'Are you very well?' he said.

'Oh yes,' said she in some surprise; 'I am very well.'

'I hope your father is getting on well,' he went on: 'I haven't been able to go to see him for some time.'

'Yes,' she answered; 'my father, I am thankful to say, is going on very well. He is entirely taken up,' she added with a smile, 'with his "Defence of Transcendentalism."'

Her smile was unavoidably accompanied by a wistful look of wonder concerning the meaning of this farce of conversation between them. He caught her look, and turned pale even to the lips, while she flushed with a burning glow. There was an awkward pause.

'Are you going to Lancashire for Christmas?' he asked presently with the merest politeness.

'I don't know,' she answered. 'I mean, I have not yet decided.'

Then her uncle came along, and Ainsworth left her and went and talked with Miss Bruno the novelist, who, Isabel could see, received him with marked pleasure. Isabel was not only deeply wounded; she was ashamed and angry. Her bosom heaved in a turmoil of amazement, disappointment, and jealousy, so that she had to move away and compose herself alone.

Why did Ainsworth behave thus? The fact was he was afraid to trust himself in Isabel's presence. He had to put a constraint upon himself, lest he should pour out what he longed to say, but for which the time was not yet come. Had he then uttered what was in his heart, what had once and again risen almost to his lips, much pain and stress of feeling might have been spared both to Isabel and to himself. But he held his tongue and he went away because he had pledged his word to himself that he would not ask Isabel to say 'Yea' or 'Nay' until after a certain event had taken place. The event was ripe, but it had not yet dropped. His play was ready, that is to say, and had been accepted for speedy trial: it was to be put into rehearsal at once, and to be produced if possible on Christmas Eve. The manager of the theatre, however, had promised only an afternoon performance, seeing that the play was by a 'prentice hand'; but Ainsworth was grateful for even that: it was, for a beginner, a chance in a thousand; and he had the assurance that if the play were successful, it would go at once into the evening bill: if it were not successful—it would be relegated to the limbo of plays damned and events forgotten. Taking these things into account, he had resolved that the name of the author should be suppressed, and that none but those immediately concerned—Alexander, the manager, and the company of actors—should know who the author was. Therefore, he said nothing of the production to Isabel or the Suffields: if it failed, they would be none the wiser; and if it succeeded, they would know in good time.

Next day his rehearsals began, and what with

these and his newspaper duties he was occupied day and night until the date of the play's production; so no further word had he the opportunity of saying to Isabel, until it was too late—almost.

Meanwhile, Isabel went in and out as heretofore, and seemed to the general eye as bright and charming, and as much mistress of herself as she had been wont to be. But her heart was sorely vexed. She had almost forgotten the rumours of evil likely to happen to her uncle, and she could therefore be more occupied with her own intimate affairs. She had ceased to be very angry with Alan Ainsworth, but she was still surprised and disappointed. She tried to find excuses for him—explanations even—but she succeeded very ill. She had thought that he had held aloof from her as a woman whom it was not for him to woo because of her wealth, and she had attempted to show him till she was ashamed that in that regard her wealth was nothing to her: she had done that from the first. Now she desperately concluded that, if he cared for her at all, he cared, as she had at first thought, with a friendly interest merely, and by no means with an overpowering love. Perhaps the impulsiveness of his nature made his friendships with women appear warmer than they really were; at any rate in her case he obviously had no intention of urging that his friendship should be given the complexion of love. It might be, she thought humbly, she was not the kind of woman to inspire a man like Ainsworth with a passion.

In this soreness and disappointment of heart, she turned with an agreeable sense of comfort to the frank and generous regard which George had for her—with, indeed, something like relief and gratitude. She perfectly understood the question in his letter concerning Christmas. Should she go down to the old hall, then, that had long been as a home to her, and please George, please her uncle and aunt—she knew it would please her aunt now—and please the spirit of Uncle Harry, if he still knew aught of what passed on the earth which had not been too kind to him? Did she love George? She could not declare to herself that she did; but, after all, few people who married seemed to be very much in love. She could say—as Euphemia said of her lover—'He is very fond of me;' but she could not find that so satisfying as Euphemia seemed to find it. For she was not of the passive kind of woman who find it enough to be appreciated and loved: she was of the rarer kind who must themselves love and appreciate. Yet she admired George's manly and masterful qualities, she respected him, and she certainly liked him. He was not the kind of man she had dreamed she would marry; but still—still, how many women married their dream, or even their first love? And so—and so she obfuscated her true sense of things, darkened her usually clear vision, put her hands before the eyes of heart and soul, and determined she would go down to Lancashire at Christmas.

And in the halls of the Suffields she was anxiously awaited on the day before Christmas Day. George had confided his secret and his anxiety to his mother; and his mother, in motherly fashion, became anxious too: when she had last seen Isabel, she could not get her to

promise to come north, and she did not profess to be able to forecast or to tell what Isabel would do.

'I am sorry, my boy,' said she, 'that I cannot give you any comfort. But I know Isabel too well to venture to say what view she may take of it. She likes you, I am sure—she has shown she does—but whether she thinks she likes you well enough . . . Bell has notions of her own that there is no reckoning with. I used to think that she and Alan Ainsworth took very much to each other; but I know she has seen little of him for months, since, I believe, she came into Uncle Harry's money.'

George's father observed that his son would not sit down, and that he fidgeted about from room to room, and tramped in and out and considered the weather and looked at railway time-tables. 'What's th' matter wi' th' lad?' he asked his wife. 'He's as restless as a cat on hot bricks!'

Then his wife disclosed to him the secret of the cause. He pursed his lips, nodded twice, and went and laid his hand on his son's shoulder. 'Thy mother,' said he, 'has told me, lad. Keep thy pecker up, and never say die—and put thy trust i' th' Lord.' Suffield seldom used religious phrases in his ordinary speech, but when he did use them he used them with simplicity.

'All right, dad—all right,' said George, grasping his father's hand.

Euphemia, of course, had guessed the secret already, and had her own view—which she kept to herself—of the issue. Thus the whole household waited, and watched the clock, and considered the arrival of trains. They did not enter upon this acute condition of waiting until after luncheon; for no train leaving London at a reasonable hour could arrive until about half-past two, and then there was the little appendix of a journey out of town to be reckoned. But when luncheon was past, expectation was rendered feverish by the railway time-tables. The Suffields were in the habit of travelling by one particular line, and they knew that by that there arrived an available train almost every hour up till about ten at night. There are, however, three great railways from London into Lancashire, and when they came to examine the time-tables of all three in *Bradshaw*, the total number of suggested trains—one train arriving on the heels of another, or outstripping another, all the day long—made their heads whirl. All but George then gave up the time-tables in despair and waited with resignation. He openly made out a list in three parallel columns of all the trains and then put the list in his pocket.

'I would go and meet her at the station,' said he, 'but she might come by the road.'

He went out, therefore, and hung about between two points of vantage in the park, whence he could command a sweeping view of the road on the one hand and of the path from the local station on the other. There were tense occasions when, with his list in his hand and his knowledge of the distance from town in his head, he could lay his finger on a narrow margin of minutes and say: 'If she came by *that* train, she should arrive about now.' But she did not arrive, and George still waited and hovered to and fro.

His father had wandered into the village to gossip with some of the old folk about their colds, their rheumatisms, and their asthmas; but his mother and sister sympathetically observed him from the windows of the drawing-room.

'Brother George, brother George!' murmured Euphemia in one window, where she sat with a neglected novel in her lap, 'do you see anybody coming?'

'You should not make game of your brother, Phemy,' said her mother from the other window. 'We shouldn't watch him like this, poor lad!' And she rose and walked into the depths of the room. 'It seems like sacrilege. We should be ashamed.'

'Well, mother,' said Phemy, 'he shows how he feels very publicly.'

'It's his nature, my dear,' said her mother proudly, 'to do everything openly.'

'He must be very fond of Bell,' said Phemy—'fonder than I thought he was. I'm sure Clitheroe never waited about like that for me!'

So it wore on till tea-time and dark. When tea was brought in, Phemy called her brother, and he came. But he would not sit down: he swallowed cups of tea, tramped about the room, and looked out of window.

'Happen,' said his father, who had returned from the village charged with news to which his wife gave but a preoccupied ear—'happen she thought she'd have lunch first—and I don't blame her—and then she'd catch that train at two—the best train of the day: it gets you here in plenty of time to get ready for dinner. That's the way to travel: from a good meal to a good meal; then you're not too tired by your journey.'

'Bell likes her meals good and regular,' said Phemy.

'Her school-life,' said Mrs Suffield, 'got her into the habit of having everything regular and up to time.'

'Bell is the only woman I know—except mother,' said George—'that can appreciate the whole of a good dinner. Most women don't care what's set before them: they seem always to prefer tea and talk!—Tea and talk!' he exclaimed with great contempt.

'Quite so, my lad,' said his father. 'And it's very bad for them; but they won't believe it.'

'Isabel,' said Mrs Suffield, 'knows what's what: I must say that for her. She eats well and wisely. She knows that good food makes good blood; and that good blood means good life for herself, and the chance of good life for her children after her—if she has any.'

Upon that all were silent, and George went out again—though it was dark—to his sentry-duty between the two points. But still Isabel came not—came not even by the train her uncle had reckoned upon her taking—and the dark became illumined by the moon, and the stars twinkled to see George still at his post. When the moon covered all things with her mystic light, George went in and dressed for dinner. Train still succeeded train on his list, racing madly with each other: she might arrive just before, or just at, or a little after the dinner-hour. Dinner was put back to await her, and they all sat—all save George, who hung about out of doors with an ear for every sound—all three

sat, dressed, hungry and silent, in the drawing-room.

'He'll get his shirt-front spoiled with the damp,' said Mrs Suffield; 'and those birds will be done to rags with waiting!'

Phemy laughed, and her mother frowned, and the mantel-clock struck half-past eight.

'Let's have dinner in, Joan,' said Suffield. 'She has very likely arranged to come by the dining-car express.'

'There are three of them on the different lines,' said his son, who had just entered, 'all within ten minutes of each other.'

So they went to dinner, and ate it with little gaiety or enjoyment.

'If she doesn't come by one of those three,' said George, striving to make up his mind to a definite conclusion, 'she won't come to-night.'

'Oh,' said his father. 'Then we can go to bed when we want to. She won't come till to-morrow now—if she come—and to-morrow's a bad day for travelling.—What did you say about coming when you wrote to her, lad?'

'I didn't expressly invite her,' answered George with a blush. 'I just asked her if she was coming.'

'Oh—in that case,' said his father, 'happen she doesn't mean to come—not that I mean to put you out of heart, my lad,' he added hurriedly; for George had turned very pale and had pulled his brows together. 'But, well—there you are, you know.'

'If she had not meant to come, she would have written that she was not coming,' said Mrs Suffield decisively.

'Don't let us discuss it, mother,' said George.

Isabel did not come; it was past eleven, and all were thinking gloomily of bed, when old Tummas, the butler—Daniel was gone for a holiday—entered with what he called a 'tally-graft': it had just been brought to the back-door by a special messenger. George tore it open. 'Am coming by night-train,' he read aloud; 'shall be with you early in the morning.—ISABEL.'

'The night-train!' exclaimed Mrs Suffield. 'It is not very seemly for a young lady to travel by night!'

'Oh, it's all right, mother,' said George cheerfully; and it was only now when it disappeared that the weight of his anxiety became apparent. 'Though you know well enough that when she wants to do a thing, Isabel is not the one to think whether it is seemly or not.—The trouble, however, is,' said he, with a laugh, 'that she doesn't say which night-train: there are three of them, as of the others!'

'Ah,' said his father, 'I've had quite an education to-day in trains: I had no idea that there was such a big, three-cornered competition, and that there could be so many people wanting to run up and down between this and London!'

George consulted his time-tables again, and took his resolution, and went out for a little to give an order to one of the grooms; and then they all went to bed.

At three o'clock on Christmas morning, in the dead, cold waste of what was still night, George Suffield stole softly away in a dogcart, like a midnight marauder. He had told no one his errand; and he drove on softly on the grass till

he thought he was out of ear-shot of the house, when he flicked his mare with the whip, saying, 'Now, my girl,' and dashed away out of the dark and down the high-road leading to town. He was going to meet Isabel. He would wait for first one night-train and then another until she came, until he saw her coming forth to greet him, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' In truth he trembled at the mere thought of meeting her alone—trembled, half with joy, wholly with expectation. Did she, or did she not, understand how he would interpret her coming? Did she *quite* understand?

The first train arrived at four o'clock at one station, laden with jovial passengers. But Isabel was not in that train. The next train arrived at a little past five at another station, and thither George leisurely drove to wait. Slowly, with leaden feet, the minutes and the quarters passed, but at length the engine glided into the station and ceased its motion with a great sigh. George singled out the Ladies' Sleeping Car, and just as he reached the door, Isabel stepped out upon the platform. Not many ladies could have borne the ordeal of being thus seen immediately at the end of a cold night journey; but Isabel could bear it better than most, and it was not the consciousness of being seen under untoward conditions that made her blush so deeply as she did.

'So, Bell,' said George, grasping her hand and embracing it with both his, 'you have come.'

'Yes, George,' said she; 'I have come.'

WHAT IS A BUCKET-SHOP?

AMONG the many 'notions' of dubious morality and more than dubious utility which we have imported from America, along with corners and watered stocks, is the Bucket-shop. This is a peculiarly American institution, which has only of late years found an abiding-place among us, and that not to any great extent outside of London. It may be that there are establishments on the Bucket-shop principle in Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow; but they have not the unblushing hardihood and heedless 'go' of the American and London establishments.

The term Bucket-shop is now primarily, if not exclusively, applied to an unlicensed and unauthorised office for gambling in stocks and shares. It is quite applicable, however, to any office for minor speculation in anything, conducted as an open gamble.

Indeed, the Bucket-shop is said to have originated in the grain-trade of Chicago, and one story of its origin is this. Some years ago, the Board of Trade—not a Government department, but in reality the Bourse, or Exchange—of Chicago laid down the regulation that the dealings in 'Options'—which have been already explained in this *Journal*—should not be for smaller quantities than five thousand bushels. This not only choked off the small speculators, but also seriously affected the business of those brokers and dealers who had cultivated clients of small means. To overcome this regulation, a sort of Petite Bourse, outside Exchange, or open Board of Trade, was started in a room under the regular Board of Trade room. For facility of intercourse,

a lift was by-and-by introduced; and in dull times a member of the larger room would offer to send down to the smaller room for a bucketful of small 'options' to keep things moving.

This is one explanation of how the term came to be applied to an office for small gambles in grain. We are not quite satisfied with it, however, and the term Bucket-shop was probably applied to the open Board of Trade by some singed moth or other. To 'bucket' is an old slang term for to 'cheat' or 'swindle.' It occurs in Vaux's 'Flash Dictionary' (1812), and is made use of by Sir Walter Scott in his *Diary* (1828), as if it were then a well-known phrase.

Then, again, to 'bucket' is to ride a horse recklessly; and in rowing, to 'bucket' is to turn the body forward too eagerly, preparatory to taking the stroke—another form of heedlessness. An old French word corrupted into 'bucket' gave name to a beam on which anything may be hung for carrying, such as a slaughtered sheep strung up by the heels. It is from this word that we have the slang phrase to 'kick the bucket;' and it is not extravagant to imagine some suggestion of the operation to the fertile mind which had invented the name of Bucket-shop. And finally, the word 'buck' is, according to Hotten's 'Slang Dictionary,' applied both to an unlicensed cabman and to a sixpence, from which an easy transition would make 'bucket' unlicensed dealing in small operations. From any one of these suggestions, a more reasonable theory of origin seems to us deducible, than from the somewhat strained story of the 'bucketful' of orders from the outside shop.

However originated, the term Bucket-shop is no longer confined to offices for small gambling in grain, but is applied to places in which a regular business is conducted, not for dealing in, but for betting on, stocks and shares. As a rule, the Bucket-shop keeper makes his own prices, approximating, of course, to those of the Exchange, so as to include what he calls his commission, and he makes them 'wide' enough to ensure his own safety, however the market goes. Bucket-shop dealing has been called thimble-rigging in stocks. This is, perhaps, too sweeping a definition, because, although the Bucket-shop is a foolish and improper institution, all Bucket-shop keepers are not deliberate swindlers. In fact, some of them are as straightforward and honest as the best class of bookmakers on races; but all the same, like the bookmakers, they flourish on the follies of the public; and like the keeper of a roulette table, they have all the odds in their favour. As in all gambling, there is both honesty and cheating in Bucket-shops; but in any case it is gambling pure and simple.

It is necessary to discriminate between speculation and gambling, and to get rid of the popular delusion that buying and selling on the Stock Exchange is not legitimate business. While we are not at present considering the ethics of speculation, we must ask the reader to remember that there is a wide difference between buying and selling a commodity or security 'for the rise' or 'for the fall,' and merely betting on the chances of a rise or a fall. The speculative buyer or seller must, if required, either take or deliver what he has bought or sold, and the transaction is regulated, recorded, and completed, as a regular

business transaction on recognised business principles. In the Stock Exchange, it is true that all the stocks and shares which are daily bought and sold do not daily change hands, but at the end of the 'account' pass from the last sellers to the last buyers, while the intermediaries settle their differences. Leaving these intricacies in the meantime, however, what we wish to make clear is that on the Stock Exchange definite commodities—that is, public securities—are dealt in, but in the Bucket-shops only *chances* are dealt in.

The frequenter of a Bucket-shop does not either buy or sell the stocks, nor does the keeper of it intend that he should. He simply bets on the rise or fall of a price, and in doing so deposits, or stipulates to pay, a 'margin,' which is just the same as tabling the stakes in a bet. The ultimate result of the operation depends more or less—but not more than the Bucket-shop keeper can help—on the movements of the stock markets, and thus the Bucket-shop is really an addendum to the Stock Exchange; or, as it was originally in Chicago, of the wheat-pit. But it is a parasite, an unsightly and unwholesome growth, which is abhorred by the legitimate dealer.

And one reason for his abhorrence is that the shocking reputation of Bucket-shops, and the evil experience of those who have resorted to them, have done a great deal to discredit legitimate dealing in properly constituted Exchanges. The idea is apt to prevail among persons of limited knowledge that, because the Bucket-shop is an office for gambling in stocks, all speculating in stocks is reckless gambling. Let it be clearly understood, therefore, that although the Bucket-shop hangs on to the Exchange and uses the quotations and terms of the Exchange, it is not a portion of, but is indignantly disowned by, the Exchange.

Another reason for the abhorrence of dealers is that whereas the members of the regular Stock Exchanges in this country are forbidden to advertise, the Bucket-shop keepers advertise far and wide, and attract into their parlours many an unwary fly who might otherwise have found his way to the legitimate avenues of the kind of business in which he was desirous of embarking.

We do not say, of course, that all stockbrokers who advertise are Bucket-shop keepers. There is no particular saving grace in membership, but only a certain assurance of respectability and honour. There are numbers of men known as 'outside brokers' quite as respectable and honourable as those within the magic circle, and who are only 'outside' because of some former misfortune or technical disability. To these 'outside brokers' it is quite open to advertise for business, which, moreover, they conclude within the precincts of the Exchange through a member with whom they arrange to divide their commissions.

A bonâ-fide 'outside broker' conducts bonâ-fide business in the same manner and on the same principles—except that he advertises—as a member of the Room. The Bucket-shop keeper, who also advertises, is not a broker, but a principal, like the croupier of the roulette table.

A broker is an agent whose interest is identical with that of his principal. A Bucket-shop

keeper's interest is exactly the reverse of that of his client.

Prices on the Stock Exchange are 'made' by the rivalries of buyers and sellers, the incidence of politics, the pressure of commercial events, the movements of gold, and so on. In London it is the function of the 'jobbers' to make prices for the brokers—a jobber acting only for himself, and a broker only for his clients. Now, when a jobber is asked by a broker to make a price for any given stock, he names two figures, say '55—55½'—which means that he will buy at the lower or sell at the higher figure, not knowing whether the broker be wishing to buy or sell. In the competition of business, prices, especially of favourite stocks, or those most extensively and frequently dealt in, are made very 'close'—that is, with a very small fraction indeed between the buying and the selling rate, the fraction representing the jobber's profit if he closes the transaction both ways at once, as he endeavours to do. These quotations are marked up, and are telegraphed all over the country; but the quotations fluctuate from hour to hour, and even from jobber to jobber.

The Bucket-shop keeper has either a tape-machine or messengers to bring him the prices in a constant stream from the Exchange, where he must have some confederate *sub rosa*. What he practically says to his clients is that the market must go up or down, and he advises them to select a stock, or he indicates a stock, in which the probabilities are one way or the other, and to wager a certain sum that it will go up or down to a certain extent. Suppose, for instance, Caledonian Railway Stock be selected for the gamble—the 'client' will bet ten pounds that 'Caleys' will go up above a certain named price. He deposits the ten pounds; and if the price falls one per cent.—we are assuming the extent of the operation being of the usual one thousand pounds nominal stock—the Bucket-man 'closes,' as he calls it, and pockets the money. Some of them charge a commission on the transaction, but for the most part they include their commission in the so-called prices. It will be observed that while the client may choose his own time, if he be on the spot, to close the bet should the price go in his favour, he has no option should it go against him, the 'deal' being ended the moment the margin is absorbed.

It is easy enough for a clever and unscrupulous Bucket-man so to manipulate quotations as always to secure the margins. Or even if prices do go against him, it is very simple to put another customer on the opposite tack, and make the one balance the other, to his own advantage.

As far as the 'client' is concerned, it is all pure guess-work and downright gambling. He does not go into the market to stand the chance of buying or selling in the light of his own knowledge and experience, and so by his own action to help to produce the result he expects and desires. He does not want the stock he 'bills,' nor has he the stock he 'bears.' He knows and cares nothing about its real value, and he has not the slightest desire even to see the article he is professing to deal in. He merely wagers money on the chances of what other people, of whom he has no knowledge, will do.

These Bucket-shops are swarming all over the United States, but are, happily, not so common with us. This is how an American writer describes the *modus operandi* in his country:

'The Bucket-shop keeper exhibits to his visitors the current quotations of some regularly conducted Exchange, and if the patron of the shop thinks that the members of the Exchange will buy enough (say) Western Union to advance the price, he deposits ten dollars with the cashier of the Bucket-shop, and "buys" ten shares of Western Union at (say) 85 from its keeper, who stands ready either to buy or sell on the latest quotations from the patron. Here a margin of one per cent. is put up, and, unless otherwise stipulated, if the stock in the market on which they are betting goes down to 84½ or 84¼—depending on the "commission" charged—the patron's margin is exhausted and the game closed. Sometimes, if the standing of the patron is known, the Bucket-shop keeper will let the loss run against the customer a point or so more.'

This is a temptation to the gambler, who will let a loss run as long as the keeper will 'carry' him, which is just as far as the patron can be squeezed.

For the rest, says the same writer, these Bucket-shop keepers are 'Financial nomads, changing their firm-names and habitat to suit their pecuniary exigences. They belong to no association, are accountable to no authority, and the sums they owe to confiding customers are usually too small to justify an appeal to law; besides, many patrons would not like to advertise their dealings.'

That is the pity of it. Men get bitten, but suffer in silence and shame. Every dealer in a Bucket-shop is, in sporting phrase, betting against the bank, and is bound to get caught sooner or later.

Is there no law against them? Apparently none, except the law of common-sense. If people would only consider the utter absurdity of the prospects held out by the Bucket-shop keeper—the weak folly of believing that if the chances of picking up fortunes are such as he professes, he would not pick them up for himself—the Bucket-shops would have fewer dupes. And yet their victims are legion, especially among the class of clerks and small shopkeepers, and even of 'retired persons' of limited means. Let a man figure in the proprietary of any joint-stock company, or in any way be known as an investor, and he will be flooded with the prospectuses and false promises of the Bucket-shops.

Who does not know these invitations to entrust limited amounts—the advertiser is always wary enough not to frighten his prey with big risks—to the unlimited discretion of a person they never heard of before in connection with a stock they know nothing whatever about—with the certainty of making a fabulous percentage of profit without getting out of bed? Well, we have known many who have been tempted, but we never knew one who came out finally unsinged. For the gambler has all the chances of the market and all the wiles and artifices of the Bucket-shop against him.

The worst of the Bucket-shop is that it preserves the appearance of orthodox business. It is often carried on in a sumptuous establishment,

with business waiting-rooms for clients, and ample supplies of telegraph information and daily newspapers. With the general air and bustle of such an establishment the novice is easily impressed, as we may be with the showy grandeur of Monte Carlo. But he is not more certain to lose his money at Monte Carlo than he is in a Bucket-shop.

Then how is it that Bucket-shop keepers do not always and rapidly make fortunes? How is it that they are so frequently disappearing from human ken, and if not too industriously pursued by the police, are reappearing with new names in some other part of the city, or in some other town? For the most part because they are mere adventurers to begin with, and if they make a 'pile,' either 'slide' with it, or else gamble with it themselves and 'get left;' then they leave their shop and its customers, and the landlord seizes the furniture.

How many hearts have been broken and homes made miserable by the Bucket-shops will never be known. Let the reader avoid them as he would the dragon's teeth.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER IV.—AN EBBING LIFE.

WHEN the boy's words fell upon Jessie's ear she swayed to and fro; the lantern dropped from her grasp, and she sank to the ground with a sense of utter helplessness. It seemed to her that the lantern was going out, and that they were whirling into darkness. But gradually her dizziness left her, the light came back to her eyes, and she recognised Jim bending over her with the flaring lantern close to her face.

'Miss Jess!' he was crying, in a panic-stricken voice, 'don't lie there. You'll be run over. Don't you hear something a-coming along the road? Get up—do get up!'

The tramp of horses could certainly be heard upon the hard road. Jess rose to her feet with Jim's assistance; and she had scarcely reached the side-path when two blurred lights were seen approaching through the mist.

'It's from the Hall,' said Jim. 'It's Colonel Woodward's carriage; shall I call out?'

'Yes.'

Jim waved the lantern and uttered a shrill cry. The carriage came to a stand-still, and a gentleman stepped out. 'Colonel Woodward!'

He was a strongly-built man of forty or forty-five. He had a kindly face; and as he held out his hand to Jess, spoke in a deep earnest voice. 'I was on my way to the cottage,' said he. 'We want your help, Miss Bryce. We are in great trouble at the Hall. A young fellow has been struck down in Thurrock Wood. He's not dead; but I fear he's dying. Everything is being done, however, to save his life. We only need a trained nurse. Will you come?'

Jess answered eagerly: 'I will go with you now!' She spoke a hurried word to Jim, exchanging with him a meaning look, and then stepped into the carriage. Colonel Woodward took the place at her side, and they drove back to Thurrock Hall as quickly as it was possible on such a night.

Jess almost dreaded to speak as they went along, lest her voice should betray her intense agitation. In one moment the whole outlook had been changed. He was dying! Had she waited three years, and hoped against hope, only for this? How strange that Woodward should have come for her! She could no longer resist the question: 'Who is he?'

'Nobody knows,' said Woodward; 'and nothing has been found to identify him. He has not been robbed. A leathern case containing some bank-notes was found in a side-pocket. The whole thing is a mystery.—What can have prompted the crime?'

A dreadful thought occurred to Jess. 'Is it not possible,' said she, 'that the blow was self-inflicted?'

'The doctor thinks not,' said Woodward. 'It is one of the most incomprehensible attempts at murder, he declares, that he has ever heard of.'

Jess sank back in the carriage. She wondered who could have done so cruel a deed? It seemed to her that John Upcraft was surrounded by enemies. And yet she knew, for her own heart told her so, that John had never done any one an intentional wrong.

A lengthy drive through the dark, leafless avenue brought them to the principal entrance to Thurrock Hall, with its lofty portico, reached by a broad flight of steps. What a contrast this mansion was, compared with the six-roomed cottage down in the marshlands! The great hall, with its oaken staircase beyond; the library, the suite of reception rooms, the long picture-gallery above. Every room was well known to Jess; for she had been a frequent visitor at the Hall for years past.

The Colonel led the way up-stairs.

The injured man was lying upon a bed in one of the spare rooms, quite motionless. Jess approached the bedside and looked into his face. Three years had greatly changed him. She could scarcely believe that this was the John Upcraft she had known in better days. There were lines of care that told how deeply he had suffered. For a moment she thought him dead: he was livid, and hardly seemed to breathe. The colour went from her face while she looked. Woodward was standing at her side, watching her every movement, seemingly with more concern for her than for the patient.

'Are you faint?' said he.

'It's nothing,' said Jess. 'I'—

He hastened to reach a chair for her, and she sank down with a sense of hopelessness and despair, which she could hide no longer.

Woodward went in search of his sister; and presently Miss Woodward came in with some tea. She was not unlike her brother, though graver in look. She had lived many years at Thurrock Hall; and since her brother had retired from the army, she had kept house for him here. Something in her look and tone, at times, had made Jess wonder if she had ever experienced a great sorrow. It seemed to her as though some painful romance had cast a shadow over Miss Woodward's life in days gone by, and had left its traces upon her face.

'Shall I sit with him to-night?' said she, looking sympathetically at Jess. 'You look so tired.'

No suggestion could have roused Jess more thoroughly out of herself. 'Indeed, I'm not,' said she; 'I'm quite rested now!'

When the household at Thurrock Hall had retired, and Jess found herself alone at the bedside, she bent down over her patient with a great joy at her heart. She was near him once more. There he lay, between life and death; no look of recognition in his half-closed eyes, no word upon his lips, no utterance even of her name. But she was near him; that was some recompense after all these years; and a sense of gratitude, so long unknown to her, filled her whole being; and she found relief in tears at last.

He had constant medical care: the days went by; but without any promise of recovery. And now a new dread took a hold upon her. He would be recognised! How could that fatality be averted? She racked her brains in search of some loophole for escape from an avowal that she was nursing the man she loved—a hunted convict—and that his name was John Upercraft.

One thing, however, afforded Jess a great sense of relief during these anxious days. Her father, though he had returned from his unpremeditated visit to London, had kept away from Thurrock Hall. She knew that he had an almost morbid horror of being asked to give medical advice since he had gone into retreat. But was that sufficient to account for his apparent absence of all interest or sympathy concerning this trouble which had fallen upon the shoulders of his warm-hearted neighbour? But she offered no comment, even to Woodward. Her father's name, indeed, never escaped her; for she fully realised that the moment he entered the sick-room the secret, which she was scheming every hour in the day to preserve, would be blurted out. Her one hope was that Upercraft would regain strength enough to quit the Hall before her father showed the least sign of making his appearance.

At last Upercraft began to give some indications of recovery; and one night, when Jess was alone beside him, he recognised her for the first time. She was drowsy from many hours of vigil when she heard him murmuring her name: 'Jess!'

She went to the bedside and bent over him: 'Dear John! Do you know me?'

He moved his head feverishly from one side to the other. 'I wish that boy would take the lantern away,' said he. 'It blinds me. Will you help me up? I can walk now. What a shivering fit I've got from lying here so long! No; don't put your cloak over me. I shall soon get warm. Is that the light in the cottage window? Help me up! There's the gun firing again.'

She took his hand and spoke a soothing word in his ear. For a while he lay silent, looking towards the cheerful fire, the only light in the room, except a little hand-lamp which Jess had placed out of sight. 'How bright and warm it is,' he presently went on in a changed tone. 'When I've washed this mud off my face and hands'—He raised his eyes to Jessie's face while speaking; and then a look of recognition gradually came into his face. 'Jess—am I dreaming?'

'No, dear; you are awake now.'

'Am I?' said he, looking about him doubtfully.

'Why, this is not the cottage! If I am awake, tell me how I come to be lying here?'

'This is Thurrock Hall,' said Jess, 'and you have been ill—very ill.'

Then she told him in a few words what had happened. When she had finished, he lay for a long time silent and thoughtful. Then he said, as if questioning himself rather than Jess: 'Who has done this?'

'It's not known,' said the girl; 'but Colonel Woodward, who is an active magistrate, is making a thorough investigation.'

Presently Upercraft fell into a sound sleep. Jess took a seat by the fire; but she no longer felt drowsy. She began to wonder whether John would approve of her action in keeping his identity concealed from her friends at Thurrock Hall. Her father, as she still dreaded, might walk into the sick-room at any moment. She resolved to speak of this to John as soon as he was strong enough, and be guided by his decision.

When Upercraft awoke an hour or two later, he looked eagerly at Jess, and said: 'Give me time—a day or two—and it will all come back to me!'

'Of what are you speaking, John?'

'All that happened in Thurrock Wood,' said he. 'I was dreaming about it just now. It was bitterly cold that night, and the footpath was frozen hard. I heard a step coming up behind me a long way off. I thought I recognised it. Whose could it have been? I can't remember! But I remember turning with his name on the tip of my tongue, when I was struck down. That blow has blotted out the name!' He again fell into a thoughtful mood. At last he said: 'If I were to hear the footstep, hear it only once, the name would come back to me. I wonder, shall I ever hear it again?'

Jess made no reply. She was intensely interested in all he was saying; but she feared to encourage any talk; and after a while he fell asleep once more, and did not wake till day-break.

One afternoon, a few days later, Miss Woodward—almost as conscientious a nurse in the sick-room as Jess herself—came in to relieve her for a while. Colonel Woodward appeared a moment after her. 'Come, Miss Bryce,' said he, 'let us go for a brisk walk across the home park; what do you say?'

'I am always ready for a brisk walk,' said Jess, with a sense of her old sprightliness coming back now that Upercraft was out of danger. If Woodward had asked her to dance with him down the avenue, she would have hardly refused.

At first, their walk was brisk enough, even for Jess. They both felt a healthful glow as they went along in the face of a keen north wind. But after a while, turning into a pathway under an avenue of elms, they began to slacken their pace, for Jess was getting out of breath. Her lips were slightly parted, and her cheeks had gained quite a rosy hue.

Woodward bent his eyes earnestly upon her face. 'I have often wished,' said he, 'that I could see you looking more cheerful; and you begin to look so to-day—more yourself! I know

how you have suffered. I learned about your trouble long ago; and I have felt so sorry for you.—Do I pain you? I want you to think of me as your friend.

She had long known that Woodward cared for her far more than she could have desired. She knew also, only too well, that her father had never ceased to do his best to bring about a match between them. But since Woodward was some years her senior, and knew of her engagement to Upcraft, she hoped that in time his untold love might turn to friendship. She had always felt a great affection for him. He had been a true friend to her and to her father for many years; and the thought of shunning him had never entered her head. But she almost wished that she had done so now; for she had no desire except for his happiness. She could realise, as she had never been able to realise before, what a hopeless passion must be, and her sympathy was seriously awakened. She was too deeply moved to speak; she could only thank him with a look of gratitude: she felt what avowal must follow such condoling words!

The afternoon had become overcast. An occasional snow-flake sifted through the black branches of the elm-trees over their heads. They had turned their steps towards home before Woodward resumed: 'I should be the last to ask you,' said he, 'to put this trouble out of your thoughts. That I know would be impossible. But if you will give me the right to share your thoughts with you, Jess, I will do my best to bring at least a gleam of happiness into your life.'

He saw a feathery flake touch a ringlet of her dark hair; another alighted on her lashes as if it were a frosty tear. And then the snow began to fall in earnest, and they hastened on their way. The white flakes whirled about them in blinding clouds, looking like flakes of soot against the stormy sky.

'It cannot - it can never be!'

Jess was sorely troubled. She now conceived how wrongly she had acted in keeping the knowledge of John's identity a dead secret. What would Colonel Woodward think of her when he learned the truth? She never imagined that she could be placed by one thoughtless deed in so distasteful a position. She could find no excuse that would fully justify her lack of moral courage to confide in him. It seemed to her at that moment as though she had questioned his honour. Would it not seem so to him?

The snow-flakes danced about them in the wind, looking like a swarm of pale, mischievous sprites that took delight in her discomfiture. She stopped and glanced up distressfully into Woodward's face. 'Oh, can't you understand?' said she, in a bewildered tone. 'I could not bring myself to speak of it, not even to you! For I had the horrible dread that it might reach my father's ears. It was this that prompted me to guard the secret. Try not to think ill of me. I've hardly been in my right senses, I fear, since all this happened. My one thought was to get him well, and away! And then I would have asked your forgiveness for my foolish mistrust of your sister and you.'

The playful snow-flakes rushed round them in maddening flights. Woodward leaned his back against the trunk of a great elm and regarded

Jessie distractedly, as though puzzled to decide whether she was in her right senses yet.

'The man whom you found nearly murdered in Thurrock Wood,' Jess went on, 'whom you brought to the Hall in your carriage—to whom you gave your hospitality, and have tended ever since like a friend—is none other than an escaped convict—the man I have loved for years—and his name is John Upcraft!'

The eager flakes caught up her words and fled with them, as if racing to be first to carry her secret to the four winds.

Woodward spoke no word. He silently gave Jess his arm, and they struggled on together in the face of the snow-storm towards the Hall.

They had ascended the terrace steps, and were crossing the terrace on their way to the front door, when Jess chanced to peer in at one of the library windows. On the hearth-rug in front of a bright fire stood her father. He was warming his hands at the blaze; and he smiled at them blandly over his shoulder as they hurried by.

Jess pressed more closely to Woodward's side; her fingers tightened upon his arm; and she turned as white as the snow-flakes that were beating against their faces. 'You'll not let my father see him, will you?' said she. There was terror in her look.

Woodward hastened to reassure her. 'But come to the library,' said he. 'Show yourself for a moment. You may then safely leave him to me.'

She followed Woodward tremulously. Her father was still standing over the fire and warming his hands, when they entered the room. 'Well,' said he, 'caught in the snow-storm, were you? So was I. It will be the death of me. I shall have to ask you to put me up to-night, Woodward. I dare not venture out again in this weather.'

Woodward turned away to hide his look of annoyance. 'You're always welcome, of course,' said he.

'So the patient is recovering, eh?' Mr Bryce went on, glancing at Jess. 'Miss Woodward can spare you now, can't she?'

'Not yet,' Woodward chimed in. 'The patient is out of danger; but we shan't be able to spare Jess for some days.'

Mr Bryce looked frowningly into the fire. 'Out of danger, is he?—Now, I wonder,' said he, in a slow, deliberate tone, 'I wonder if he has expressed any opinion—whether, in a word, he has been able to throw any light upon this mystery. It would be interesting to know'—

'He remembers nothing,' Jess interposed, 'except a step behind him—then the dreadful blow—nothing more.'

'Ah!' Mr Bryce nodded at the fire, and rubbed his hands cheerfully together. But he made no comment beyond this exclamation.

Jess gave Woodward a quick glance and went out. She found Miss Woodward seated at the bedside when she reached the sick-room. Upcraft had fallen asleep. 'My dear,' said Miss Woodward, looking anxiously into Jessie's face, 'you won't think me too curious, will you? But do tell me! Has he spoken to you? He told me he should speak to you to-day.—But you can't cast your love for that other one,' she hastened to

add—'the one you have lost—out of your heart, can you?'

Jessie shook her head. 'I have much to tell you,' said she.

'Ah! I was afraid,' Miss Woodward went on—'I was afraid it would prove to you a livelong grief! I pity you. Yes, only as a woman can pity, my dear, who has gone through all the misery herself.'

Miss Woodward had scarcely gone, when Upcraft opened his eyes. He raised himself and listened intently.

'What is it, dear?' said Jess.

'I've been dreaming again about that footstep in Thurrock Wood,' said he, with the listening look still in his eyes. 'Whose step can it have been?'

Upcraft lay awake, puzzling over this question. It was long past midnight; the household was hushed in sleep, and no sound reached him except an occasional gust of wind, or the soft pattering of the snow against the windows. The fire burned brightly in the darkened room, throwing weird shadows like threatening arms upon the walls. Jess had fallen asleep in a chair at the bedside, with an arm resting upon the bed, and her head resting upon her arm.

He had closed his eyes, half-dozing at last, when an approaching step in the corridor outside caught his ear. During some moments, Upcraft thought that he must be dreaming again; for the step exactly resembled the one he had heard in Thurrock Wood. He raised himself upon his elbow and cast a swift glance at Jess, to discover if the step had awakened her. No; she was sleeping soundly enough. He was half tempted to rouse her; the step might be a delusion—the lingering echo of the dream he had had a few hours ago. But he refrained; for each moment the step seemed to draw nearer; and then the name of him to whom the step belonged flashed upon his memory—the very blow that had fallen upon him seemed to repeat itself—and he sank back stupefied upon his pillow.

SOME LITERARY AMENITIES.

LITERATURE is a hobby that affords a varied round of pleasures. Besides those of reading, writing, thinking, critical gossip, and the genialities of your club gatherings, if you are so happy as to be a member of any such intellectual society, there is the exercise of your physical man in excursions among the bookshops and stalls. A lover of books will, unawares, tramp miles and go through quite a long course of calisthenics in a second-hand shop no larger than a boudoir, as he wanders to and fro scanning the shelves, ever and anon pulling down a volume and replacing it; to say nothing of his numerous scrambles up the shop-ladder in search of hid treasure. Then, too, the deeply interesting little chats on book-lore with the quaintly philosophical bookseller—whose favourite work is perhaps Boswell's 'Johnson,' which he knows by heart—are interspersed with the vagaries of all sorts and conditions of callers, from the Irish labourer who has mistaken the place for the Post-office half

a mile away, to the callow youth who, to our surprise, instead of asking for a sixpenny 'Robinson Crusoe' or a threepenny 'Midshipman Easy,' asks about the result of the afternoon's football match, seemingly under the impression that a man surrounded by so many books must assuredly be omniscient.

One caller, a well-dressed lady, who one evening drove up in a carriage, created quite a sensation by asking for 'Don Quixote, by Charles Dickens.'

'I beg your pardon, madam,' said the bookseller cautiously, 'did you say "Dombey and Son?"'

'Oh no! Don Quixote!' she emphatically replied.

'I have a beautiful copy of a work of that name by Cervantes,' he said, showing her the volume.

After turning over its pages awhile in doubt, she murmured: 'I'm afraid this will not do for me. I want the one by Charles Dickens to complete a set!'

A curious example of generous obstinacy was a stout countryman who inquired for a nice book to read—'one with a story in.' On several being placed before him, he examined them attentively, and picked out the middle volume of a 'three-decker' with the remark, 'This 'ere's my sort. What's the price?'

'Oh,' was the reply, 'this is only the second volume; the story goes through three—the set is half-a-crown.'

'Hauve-a-crown! Well; I'll gie ye that for that one book. It's a pretty un enough.'

'But won't you have the other two as well? You'd better!'

'Naw! I don't like th' beginnin' of a story; I can't get forrard wi' it. An' I don't like th' endin'; I don't know as 'ow it's comed about. But in th' middle un I'm into t' thick of it right off. No; I'll only tak' th' middle un; it'll set me up for a month.' And cramming the book into his pocket, he put down his half-crown and disappeared with a 'Good-night!' before the other volumes could be given to him.

Another was a tatterdemalion strongly reminiscent of Quilp. He was not quite so hideous; but what he lacked in that was counterbalanced by rags, dirt, and odour. He arrived in a flat donkey-cart, and, sneaking into the shop with a big empty sack in his hand, he inquired in a nasal treble: 'Anythin' in my line to-day, Mister? I can do with a sackful.'

'No,' answered that gentleman sternly, without looking up from his cataloguing; 'I never have anything in your line, and never shall. You haven't paid me for that last lot of books.'

'Aven't paid ye!' he squeaked in simulated astonishment. 'S'elp me! 'Ave ye 'ad yer letter-box broke open lately? 'Cos that's why yer never got that there cheque as I sent ye!'

'Cheque!' exclaimed the bookseller, still writing. 'You haven't any money in your pocket: never mind the bank.'

'No money in my pocket, eh? 'Aven't I, though, eh? Jus' you wait! Oh, no!—no money!' With these exclamations, he dropped his sack, and diving here and there into his rags—it was a wonder he found the way to a pocket among so many holes—he fished up a dirty, bulky cash-bag, which jingled very suggestively while he was nntying the string. The bookseller looked up in astonishment, then he burst into a roar of laughter as the contents of the bag were turned out on a sheet of music: rusty keys, penknife blades, divorced scissors, clock-wheels, nails, screws, and tacks—among which Quilp Secundus fumbled till he found something which he put into his mouth to clean, and then triumphantly slapped on the palm of his left hand. 'No money, eh? Look there!' The purchase-money for a sackful of books was a threepenny piece!

No trade was done; and Quilp muttered as he went out: 'When man can't trust his brother-man, commerce is a-goin' to the dogs.'

An entirely different character was a worn, elderly-looking man, who, one Tuesday night, came into a bookshop asking for help. The bookseller, who seemed to know him, offered him, out of a stock of three hundred or so, a dozen shilling pamphlets—speeches of John Bright, marked for sale in the window at three-pence each—to sell in the street at any price he liked, provided that when he had sold the dozen he was to buy any more he wanted at a reduced rate. In five minutes he was back to pay his halfpence, and take away two dozen. A longer interval elapsed before he returned to invest his earnings in more. So he went on for the rest of the evening and throughout the week, till on Friday, looking much younger—the effect of better living—he bought the remaining stock; and on Saturday he presented himself to the bookseller to say that he had saved three pounds, and was going to set up an apple-cart on Monday. This he did; and when we saw him last, judging by the sound of his voice, and the patronage of the office boys whose pennies will buy them more dessert than dinner, he seemed to be doing a roaring business.

Booksellers' catalogues are perennial springs of pleasure to the book-lover, who often is unable to part with a single one, but hoards them up like a miser. He goes most carefully through each one as it comes in, marking off all the books that he would like, without regarding their heavy prices or the lightness of his purse; and when he has added up the total amount and found how little of it he can afford, he sighs, and consoles himself with the reflection that most of them he can live without. The sole consolation of one such bibliophile was to become the possessor of the books he had ticked off. He had, however, money to spend, and was uneasy till he had spent it. When the books arrived, he occupied hours in skimming their contents and placing them on his shelves. Some of these he gradually discovered were not literature; and being proud of his library as a collection of works of high literary and artistic merit, he—more cautious than Gilead P. Beck, who made a bonfire of his Browning—as gradually weeded them out, and placed them side by side with other books of like calibre in a special corner

in his attic. This became a penance chamber; for, when, as occasionally happened, he was in a pessimistic mood, he invariably visited it, sat down in the midst of these 'books that were not books,' and, considering them as the causes of wasted time and pence, solemnly objugated them.

Catalogues, too, are happy hunting-grounds for unintentional humour, which arises sometimes from the printer's errors, sometimes from incongruities of arrangement and expression. A sample of a combination of both occurs in the titles, 'The Art of Dying; back gone;' and 'Eastlake's Lady, old and ragged.' The printer alone seems to be responsible for such as 'A Theory of Immortality;' and 'Drew's Essay on Soles' is more suggestive of ichthyology than theology. The substitution of a small *i* for a capital humorously suggests the obtrusion of a celebrated Norwegian novelist, 'Bjornson in God's Way;' whilst by the insertion of a comma in the wrong place, 'Jernsalem, delivered in prose,' we might imagine that the Crusades were wars of words not weapons.

The habit frequently adopted by booksellers of using the possessive case of a writer's name followed by the title of his work leads sometimes to curious effects. For instance, 'Berkley's Wealth and Welfare;' 'Lalor's Money and Morals;' 'Turner's Wish and Will;' 'Ellis's Temper and Temperament;' and 'Wynter's Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers,' suggestive of the Artful Dodger's profession. Occasionally, the bookseller himself deviates into humour, as in the two following instances: 'King's Interest Tables, a rather poor copy, and very poor price;' 'Poems by James Gay, with a portrait of the Great Man, who modestly calls hims lf Poet Laureate of Canada and Master of ali Poets. Notwithstanding these high claims I sell his poems for 4d.'

One gratifying effect of free lectures for the poor is the greater frequency of the demand among them, both at the free libraries and shops, for books which they hear mentioned or quoted, and feel desirous of reading. There is something pathetic and hopeful in the accidental humour of the book titles they jot down as aids to memory; the humour of inadequate knowledge brought to the assistance of the erewhile unknown. From such lists we cull these examples: 'The Works of Mac Sadler' (Max Adeler); 'The Quinsey's Opium-eater;' 'Jane Hair;' 'The Middle Ages of Alum' (Hallam); 'Story of Andrew Mackay' (Andromache); 'Maud Arthur' (Morte d'Arthur); 'Shoppinghour' (Schopenhauer); 'Lamb's Asses of Elias;' 'Carlyle's French Revelation;' 'Dictionary of Verbal Words;' 'The Decline of Gibbon.' In view of demands for books like these, one naturally thinks of two anomalies that are not, unfortunately, happy enough for amenities: Ruskin's endeavour to educate the labourers and workmen of Great Britain, and the unreason of the reasoner Schopenhauer. It is a satire on Ruskin's theory that those very labourers, for the volumes of letters addressed specially to them, must pay the prohibitive price of four pounds, while they can purchase a handsome Shakespeare for three shillings, and become the possessor of a classic like Carlyle's 'French Revolution' for half that

amount. As for Schopenhauer, he declaimed against reading, but waxed irritable when the public, taking him at his word, did not buy his books.

A BOAT-SERVICE ADVENTURE.

RATHER more than three years ago I was serving as sub-lieutenant on board H.M.S. —, at that time engaged, with the rest of the British and German men-of-war in those waters, in the blockade of the East Coast of Africa. This blockade was the result of a sort of compromise. The British wished—as they have always wished—to put down the slave-trade, and the Germans to prevent the sale of arms to the native inhabitants of their new colonies. So the two admirals arranged to join forces, and declared a joint blockade of all vessels trading in arms or slaves. Of course, there were other niceties in the agreement; but that was the gist of it.

To carry out the blockade effectually, each ship was allotted a station, for which she became responsible. H.M.S. — was ordered to take charge of the island of Pemba, which, although not, properly speaking, a part of the coast, or even fringing it—there being a channel of half a day's run between them—had nevertheless been included in the blockade. Pemba is the first or northernmost of the three Arab islands, Pemba, Zanzibar, and Mafia, and was then under the rule of the Sultan of Zanzibar; but this rule was far more nominal than real; practically, it was parcelled out among rich Arab families, the heads of which were almost independent chiefs, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, independent merchant-princes, for, taking into consideration that Pemba has so far had no European capital or European enterprise to help it, its commerce is very creditable, and is all in the hands of these feudal Arabs, who own not only plantations—cloves, sugar, &c.—but mercantile fleets to transport their produce. And—and it is here that there is a certain 'coolness' between these gentry and the British naval authorities—these ships are apt to return from their trading voyages laden with slaves for their owners' plantations.

The most remarkable feature in the geography of Pemba is its deeply indented coast-line, which is simply studded with natural harbours, with here and there an arm of the sea stretching so far inland as almost to divide the whole island—something like the Scottish firths, only more irregular. Add to this that it is fringed with reefs and sandbanks, sometimes extending many miles out to sea, and you will understand that H.M.S. — had plenty of work to do, and that most of it had to be done in boats.

I was given command of the steam-cutter, and ordered to hold myself responsible for a large bight rejoicing in the jaw-breaking appellation of Kegomacha Bay. Here I was left with my crew of six and an interpreter, making with myself eight all told. We left the ship with provisions and coal for five days; but as it was quite out of the question to keep all that coal in the boat, we made a *cache* of most of it, and hoped that it might remain unstolen; if not, well, we must cut wood.

My next care was to have things put square

and shipshape in the boat; spirit-breaker and ammunition boxes aft, other large stores under the thwarts, and small articles in the lockers. Then, having had a regular clear up, we made tea, after which I inspected the arms and served out ammunition. By this time it was nearly five o'clock; so, as I wished to get well into the oiling by nightfall, I ordered the anchor to be weighed, and stood out to sea.

My reason for doing this was as follows: The Arabs are very good navigators; but even the best navigators, when making a reef-bound and unlighted shore, like to verify their position by getting a good look at the landmarks during daylight. When a vessel is liable to be chased, this is all the more necessary, as she cannot afford to go pottering about among shoals, trying her nose first at one point and then at another, but must dash right through the darkness to her own particular little harbour, and to dash with any confidence, requires an exact knowledge of one's whereabouts and of the bearing of the point to be dashed at. It has thus become customary for the captain of a slave dhow so to regulate his voyage as to be just in sight of land at sunset; the nearer he can manage this the better for him: to be too soon, means showing himself longer than he cares about in what he probably calls 'the dangerous-in-daylight zone;' to be too late means that he does not get a clear view of the land. Relying on this, I argued that a small boat like mine, with no sail hoisted, and steaming easy so as to avoid making smoke, by arranging on her part to be at about the same distance from the shore at the same time, or perhaps a few minutes later, might, with the binoculars, have a very good chance of sighting one of these gentlemen just as he was bearing up for harbour. This was my plan; and you may be sure that I searched the horizon very carefully as the sun went down, and the short twilight of ten minutes or so that there is in those parts gradually merged itself into the dark.

At last I was rewarded; looming up on our starboard bow was something large and black; soon it began to assume definite shape, that of a triangle: it was a dhow's lateen-sail. Unfortunately, just at that moment the stoker, who ought to have known better, opened the furnace door, letting the glare light up both himself and the bowman: almost simultaneously, the dhow put her helm down and headed away for the eastern extremity of the bay.

'Full speed!' I shouted, at the same time catching up a rifle and sending a bullet through her sail as a summons to heave to. Strictly speaking, I ought to have first tried her by firing a blank cartridge; but, under the circumstances, I dispensed with that formality. Of our summons she vouchsafed, as I had expected, not the smallest notice; so we settled down to the chase. Some ten minutes had elapsed, when the cockswain remarked to me that the water seemed to be growing very shallow. A sounding, taken with the boat-hook staff, showed him to be right: there was barely a foot of water under our keel. Now, I knew that somewhere hereabouts there was a large sandbank, with occasional patches of very shallow water indeed on it; and it occurred to me that the dhow must have altered course as she did with the object of bringing us across

one of these. Lest it be thought singular that a native Arab dhow should have better hydrographic information than a boat belonging to one of Her Majesty's ships, I may say at once that not only is all this part very roughly charted, but that even the best chart could hardly be expected to give all the little boat-channels that criss-cross a large reef or sandbank; whereas a dhow belonging to the neighbourhood would have her own private marks for every rock and every pool. Had it been a dhow from any other part of the island, she would have known a great deal less than we did; but it being our first day, we had not had time to make our own observations, and this particular dhow had the advantage of us.

However, to have done anything but keep straight on now would have been to make certain of losing her. While I was reflecting on these things, and wondering whether so small a boat as we were might not escape grounding, I got a most unmistakable answer; namely, a prolonged scraping noise under the keel. For fifty yards, perhaps, we struggled on, churning up the sand with our screw, then came to a full stop.

On this I gave the order, 'Stop the engines; all hands overboard,' setting the example myself. Relieved of our weight, the little cutter floated again, and, four a side, we walked her along by the gunwale until once more she brought up with a bump.

'I see what's the matter, sir,' said the cockswain, who was stooping down at the bows; 'there's a boulder right under her forefoot: launch her back a fathom.' This we did, and then, altering the direction of her head, got her forward again through a distance of perhaps twice her own length. Here luck was once more against us: the water shoaled to about two feet. I suppose that the chase must have heard our not too mild expressions of disgust at this new check, for out of the night came various guttural sounds, the English equivalents of which would probably have been something like: 'Hope you're comfortable; sure you don't want a tow?' and so on. This was too much. We shoved, and we pushed, and scraped the sand away from the bows, and finally I told the leading stoker to lean over and set the engines going. Then at last she began to move. The word 'Stop!' was just on my lips, when, before we knew where we were, the boat gave a sort of slither forward, and—souse! we were all under water. She had been on the edge of a steep bank, and had slid off.

In a few seconds we were all up again, spluttering and laughing, and fortunately untouched by the screw; but where was the cutter? Here was something that Mark Tapley himself would have found it hard to laugh at. Being under steam, she had gone on by herself. In fact, I fancied that I could just discern her outline away out to seaward.

Our position was most serious. Our foothold, such as it was, would be lost when the tide came up, and there being a strong northerly current, we should infallibly be swept out to sea. Even supposing that one or two of the strongest of us managed to reach the shore by swimming, what sort of a fate would be theirs at the hand of people who, only a few months before, had mur-

dered a whole boat's crew, and were now smarting from the indemnity that they had been forced to pay for their crime? And this supposition made no account of sharks, which, although not so bad as in some parts, were yet quite sufficiently numerous to constitute a danger.

Every minute that passed, the boat was steaming away; yet what was to be done? In this dilemma I called the two petty officers, the cockswain and the leading stoker, to a council of war. Imprimis, we were all agreed that to swim *after* her and try to catch her that way would be mere foolishness, and wasting our strength to no purpose. Now there came to my mind a certain conversation that I had once had with a very scientific officer anent what are called 'turning circles.' A ship's handiness is said to be measured by the diameter—that is, the smallness of the diameter—of her 'turning circle' with different degrees of helm. This is fairly clear. It does not want an expert to understand that a vessel under steam with her rudder kept over at the same angle will, if there be no tide or current, ultimately come back by a circular course to the point at which she started. What, however, is not so well known is that a screw steamer even without any helm at all will do this. But she will take a very long time about it. The reason is that a screw steamer left to herself never goes quite straight ahead; to make her go straight ahead requires a little helm. Hence, leaving her entirely alone comes to the same thing as giving a little helm to a paddle steamer. The officer in question had been making experiments in a piece of ornamental water with model screw steamers, and had been trying to see what kind of screw caused least deviation from a straight course; and he said that he was surprised to find how exactly all his models came back to the very spot where they had started from. 'In fact, my dear fellow,' he had said, 'a screw steamer is nothing more nor less than a very cumbrous sort of boomerang.'

But, oh dear, what poor encouragement were those ornamental-water experiments to us, standing on a little knoll of sand, miles from the shore, with blackness all round us, a rising tide, and eddies and currents swirling this way and that, sufficiently to render nice mathematical certainties very uncertain indeed. No; we must have something more to go on than the action of the screw as a turning agent, to hope that our little boat was coming back to us. Strangely—and fortunately—there *was* something else. The cockswain was in favour of swimming after the boat, not thinking that we could catch her at once, but that, after ten minutes or so, she might begin to slow down of herself. I knew better than that, and so of course did the leading stoker; besides, I pointed out to him, she was out of sight, and it was very unlikely that we should be able to make a correct guess at her course. Finding himself outvoted, he urged that, after all, she was half crippled by the bowman's tarpaulin hanging over the port side.

'The bowman's tarpaulin hanging over the port side!' I repeated, with hope beginning to dawn. 'Are you certain?'

'Quite, sir. I made a grab at it to save myself going under water, and the whole thing came overboard.'

'But it's fast to the boat?'

'Oh yes, sir; it's made fast right enough; but it's dragging through the water, and that's enough to stop a little boat like'—

'Stop her, with that head of steam on!—not a bit of it,' I replied. 'But it'll do better—it'll turn her.'

I don't think that the men were very sanguine; but that I could not help. If there was a heavy tarpaulin hanging over one side of the boat, she was bound to keep turning towards that side. The only other thing that could influence her course was the current, and this, in the main—for it would be hopeless to attempt to go into the various eddies—set towards the north. Therefore, the boat would come round to a point due north of us. How far north, and how long before she got there, depended upon how much tarpaulin was hanging over the side, and of course could only be guessed at. At any rate there was no time to be lost.

I called for four hauls to strip, and did the same myself. While we were stripping, I made the men take their knife lanyards and knot them all together. To these I added some twice-laid rope, of which the cockswain carried a coil in his monkey-jacket pocket; my own *kammarband*, which, for the information of those readers who have not been in India or the East, I may describe as a kind of long sash; also the interpreter's: altogether this gave a pretty long rope. What I intended doing with it, you will see later.

When every one was ready, I gave the men their orders. First of all, I made them observe the constellation of the Southern Cross. This, I explained to them, they were to keep straight behind them, so that they could be certain that they were swimming due north—that is, straight out to sea. We would all start together. After fifty strokes, one man would stop and tread water; after another twenty-five strokes, another man; and so on until we were all posted at intervals of twenty-five strokes, the inmost man being fifty strokes from the knoll, and myself being the farthest out. You see, I reckoned on the tide having set her out something between fifty and a hundred and fifty strokes—rough reckoning, but the best I could do. Finally, I cautioned the men to try and scramble on board by the tarpaulin, as by so doing they would avoid the risk of being wounded by the propeller. The rope I kept myself.

I don't think that there is much fear of my ever forgetting that swim out into the waste of black sea. There was nothing really dangerous about it bar the sharks, and the sharks would have been almost as dangerous on our little sand-knoll, where the danger would have come, had we been unsuccessful, after we got back to the others and found the tide begin to rise. Yet the sense of loneliness, increasing as one by one the men came to their allotted stations and were left behind treading water, was something terrible.

At last I had come to my post. How I wished there was a moon! Until then, I don't think that I had ever realised how terribly contracted is the horizon of a man whose eyes are only a few inches above the sea: he can hardly see any distance. At the end of three minutes

or so I seemed to hear something; what it was I could not say; nevertheless, I instinctively swam a few strokes in the direction from which the sound seemed to come. Then I listened again. Yes, it was there, and plainer. Whether it were the cutter or not, it was something; and should it turn out to be two pieces of driftwood knocking against one another, placed as we were they would be almost salvation to us. So I continued to swim in the same direction. But it was not driftwood, and it was the cutter—the cutter heading about north-west, and coming up—thank goodness—from a little behind me. The question now was: could I cut her off? Reader, have you ever witnessed a boat-race?—so have I; have you ever bet on a boat-race?—I am afraid that I must plead guilty to having done the same. But in future I shall never take the same interest in the sport; believe me that, beside a boat-hunt, a boat-race is tameness itself.

Well, I swam my best, and found—that I should miss her by ten yards! Now for my last card. Waiting until I was as near to her as I ever should be—that is, barring the chance that my card should turn up trumps, I raised myself in the water, and flung my rope, in a big loose coil, straight at her stern, then settled down to swimming again. A few strokes, and I was sure that I was gaining on her—my rope had done its work, that is to say, it had fouled the screw. Had I tried holding one end of it, it would most likely have slipped off; but being quite loose, it had wound itself so effectually round the blades and boss, that later, when we tried to get it off, the only way in which we could do so was by cutting it off in little bits. By the time I reached her, she was almost motionless.

You may be sure that I did not lose much time in firing a rifle to let the crew know that they had once more a boat to go to. In ten minutes or so all hands were on board; and very glad we were to dry our clothes, make some cocoa, and smoke our pipes.

As for the dhow, she got away, but was caught next voyage.

LUX IN TENEBRIS.

THE castle window on the height
Burns crimson through the leafless trees :
But lo ! the sun in frosty seas
Goes down, and all the world is night.

Not all. For there, amid the gloom,
The darkened window glows again
With softer light : the ruddy pane
Gives token to the night of home :

And leaping with the leaping flame,
Soft shadows on the ceiling move—
A lover reading to his love
Of Camelot and Arthur's fame.

Oh heavy heart, from sorrow win
A guerdon countervailing doubt :
God sometimes drowns the light within,
Lest thou forget the light within.

CUTHBERT M'EVOC.

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OTTERBURN.

THE battle of Otterburn was one of the most famous contests recorded in the annals of chivalry. It was not a national contest in the sense in which Bannockburn is, although it occurred in the course of an invasion of England by the Scots. The fate of nations did not hang upon the issue. It was in reality a personal fight, in which the rivalries of two powerful Border chiefs were put to the arbitrament of the sword. Each of these chieftains was a sort of king in his own country—the Percy in Northumberland, the Douglas in Teviotdale; and the fight that ensued was perhaps all the more bitter and bloody for this element of personal rivalry and clan hatred that entered into it.

It is not, however, to the strict records of the historian that the name of Otterburn owes its popularity. This has been the work of the old ballad-writers—the nameless bards and musicians of a far past who ‘sung other names, but left their own unsung.’ The older and the later ballads of ‘Chevy Chase,’ as well as the English and the Scottish ballads on ‘The Battle of Otterbourne,’ point evidently to the same contest. The outstanding feature in all these is, that a Percy and a Douglas had a great fight, the inevitable horrors of which were tempered by the fine spirit of chivalry that animated both the principals in the fight and their followers, and the result of which battle was that the Douglas lost his life and the Percy was ‘led captive away.’ The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase,’ which probably belongs to the fifteenth century, was perhaps that of which Sir Philip Sydney was thinking when he said: ‘I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet.’ Even the learned Ben Jonson declared that he had rather have been the author of ‘Chevy Chase’ than of all his own works. So true is it that song is more powerful than science; that that which touches the heart and stirs the imagination, even though it be but a simple lilt of verse, is more enduring than the

ponderous tomes that speak only to the intellect.

Yet this popular appreciation of the ballads in which the prowess of the Douglas and Percy is embalmed has not been without its drawbacks, for it has led to a great misunderstanding of the leading events of which the battle formed but an episode—though indeed the chief episode. If you were to question people on the subject of the battle and its origin, probably nine persons out of ten would answer that the fight was the result of an attempt on the part of the one chieftain to hunt upon the lands of the other—a kind of poaching raid on a great scale checked by an opposing army of game preservers. All the ballads, whether they are written from the Scottish or the English point of view, agree in this. The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase’ has it:

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the mangle of doughty Douglas,
And all that ever with him be.

The later version, also, in relating the ‘woeful hunting’ that once did ‘in Chevy Chase befall,’ says:

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way.

Both the English and the Scottish versions of ‘The Ballad of Otterbourne,’ while agreeing that it was a hunting expedition, differ, however, from the ‘Chevy Chase’ ballads in so far as they represent Douglas and not Percy to have been the intruder.

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas boun’d him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

All these ballads so agreeing as to the conflict having arisen out of a hunting raid, not anything that may be written by the historian to an opposite effect will ever succeed in eradicating the popular mistake.

The scene of the battle itself is not, we should think, a frequent place of pilgrimage, as it is not conveniently accessible. It lies far away among the high and solitary moors of Northumberland, where they stretch, brown and naked, southwards from the crest of the Cheviots. Bellingham Station, on the North Tyne Railway, is perhaps the best starting-point for the pedestrian, and he has a walk northward of from eight to ten miles, over a weary tract of moorland, before he reaches the little village that bears the famous name of Otterburn. All this district of Northumberland lies at a high level above the sea, and as the soil is wet and sour no trees grow upon it; hence the landscape has a dreary and uninviting aspect, especially to one who has just quitted the beautifully wooded vale of North Tyne, with its rich green slopes and its crystal winding river.

The little village of Otterburn lies in Redesdale, and receives its name from the brook that here comes down from the hills, and falls into the Rede Water. Near to it is the ancient Roman road known as Watling Street, which runs up Redesdale for some miles, then crosses the Cheviots, and descends into Scotland, being traceable still for most of the way until near Melrose. The fact of the vicinity of the field of Otterburn to this old Roman Road accounts no doubt for this being the scene of the battle, as this road afforded the Scots an excellent means of returning—as we shall find they were returning—into Scotland.

The battle was brought about in this way. During the reign of Edward III. and that of his successor Richard II., Scotland had been grievously harassed by the English. Time and again had the Southron forces marched across the Borders, burning and slaying and laying waste wherever they went. The Scots, so harassed, were fain to make friends with France, which country was also much pressed by the English. In 1385, the king of France sent one of his generals to Scotland with a thousand men-at-arms, knights, and esquires, to assist the Scots against England; but with them also he sent what was still more acceptable to the Scots, poor as they had been now rendered by the constant harryings of the English—namely, the sum of fifty thousand livres, and no fewer than twelve hundred stands of complete mail. No doubt at the battle of Otterburn many a French helm and hauberk had its metal tested under English lance and axe. But the French men-at-arms themselves proved rather a trouble to the Scots, and nothing was effected by their help against England.

But in 1388, the year in which Otterburn was fought, the Scots roused themselves for a war of reprisal against their Southron enemies. The English government under Richard II. was weak and divided, even the noblemen on the English Border being at enmity among themselves. This, in the opinion of the Scottish barons, afforded a favourable opportunity to strike their long-meditated blow. All the arrangements for the invasion were made with as much privacy as possible, so that the English might be taken unawares; and on St Oswald's day, 5th August, the Scottish forces met near Jedburgh to the number of forty thousand men. But secret as their proceedings had been, the rumour of

them had reached the Earl of Northumberland. Hence, when the Scots met in council of war in the church of Southdean, at the foot of the Cheviots, an English squire, in the dress and arms of a Scotsman, entered among them, as if he had been in the retinue of one of the Scottish nobles, and so listened to all their deliberations. But when he retired from the church, he found that his horse, which he had fastened up with the others, had been stolen. Not wishing to attract attention to himself, he proceeded to walk quietly away. But two sharp-eyed Scottish knights saw him thus walking off, booted and spurred.

'I have witnessed many wonderful things,' said one to the other, 'but what I now see is equal to any. That man yonder has, I believe, lost his horse, and yet he makes no inquiry about it. On my troth, I doubt much if he belongs to us; let us go after him and ascertain.'

When they came up to and questioned him, he prevaricated and contradicted himself; upon which they seized and carried him before the council. There, under threats of immediate execution, he confessed his espionage, and revealed the English plans. These were, to wait until it was seen whether the Scots should enter England on the eastern or the western frontier; and when the event had decided which, the English were to advance into Scotland on the opposite side, and so harry the country in their absence. In consequence of this information, the Scots leaders resolved to divide their army into two divisions, sending the main body into England by Carlisle, and the second by way of Northumberland. The latter division consisted of about four hundred mounted men-at-arms, with two thousand infantry, and was placed under the command of James Earl of Douglas. Southdean was but a few miles from the head of Rede Water, over the Cheviots; and down this valley the Douglas soon led his men into the heart of Northumberland.

The English spy having been sent a prisoner to Berwick, the first news the Northumbrians had of the Scotch invasion was in the clouds of smoke which ascended wherever they passed. The Scots spoiled and burned as they went along. And so rapid was their march, that they had entered the rich county of Durham, penetrated to the gates of Durham itself, burning and killing and gathering booty everywhere, had returned and recrossed the Tyne, and were before the walls of Newcastle by Friday the 14th of August, within eight days from the time they started. To account for the rapidity of these movements, it must be borne in mind, that although only the men-at-arms fought on horseback, the infantry when on the march were also on horseback. They rode on small horses, and could act on occasion as light cavalry; but on the eve of a battle, their horses or ponies were dismissed in the charge of attendants, and their riders fought on foot. And Froissart tells us that on this occasion the two thousand infantry were, on the march, all mounted.

It was here, then, before the gates of Newcastle, that the series of chivalrous exploits began which ended in the fierce conflict of Otterburn. The Earl of Northumberland had himself remained at his castle of Alnwick, but sent his two sons, Sir Henry Percy ('Hotspur') and Sir Ralph to defend Newcastle. Here between the

Friday and the following Monday, the Scots had made various attempts upon the town, and, as was the habit of the times, many a fight took place before the barriers. But it was on Monday, the 17th, the great event happened; for on that day the Douglas and the Percy met in personal conflict, when the latter was unhorsed, and his lance, with the pennon thereto attached, taken by Douglas. Hotspur was only twenty-three years of age, while Douglas was about thirty-eight; both experience and strength may therefore be said to have been on the side of the Douglas. Nevertheless, the loss of his pennon was a gallant affront to Percy and the English, while its capture was none the less a matter of rejoicing to Earl Douglas and the Scots.

The Earl, as he bore away his prize, exclaimed: 'I will carry this token of your prowess with me to Scotland, and plant it on the tower of my castle at Dalkeith, that it may be seen from afar.'

'By God,' replied Hotspur, 'you shall not even bear it out of Northumberland. Be assured you shall never have that pennon to brag of.'

Douglas answered: 'You must come this night and seek it, then. I will fix your pennon before my tent, and shall see if you will venture to take it away.'

Accordingly, Douglas planted the spear with the pennon at the door of his pavilion, and appointed a strong guard, as he fully expected a night attack. And so there would have been had the heady Hotspur had his own way. But the English leaders dissuaded him. They did not know where the rest of the Scottish army was, and might be led into an ambush.

The night having thus passed without battle, Douglas began his return into Scotland. He had a rich booty with him, and every hour's delay would strengthen the enemy, who were gathering assistance from every quarter. By four o'clock on the morning of the 18th, he was at Ponteland, eight miles from Newcastle, and there he tarried for a few hours till the town was taken and its owner made prisoner. Then the Scots once more began their march towards the Cheviots, and in the afternoon were before the tower of Otterburn, fully thirty miles from Newcastle. They attacked this tower also, but did not succeed in taking it; and when evening approached the Scots took measures to intrench themselves for the night. With this view Douglas selected a strong situation on a spur of hill about a mile in advance.

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Among the bent sac brown.

Here he probably found the remains of a round hill-fort, and within this he made all secure for the night. The ground in front of him, and which formed the site of the battle, was an easy slope descending towards Otterburn and the Rede Water, with marshy land on both sides; and, though the slope is now bare and treeless, it was then protected in many parts by trees and brush-wood. As Percy describes it in the ballad:

The roe full reckless there she rins,
To make the game and glee;
The falcon and the pheasant both,
Among the holts on hie.

This action of Douglas, of intrenching himself above Otterburn, was against the better judgment of the barons and knights in his train. They would have preferred to make good their return into Scotland, of which they were within a few hours' march. But Douglas's chivalrous instincts as a knight were, like those of James the Fourth, too strong for his prudence as a leader. He had promised to give the Percy an opportunity of winning back his pennon, and here at Otterburn should he wait for him.

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye!'—
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas,
'My troth I plight to thee.'

Next morning, a portion of the Scottish army renewed their attack on Otterburn tower, but the place was strong and well defended, and withstood the assault successfully. At night, once more, the Scots withdrew to the shelter of their camp. It was the evening of Wednesday the 19th of August. The sun had not yet sunk in the western sky, when low down on the eastern horizon rose the red moon, now at the full, all night long to shed its dim rays upon as stern and deadly a conflict as ever broke the stillness of night. The chiefs, wearied with the day's fruitless assault, had relieved themselves of their heavy armour, and were sitting at supper in their 'side gowns,' when the cry broke that the Percy was upon them. And so it was. Had the English attack been directed against the pavilions where the knights were, the discomfiture of the Scots had been inevitable; but it so happened that the portion of the camp which they surprised on the east side was that occupied by the sutlers and camp-followers. Bands of infantry were at once despatched to maintain the fight until the knights and men-at-arms had time to don their armour; and so hastily and imperfectly was this done, that Douglas went forth to the battle without his helmet, and many other lords and knights were equally unprepared.

The English, like the Scots, fought this battle on foot. The dim light and the nature of the ground did not admit of the movements of cavalry. Percy was at the head of eight or nine thousand men, thus greatly outnumbering the Scots; but Douglas, when he issued from his tent, led his knights round the back of the camp, and assailed the English in flank. The fight was long and stubborn, and at first the English were like to have the victory. But about midnight, heavy clouds began to roll across the sky, shutting out the light of the moon; and the wearied combatants withdrew their forces for a time, glad, no doubt, of a brief breathing-space. When once more moonlight was shed upon the scene, the fight was resumed. Seeing the English massed strongly at one point, and anxious to recover the spirits of his men, Douglas seized a huge battle-axe, which few but he could wield, and followed only by his armed chaplain and his son bearing his banner, he rushed into the midst of the enemy, shouting his war-cry of 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' The English ranks opened before his terrific onslaught, his hand dealing death wherever it fell; but he went too far, and was hopelessly involved in the press, and could not return. Borne down by spears on every side, at last he

fell mortally wounded, while his chaplain stood over him to protect his body. The Scottish knights rushed in to his assistance, and the English were driven back. The Douglas prayed his companions to hide his fall from his followers, and to raise his standard once more as if he were at their head. This was done; and the Scots, shouting his war-cry, made so terrible an assault upon the English, that the latter were broken up and began to quit the field. In the press, both the Percy and his brother were surrounded and taken prisoners, while the Scots chased the English with great slaughter long five miles from the field.

The Scottish ballad gives a touching picture of the dying Douglas. Addressing his nephew, he says:

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three;
And bury me by the bracken bush
That grows on yonder lily lee.'

They buried him not there, however; but bore his remains home with them to the Abbey Church of Melrose.

And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterbourne!

His son, Archibald Douglas of Cavers, who bore his standard, carried it home with him, where in Cavers house it is still preserved, along with two ladies' gauntlets, beautifully embroidered with pearls, known as 'The Percy Relics.' These latter were probably attached to the spear which the Douglas took from Percy under the walls of Newcastle.

J. R.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXII.—'LOVE THE GIFT IS LOVE THE DEBT.'

WHEN she and her luggage were safely bestowed in the dogcart, when she had been well wrapped in rugs, and when they had dashed out of the station into the raw darkness, then Isabel thanked George for coming for her.

'Nobody knows I've come,' said George. 'We waited all day yesterday for you, and were just beginning to think you were not coming at all, when in came your telegram.'

'But that made it all right—did it not?' said she.

'Well,' said George, with a joyous laugh, 'nearly right. But you didn't set down what line you were coming by: there are three lines, and each has a night-train.'

'How foolish of me!' she exclaimed. 'And you have been waiting about for three trains!' She considered him a moment, as if she found him a more eager lover than she had bargained for. 'I found,' said she, by way of apology, 'that I had a good many things to do yesterday, and I thought I would take the night-train for the sake of having a new experience.'

'So like you, Bell,' laughed George, 'to want a new experience!'

'Is it?' said she simply. 'I suppose it is.'

When they were well out on the clear high-

way, and one hand was enough to hold the reins, he put down his other hand to seek hers; but she affected not to understand his purpose, and let her hands remain hid. The mare knew that she was going home to a bran-mash, and she spanked along at such a rate that speech was impracticable; so the two sat silent, and wrapped against the cold air; and mound and tree, cottage and bush, fled fast away from them, looking merely like blacker features and articulations of the general darkness.

None of the household—save a groom to take charge of the mare—was astir when they arrived. Isabel retired at once to freshen herself with a bath and to change her dress. She did not come down till the breakfast bell rang; and then, when she had made her apologies and explanations, there were presented to her a great surprise and determining shock.

They sat at breakfast, when Mr Suffield, who had been running his eye up and down the columns of *The Lancashire Gazette*, murmuring the while 'H'm! Ha!' suddenly exclaimed to the table in general: 'Bless my soul! Now, what do you think of this?' And then immediately to Isabel in particular: 'What do you think of this, Bell?'

'Well, what is it?' cried all.

'It's in "Our London Correspondence,"' said Suffield. 'Listen: "The unequivocal and brilliant success of "The Backbiter" at the afternoon performance yesterday at the Variety Theatre has compelled the management to disclose the name of the author. The audience insisted with stamping of feet and reiterated cries of "Author! Name! Name! Author!" and the manager stepped before the curtain, and said that the author was not in the house, but he would give his name—Alan Ainsworth."—There!' said Suffield. 'What do you think of that?—Did you know his play was going to be produced yesterday, Bell?'

'No,' she answered; 'I did not. I did not even know it was finished.' She had an overwhelming sense of pain and desolation, as if this were the final cut that severed all connection betwixt herself and Ainsworth: he had not thought it worth his while to give her his confidence, even in this small matter. She had come down extremely doubtful what answer she should give to George: now she had no doubt whatever.

"The play," Suffield resumed, "will be placed at once in the evening bill of the theatre; and while the enterprising manager may be congratulated on having secured a piece that is certain to run for many days and to take a place in the repertory of the theatre, Mr Ainsworth is no less to be felicitated on having in all human probability won fortune as well as fame. Mr Ainsworth was known, though it may be but anonymously, as a brilliant member of the staff of this journal until less than a year ago, when he was invited to assume a responsible position on the metropolitan press. Mr Ainsworth has shown he can do admirable work; and his friends, of whom the present writer has the privilege of counting himself one, are confident he will go far."—There!' cried Suffield, slapping the paper on the table. 'What do you think of that?'

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'The hand is the hand of the London Correspondent,' thought Isabel vaguely to herself; 'but the voice is the voice of Alexander.—He deserves his success,' said she aloud: 'he has worked hard for it.' She spoke quietly but frankly, and no one guessed there was the pain of separation at her heart.

'I always said,' observed Mr Suffield, 'that Alan would turn up trumps: though he might have let us know about his *matinée*. Let's spend a shilling—it's Christmas, you know—in congratulating him.'

'And he's going to make his fortune!' said Mrs Suffield meditatively, with her eye on Isabel. 'I have heard that a very successful dramatist makes in these days of high prices and "No fees" as much as Fifteen Thousand a year!'

'No, mother!' exclaimed Euphemia.

'That must be a very successful dramatist, indeed, my dear,' said Mr Suffield.

'What about this telegram of congratulation?' said George.

They discussed the wording of the telegram for some time; for Mr Suffield—who had a card and a telegraph form and a pencil, which he meant to use himself—would hear of nothing but 'Many happy returns.—Returns, don't you see? There's nothing a manager or a playwright values so much as *returns* and *many* of them.' It was at length conceded that the phrase upon which he had set his heart should stand, but that there be set in front of it this: 'We congratulate you on the production of your play.' That done, they all signed it, as if the handwriting could be transmitted, in manner following: 'GEORGE SUFFIELD; JOAN SUFFIELD; EUPHEMIA; GEORGE.'

George paused, before handing it to Isabel, to count the words. Reckoning the address, there was only room for one word more to complete the shilling's-worth. 'There is only one more word wanted,' said he: 'you had better sign "ISABEL."—That will do very well,' he added with a smile; 'it will look like a Suffield manifesto.'

Isabel did not like it; but she wrote as was suggested, saying to herself, 'What does it matter?'

After breakfast, she went into the garden with Euphemia, and sauntered up and down among the flower-beds, as we saw her at the beginning of this story; but the beds were now bare and waste as her heart. There George soon found them; and seeing him coming, Phemy found an excuse for leaving her, and she prepared for what she knew was coming.

'Do you remember?' he said. 'It was last Whitsuntide that I saw you and Phemy here; it was in the beginning of the day that I spoke to you of something. Do you remember it?' he asked.

'Yes,' said she with self-possession; 'I remember it.' She remembered, too, that on that occasion she had come upon Alan Ainsworth in the conservatory.

'I asked you a question then, Bell, and you put me off; and then I begged that I might put it again in a year. It is less than a year; but I have found a year too long to wait. Tell me, Bell, am I right in thinking that you *quite* understand why I have asked you to come here this Christmas?'

'Quite,' she answered.

'Then,' said he, intensely moved, 'I may ask the question?' He took her hand and paused; the pause was not long, but it seemed long to Isabel.

'May I take the question as asked?' said she, looking down and making arabesques with her toe on the gravel.

'Bell!' he murmured. 'Then—then you accept me?'

'I do, George,' she answered. For an instant she looked him frankly in the face, and then dropped her eyes again.

'Oh, my dear!' he exclaimed, and folded her in his arms before she was aware.

To that she submitted; but when he ventured to press closer and to seek to kiss her, a sudden dislike of his embrace seized her, and she put him away. 'Not now, George!' said she—'not now!' and fled into the house.

George might have thought there should have been more in the asking of a wife than he had found; but if he did think so he did not show it. He went about exuding happiness. That he had come to the understanding he desired with Isabel was apparent; yet it was formally made known to his parents. Suffield took Isabel aside to welcome her as his prospective daughter-in-law.

'I'm glad, my dear,' said he, pressing her hand; 'it's what I've wished for. Though lately,' he added, 'I had got to think that it was going to be Ainsworth.'

It was a busy Christmas Day. They all went to church in the morning, and exchanged greetings and salutations of 'Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!' on this side and on that. They returned to find the post-bag just arrived: the post is always late on Christmas Day. The bag was crammed with Christmas cards and greetings addressed to every member of the family; for the Suffields now had droops of friends. For Isabel there was but one; yet even that she was surprised to receive, for she had told no one she was coming to Lancashire for Christmas. When she recognised the handwriting of the superscription, her heart beat ominously: it was Alan Ainsworth's. She opened it before them all, recklessly, for they all were occupied with their own communications. Her envelope contained a letter as well as a card of greeting. She read the letter eagerly, greedily. 'I owe you,' it ran, 'and my good friends with whom your servant has told me you are staying' (He had called, then!), 'an apology for the business of this afternoon. It seems rude and ungrateful, perhaps, but my only reason for not confiding to you the secret of the production was that I was afraid the play might fail. That was why I also suppressed my name. I don't think I could have looked any of you in the face again if you had known, and all the world had known, that it had failed. I know you will all rejoice with me that it has not failed, and that there seems the prospect of a long run before it. There are seats ready for you as soon as you are ready to accept them. Are you returning to town soon? I wish to see you to explain matters.'

When Isabel read that aloud—except the final sentence—to the family, George was silent and frowned a little, though no exception could be taken to anything he had heard read.

'We're going back to London on the last day of the year,' said Mrs Suffield: 'we have several engagements to fulfil. Will that suit you, Bell?'

'Oh, quite,' answered Bell.

The rest of that eventful day was crammed with gaiety and feasting. A good many guests came to dinner, and after dinner there was merry dancing; and so the time passed without thought. It was not till she had retired to her room very late that Isabel had leisure to consider what she had done and who she was. She was the affianced wife of her cousin George! She had promised to marry him!—to tie her life to his! She did not shudder at the thought of him; she was only dully miserable. This seemed to her a very poor conclusion to have reached. She was like a religious enthusiast who, after having had visions of heavenly glory, dreams of a divine presence and expectations of fulfilled prayer, suddenly finds himself shut in with a mere reality of earth, which causes him to doubt all he had formerly believed, and to despair of all he had formerly hoped for. When she had lived her simple, tedious, untrammelled life of schoolmistress, what thrills of joy were hers, what dreams of happiness! It was only now she recognised how much she must have dreamed, when she knew she was tied to a reality which was the fulfilment of nothing she had ever dreamed of or had longed for. Oh, what romantic visions she had had of heaven and earth filled with delight!—of Love that with its light and warmth would blend all the varied experiences of life into one Joy—of 'Love the gift, and Love the debt!' Now all that was done with; the whole world was become gray and dull, and shrunk to a wretched round of going out and coming in, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking! And she herself, in her folly and blindness, had wilfully chosen this result! No one but herself was to blame! Why had she been so precipitate? Alan Ainsworth promised explanations! Perhaps she had misunderstood him!

'Oh, my love! my love!' she moaned in her anguish, pressing her hands to her eyes as she paced up and down her room. 'What have I done? What have I done?'

Yet George seemed satisfied and happy. He was not to blame; and how could she take his happiness from him? She knew, now that she had been put to the touch, that she did not love him at all, as a woman ought to love a man with whom she means to identify her life; but that was not because he was unworthy of her love. She now saw, too, that in committing outrage on herself she was doing wrong to George, who by her was prevented from knowing the unreserved, romantic love of another woman! Yet George was happy in loving her and in believing she loved him.

Next morning she went down to breakfast, resolved to show no sadness or regret: it would be the merest selfishness to trouble others with her vain feelings. It was remarked that she looked pale and had dark circles under her dark eyes; but she declared it was nothing: she had not slept well, she said, and her head ached.

The day was filled with engagements: a mid-day dinner in the school-room to the work-people, and a tea afterwards to the children, and last of

all, a family visit to the theatre. But yet there were intervals for private conference, of which George assiduously tried to avail himself. He sought to enjoy the accepted lover's privilege of sitting close to and embracing his mistress; but these endeavours Isabel did her utmost to defeat. And George was not offended; for he set her conduct down merely to the coyness usual in a maiden. Isabel made one or two faint efforts to shake his belief in her.

'Are you quite sure,' she asked once, 'that I am quite the woman you ought to marry?'

'Look here, Bell,' said he; 'don't ask such absurd questions: they are not suited to my intelligence. I have not known a great many women; but I don't need to know any more to be able to tell that the woman I have chosen is the one woman in the world for me.'

After that, what could she say that would not be simply a repudiation of her promise to him?

At the same time she was troubled with the necessity of sending Alan Ainsworth an answer to his question: When would she be at home? Should she write to him that she was engaged to marry her cousin, and she had better communicate with him no more? But would not that be attributing an intimate importance to the situation which he might fail to understand? She ended by sending him a line merely: 'I shall be home on the last evening of the year.'

(To be continued.)

CORNISH TIN-MINES.

Tin is decidedly the most interesting of the mineral treasures of Cornwall. Even in the days when recorded history was not, the Cornish tin was in some rude fashion mined and rendered usable for the purposes of man. The trade so carefully fostered by the Phœnicians was developed during Roman times, only to be neglected when the Saxons and Danes struggled for the mastery of England. It was revived in later centuries.

The earliest tin-mining was of the type known as 'streaming,' and was of course conducted at or near to the surface. The streams of tin were parcels of the ore that at some remote period had been detached from a lode and swept down-hill, most probably by alluvial denudation. Carew, in his 'Survey of Cornwall' (published in 1602), quaintly considered the denuding force that originally laid bare the surface tin deposits to be 'Noah's flood.' The primitive streaming operations were carried on with rude implements of stone or bronze, pickaxes of deer-horn, and subsequently, wooden shovels. With improved tools the miners were enabled to carry their quest farther into the earth; and shafts and tunnels were excavated, and mining for tin gradually developed until its present condition was attained. Much of the Cornish tin, especially before the beginning of the present century, found its way to London; and an important factor in determining the price of the article was the element of risk involved in the long voyage necessary to place it on the London market. The tin-merchant knew how to take advantage of these risks; and when non-occurent, to invent imaginary ones to take their place. Rigging the market was an operation quite as well understood three

centuries ago as now, for—to quote once more from Richard Carew—‘About the price there groweth much adoe betweene the marchants and the owners before they can jumpe to an agreement. The marchant unfoldeth his packe of strange newes, which either he brought with him from London (where most of them dwell) or forged by the way, telling what great likelihood there is of warres, what danger of pirates at sea, how much of the fore-bought tynne lieth on their hands, &c. The owner, on the other side, stoppeth his eares against these charmes, answers his newes with the Spaniard’s “Credo en Dios,” encounters his reasons with the present scarcitie and charges of getting and working tynne, and so keeping up the price.’ Carew then goes on to observe very shrewdly that ‘in the end, after much bidding and bowing, varying and delaying, commonly that marchant who hath most money to bestow and that owner who hath most tynne to sell doe make the price.’

Enterprise at the present day is rather devoted to developing the tin mines already in existence than sinking new ones. The miner or miner of bygone days was a tin-finder as well. Even at the present there is ample opportunity for the exercise of the tin-finding faculty in tracing the direction of the veins of metal under the surface and ascertaining the best position for shafts—arts which tend to secure the maximum of ore with a minimum of labour.

Science has done much in assisting the metal-seekers in their arduous tasks; but still there is no golden rule to simplify the tin-seeker’s work. They say: ‘Where it is, there it is;’ and again: ‘By cutting the ground the metal is found’—both pieces of tin-lore that practical experience has over and over again proved by demonstration to be true. Occasionally, it happens that a lode has been discovered by accidental means. The wearing of the high-roads has more than once revealed the evidences of a rich deposit of tin beneath. The run of a lode has sometimes been discovered by the want or weakness of the grass along a particular section of a field. These instances, however, are but the exceptions to the general rule that tin-mining calls forth the best energies and intelligence of the seeker after subterranean wealth. It is the play for these two qualities that tin-mining affords which has done so much to develop the Cornish miner. In addition, he possesses resourcefulness and independence in a very marked degree. He is no mere underground labourer, as many miners admittedly are; he often works for his own hand, his remuneration being largely dependent upon the success that follows his intelligence and energy in exploiting a new venture. All over the world the Cornish tinman is in request as a miner; and during the Australian gold-fever, many of the steady persevering gold-diggers who amassed considerable wealth had received their training in English tin-mines.

The hardships and difficulties of a Cornish miner’s life are of the greatest. When it is borne in mind that in some of the mines there are upwards of fifty or sixty miles of shafts and tunnels, and that often a miner’s work lies in narrow tunnellings remote from the shaft, it will be seen that his life is no easy one. In some cases the metal has to be followed through ser-

pentine or granite, in others it must be tracked through adhesive beds of slaty clay. The tunnels are small, the air none of the freshest, and the temperature considerably higher than at the surface. Active exertion in a hot atmosphere means copious perspiration; and the miner tries to guard against resulting risks by wearing underclothing of thick flannel. His outer apparel consists of a suit of coarse canvas, which, whatever may be its original colour, soon becomes stained a ‘niry yellow.’ A strong hat, or rather helmet, to protect the head from falls from the roof, and also from incautious contact with the ceilings of the subterranean passages where the tin is sought, completes the attire. In the front of the hat is carried a candle; and the appearance that a miner presents as, thus equipped, with inclined head and bent shoulders, he tramps along the narrow tunnels, resembles nothing so much as Atlas supporting the universe; for the roof of the cavern seems in the uncertain light quite superincumbent upon his shoulders. A still more peculiar effect is produced by the voices of the miners when they are heard in some of the remoter recesses of the mine; the sounds echo and re-echo from the sides of the tunnel, and travel in reverberating measures to considerable distances, seeming to come from a company of gnomes engaged in their underground labours.

To the actual work of mining must be added in many cases the task of reaching that part of the mine where the tin is being worked. It is no exaggeration to state that some miners have spent week after week and month after month three hours per day upon ladders while journeying from the mouth of the shaft to the workings. Of course, where conditions admit, the men are hauled out of the mine either up a perpendicular shaft or along an inclined plane.

When a man has finished his shift below and is about to repair to his humble home on the surface, he speaks of it as ‘going to grass.’ His enjoyments are of the calm and philosophical order; he plunges into no excesses, but employs his leisure in recruiting his stock of health and energy, ready for the next descent to the scene of his labours.

That a good miner makes a good gardener is a remark that the Cornish tinman verifies to the full. He is not only fond of agricultural pursuits, but his little holdings are models of careful spade cultivation. They are as a rule rigorously fenced off from surrounding properties with a precision and completeness rather suggestive of a mining claim than the mere delimitation of a few fields and gardens.

With all his sterling qualities and temperate habits, the Cornish miner is far from being long-lived. A former vicar of St Just, a typical mining district, was once heard to say that he had seen many widows, but not a single widower. The reason is not far to seek. It is not accident, but disease, that makes such terrible inroads in the ranks of the miners. He may slip from the wearying ladder, it is true; a block of rock may fall from the ceiling of the tunnel; or the blasting charge may explode prematurely with fatal results; water, too, may burst into the mine and drown the poor workers like rats in a hole. But though these influences may slay their thousands, diseases born of exposure, first to the heat and

dampness of the mine, and then it may be to the keenness of the outer winter air, undoubtedly may count their victims by the tens of thousands.

One of the most interesting features of mining in Cornwall is the pumping-engine. These triumphs of engineering skill are absolutely essential to the very existence of the mines. The mean annual rainfall for the county of Cornwall is about fifty inches, so that the amount of water that penetrates into the mines must be considerable. In some instances the Cornish engines pump water from depths of two thousand feet; and in one case at least the water that is thus raised to the surface comes from recesses in the earth two thousand five hundred feet from the surface. In the case of mines such as Botallack, where the workings extend beneath the sea, there is the percolation from the sea-bed to guard against. This the miners are unconcerned about, as, when they observe a thin stream come oozing through the roof or sides of their tunnel, they calmly daub in clay with the view of checking the leakage into the mine. A visitor to this mine observed a wooden plug in the ceiling of the tunnel through which the guide was conducting him, and being of a curious turn of mind, he inquired as to its use. When told that the purpose it served was to keep out the sea, he came to the conclusion that he had no desire for further subterranean exploration, and asked his conductor to take him back to the surface forthwith.

Sunday is the great day of the miner's week. He may, during the remaining six days, merit the comparison to a grub, toiling and burrowing in the earth; but on Sunday he removes from him the signs of his toil, dresses himself in sober black, and his company with his wife, spends the day soberly and religiously.

Of the Cornish mines it is perhaps truer than of other English mining districts, that 'A poor surface gives a rich soil.' This is especially applicable to the successful mines. In their vicinity the country has a most dreary aspect. The moorland with its huge blocks of moorstone or granite, and its wealth of heath and gorse, is there strewn with unsightly waste-heaps—small mountains of refuse, which show to what an extent the underground operations have been extended. Piles of mud and pits of slime, too, add to the dreariness of the scene; while the tall chimneys of the pumping, winding, stamping, or smelting works do much to detract from the romance that is generally associated with the county of Cornwall. One sighs for the 'meadows studded with herd and fold,' which are not wanting even in the midst of many of our colliery districts. Among collieries, however, there is little useless material brought to the surface. In the case of the Cornish mines, the tin forms only a small percentage of the roughly-broken rocks which the great 'kibbles' or barrels bring to the surface; hence the barren waste-heaps, the mud, and the slime.

Some of these waste-heaps, though, are barren no longer; they are covered with verdure, not, however, by the hand of man, but by the bounty of nature. These ancient indications of past mining activity go back, some of them, to Roman times; and some bear unmistakable evidence of

having been turned over more than once; for in several instances the rubbish-heaps of early days, when only surface-mining was practised, have been found to cover a rich store of metal deposited in the ground beneath. One feature of abandoned works that is even more striking and impressive than the shapeless heaps of ruin that mark the site of the former surface-buildings, is the occurrence of the deep black pools, most of them, according to local tradition, bottomless, and having in the centre of their bed the shaft leading to tunnels that never again will resound to the click of the miner's pick or the thundering of his mighty sledge. Many of these abandoned workings still bear evidence of their past success or failure. The miners of bygone days used to bequeath their experience to those who came after them by planting the banks adjacent to a prosperous mine with sprigs of elder; while an unsuccessful venture was commonly indicated by blackthorn.

No article dealing with the Cornish tin-mines would be complete without some allusion to the Stannaries or Stannary Courts (*L. stannum*, tin), which in former times exercised almost absolute power over the whole business of tin-getting. By ancient charters, the Cornish tinners were exempt from all other jurisdiction than that of the Stannary Courts save in cases of 'land, life, and limb.' An officer was appointed by the Duke of Cornwall, and was called the Lord Warden of the Stannaries. When he thought it necessary, he could summon the twenty-four stannators of Cornwall to the Stannary Parliament, there to revise old and make new laws relative to tin matters. The last of these parliaments met in 1752; and after that date there was practically no business done in the Stannary Courts. Taxes on tin had been paid to the Dukes or Earls of Cornwall for many centuries. The smelted blocks were carried to certain towns to be coined—that is, stamped with the Duchy seal before they could be sold; and heavy fines were imposed upon persons who attempted to evade the stamping dues. In 1838, however, these were abolished, and the last relic of the old Stannary Courts disappeared, a compensation being awarded to the Duchy in place of the revenue formerly derived from tin.

Many are the crises through which the English tin-trade has passed. Leaving out those which are matter of very ancient history, we find great distress in Cornwall in the year 1727. The scarcity of corn reduced the tinmen to desperate straits. Sir John St Aubyn came forward and generously advanced money to keep them from starving and 'plundering their neighbours.' The last-named reason for Sir John's kindness is clearly indicative of the sturdy resourcefulness that characterised the miners of the early part of the eighteenth century. By 1730, the tin-mines were again flourishing. In 1744, however, another serious danger threatened the industry. England was then at war with France, and the small trading-vessels that carried the tin from Cornwall to London would of course form an easy prey to the French. At this crisis, St Aubyn again came to the assistance of the tinners, and obtained from the Admiralty adequate convoy for the tin-laden vessels.

About twenty years ago a far more serious danger than temporary famine or seizure of tin

cargoes by foreign foes was that which threatened to make English tin-mining altogether unprofitable. Much tin had been discovered in the East, in the neighbourhood of the Straits Settlements, and this sent down the value of the English article to an almost ruinous price. Many of the mines ceased working. The miners sought fresh fields of labour in foreign lands, and the prophets of ill averred that in a few years the British tin-trade would cease to have any save an historical importance. In 1870 and 1871 the price of tin was much inflated. Then came the importation of Australian and Straits tin, and prices dropped, and continued to drop to the great distress of the miners and shareholders.

The history of the Wheal Owles Mine during this crisis is most interesting. The Wheal Owles is one of the St Just group of mines, and was the scene of the recent lamentable flooding, when so many brave men lost their lives. When the crisis came, the managing director or 'purser' resolved that he would not sell 'black tin' at a less price than sixty pounds per ton. Black tin is the metal that has undergone the stamping and the washing process to separate it from some of its rocky impurities. It has also had other matter burnt out of it, and is ready for the smelter's hands. The mine was then in the hands of a few well-to-do 'adventurers,' who could afford to try the experiment. Accordingly, no tin was sold, and it was stored in great quantities in hutchies. A wealthy banking and smelting firm advanced the necessary money for carrying on the mine on the security of the stored black tin. This policy was commenced in 1875; and in 1878 the price of pure tin had fallen to sixty pounds per ton, and the crude article to forty pounds. The debt at the bank was £24,000, and the interest of course considerable. Still the 'purser' held on, and no tin was disposed of; and in 1881 and 1882 the reward came. The market went up, and the shareholders were enabled to realise far higher prices than the minimum below which they had resolved not to sell.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

WHEN the sense of stupefaction passed away, Upcraft became aware of a figure bending over the railing at the foot of his bed and peering inquisitively into his face. 'It's you, is it?' said the figure.

If he had needed any confirmation as to whose step he had heard or as to what manner of man stood there, he had gained it now. As the man spoke, he raised his shaggy eyebrows, feigning, as it seemed to Upcraft, the utmost surprise. He was enveloped in a thick gray dressing-gown. The light from the fire flickered upon it, and upon the old and cunning face of Mr Bryce.

At this moment Jess opened her eyes; she looked in bewilderment round the room.

'So this is the man you're nursing, is it?' said her father. 'It's just as well that I took it into my head to have a look at you, eh?'

Jess made no answer; but she kept a watchful look on his face.

Mr Bryce rose from his leaning posture at the foot of the bed and crossed over to the fire, where he stood very much in the attitude in which Jess had seen him in the library a few hours ago. He stretched out his hands to warm them while glancing at Upcraft over his shoulder. 'Now listen to me,' said he, with a crafty look out of the corner of his eye, 'for I'm going to speak plainly! Let me advise you to weigh every word before you answer me. Shall I go on?'

'Go on,' said Upcraft; 'I'm listening.'

'In the first place,' said Mr Bryce, 'I'll ask you a question. Do you still realise that you are a convict at large? Answer me that!'

There came a look of anger into Upcraft's eyes: Jess felt the hand she had given him pressed convulsively; but he made no answer.

'It's fortunate,' Mr Bryce went on, with a nod of satisfaction, 'that no one here—at Thurrock Hall—knows anything about you. You are Miss Jessie's patient—that's all. Your identity is known to no one, except us three who are here together.'

Upcraft looked into Jessie's face. 'Is that true?'

Jess answered: 'Colonel Woodward knows who you are; no one else knows.'

Mr Bryce cast a meaning glance at his daughter. Then he said: 'Now, listen to what I have to propose.' He walked across the room and back again thoughtfully; then he resumed his attitude over the fire and looked with evident mistrust at Upcraft.

'Well?' said Upcraft, impatient at his hesitation; 'you have something to propose, you say. What is it?'

'I was only wondering,' and there was still mistrust in Mr Bryce's manner, 'whether, as a medical man, it would not be wiser to put off my talk for a few days. I don't want to alarm you,' said he; 'but you've a feverish look in your eye which I don't quite like.'

'You are too considerate,' said Upcraft, in a tone of irony.

'Not at all,' said Mr Bryce.

'Then say what you have to say,' said Upcraft; 'now or never.'

'Very well,' was Mr Bryce's reply. 'You have had your warning. I'll only advise you, as a professional man, not to let anything I may say cause you undue excitement. The matter is a very simple one. You very naturally desire, under existing circumstances, to keep your presence here unknown—unsuspected.'

'I did not say so,' said Upcraft.

'Tut,' said Mr Bryce, with a wave of the hand. 'It's understood, then—it's understood.'

Upcraft offered no comment. He clasped his hands behind his head and looked fixedly at Mr Bryce. Jess stood at the bedside between the two, frequently looking from one face to the other.

'When I reminded you, rather bluntly just now,' Mr Bryce resumed, 'that you were a convict at large—an outlaw—I had a distinct motive for doing so. I wanted you clearly to understand your position. One word from Colonel Woodward, or from me, would send you back to the prison from which you escaped three years ago.'

An odd smile passed over Upcraft's face at

these words. But Jess looked with abject dread at her father.

'But you won't give him up, will you?' said she. 'You won't betray him now?'

'Why, no—no,' said Mr Bryce in his most plausible tone—'not if he agrees to my conditions.'

'Conditions?' said Upercraft, closing his eyes for a moment, as if the better to comprehend. 'What may they be?'

'Simply that you give up all thought of holding my daughter to her engagement: that you lose no time, when restored to health, in making arrangements to quit the country for once and all: that you give your promise, in a word—having been provided with money to live abroad—never to show your face again!'

'And if I refuse?' said Upercraft, opening his eyes and looking searchingly at Mr Bryce.

'Those are my conditions.—If you refuse,' Mr Bryce resumed, 'I shall report you at headquarters; and before a week is out, you will find the handcuffs on your wrists again, and a prison van waiting for you without!'

Upercraft could control himself no longer. 'You coward!' said he, leaping up from his pillows as if he had some thought of springing at Mr Bryce's throat. 'By what right do you presume to dictate terms to me? Your step along the footway through the wood still rings in my ear. Look to your own wrists! For I may yet be tempted, if goaded much further, to put Woodward on the track of the man who tried to murder me in Thurrock Wood!'

At this fierce and unexpected retort, Mr Bryce was completely dumfounded, but only for a moment. He quickly recovered himself, and turning to Jess with a hypocritical air of concern, inquired: 'Does he often rave like this?'

Jess looked thoroughly amazed. If there was any reason in Upercraft's utterance—if it were not a mere feverish outburst of meaningless passion—her father was the direct cause of this grave calamity. As the words sunk into Jessie's heart, their truth became clearly manifest; they seized upon her imagination with irresistible force; and the whole scene of the attempted crime passed before her eyes. Her father had quitted the cottage soon after Upercraft's departure. He had crossed the fields, and had taken the footway through the wood to Great Thurrock Station. There he had seen Upercraft, followed him, and struck him down. She looked at Upercraft as if for some further confirmation. But he had fallen back upon his pillows, and lay there so pale and motionless that Jess became seriously alarmed.

Mr Bryce stepped forward and more closely scrutinised Upercraft's face. 'Out of danger, eh? I don't know so much about that! He's still delirious. Why, my dear,' said he, 'why didn't you give me a hint? You heard me warn him, didn't you? He's in a high fever. I should give him a cooling draught at once.—Good-night!'

Having uttered these words in a soothing, professional tone, while bending over the patient, Mr Bryce went out, treading softly down the passage, as if unconsciously trying to disguise the sound of his own footsteps.

Towards nightfall on the following day, while Woodward was alone in the library, a visitor was

announced. He was a dark man with a closely shaven face; and there was a sporting cut to his dress which added to his general appearance of wide-awakefulness.

Woodward received him with the eager question: 'Any news?'

The man nodded. He was a detective whom Woodward was employing to search into the matter of the attempted murder of John Upercraft.

'Is Mr Bryce here?'

'No,' said Woodward.

'At home?'

'Yes; he went home this morning.'

'I've business with him.—My dogcart is outside,' said the man. 'Will you drive over with me? I'm on the track at last.'

'Can Mr Bryce help you?' said Woodward, with surprise.

'Nobody better!' said the detective.

Woodward took his seat in the dogcart at the detective's side, and they flew along over the melting snow in the growing dusk of evening.

Mr Bryce, who sat in his easy-chair, grasped the arms vigorously as the two men were shown in. He looked startled. There was a wine-glass and an empty bottle of port on the table at his side; and the effects of the wine were apparent in his flushed face and thick utterance.

'Woodward?' said he. 'And who's your friend?'

'Sharp,' said the man, 'from Scotland Yard. I've a warrant, Mr Bryce, for your arrest on suspicion of being concerned in that affair in Thurrock Wood. May I trouble you?'

Mr Bryce, still grasping the armchair, rose up and stood erect before his visitors. The detective stepped forward and held out a pair of handcuffs invitingly.

A stifled oath—a gasp for breath—and Mr Bryce, reeling forward, clutched at his own throat, as though wrestling with some demon, and then fell in a heap, face downward, in front of the hearth. They lifted him back into his chair. They looked at each other. After a pause, the detective said: 'There's no need for handcuffs here.'

For some days Upercraft's relapse caused grave anxiety; but he slowly regained strength; and, strangely enough, as Jess remarked, he never spoke one word to her that showed any distinct recollection of her father's midnight visit.

One bright spring day, Jess had wheeled Upercraft's chair to the open window. She was more a companion to him now than a nurse; and as the need of her as a nurse diminished, she became conscious of a growing change in John Upercraft which seriously perplexed her. He seemed to be drifting from her. 'I shan't trouble you much longer,' said he. 'I'm mending fast. In a few days I shall be well enough to quit Thurrock Hall.'

'Trouble, John? You are a trouble to no one.'

'Not even to Woodward?'

'No. It is ungenerous to think so,' said Jess. 'There is nobody more hospitable in the whole county!'

'You know best,' said Upercraft.

'John! How strange you are,' said Jess. 'What is in your thoughts?'

'I was thinking about myself, I'm afraid,' said he. 'What is to become of me? What have I to live for now?'

'I don't know,' said Jess archly, 'unless it's for me.'

'For you, Jess?' said Upercraft, with surprise. 'Aren't you going to marry Woodward?'

'I? You must be dreaming.'

Upercraft's face brightened. 'How could I have ever had a doubt? Why, Jess, this is the second time you have saved my life! If I had needed any proof—if in all these years you had ever given me the slightest cause to doubt you—your devotion to me during these terrible days, while I was lingering between life and death, should have convinced me that I had no right to think that your love was changed!'

The ice was broken. They were lovers once more. And now he told her what had passed between him and her father on that misty afternoon at the cottage in the marshlands, and how he had subsequently entered the bar-parlour at the 'Old Hulk,' where the gossips had copied her name, as he thought, with Colonel Woodward's.

'It is possible,' said Jess; 'I have been much at the Hall. Miss Woodward is my friend. Her brother and I have been thrown together. I like him, and - and?—'

And then she hesitated, and looked out upon the park, and thought of what had happened there in the snow-storm on that memorable afternoon. Then she related to Upercraft every detail of the scene.

They now spoke freely to each other of all that had happened during their three years of separation.

'After bidding you good-bye, Jess, on that dreadful night,' said Upercraft presently, 'I went abroad. After a number of adventures, of which I will tell you another time, I reached "Frisco." There I got work in a silver mine, and began to make money.'

'But why,' said Jess, 'why did you never write?'

'I feared my letters would be intercepted,' said Upercraft. 'I could not trust your father. I thought of coming home and seeing you, and returning to the States. But I never could make up my mind. But at last something happened which decided me.'

'What was that?'

'It happened at a grog-shop. Some men were gambling at dice. A quarrel arose. Words led to blows. A pistol-shot was heard, and one of the gamblers fell. I ran to lift him from the ground, and instantly recognised him. He was an old fellow-clerk in the London house. He was seriously wounded, and lived only a few days. Before he died, he wrote a confession, which was signed and duly attested. It was about that forgery: and it is now in the hands of my lawyer. It sets forth how some half-dozen drafts, which I had been accused of having forged, were forged by him. He had put one of them among my papers.'

'How cowardly!'

'Yes,' said Upercraft. 'When he heard of my escape from prison, the little courage he had utterly failed him. He was in mortal dread that I should make my appearance at the office

and boldly accuse him of the crime. He was conscience-stricken, and he lived in fear and trembling. At last he left England, and wandered from one country to another, and so came across the man he least desired to meet.'

'It was fated; wasn't it?'

For a while they were silent. Then Upercraft said: 'I was on my way to the Hall, after quitting the "Old Hulk"—resolved to visit Woodward, and do my utmost to induce him to give you up—when I met with that trouble in Thurrock Wood. You know the rest.'

Upercraft was re-established as head-clerk in the house from which he had been dismissed as a criminal more than three years before. Soon afterwards, Jessie became his wife.

Woodward travelled for a while. Then he came home, and settled down with his sister at Thurrock Hall. Jim, when big enough, was taken on as under-gardener; and Mrs Gilkes found a home at one of the park lodges. She never observed anything queer about her son, when the signal-gun went booming over the marshlands on any subsequent occasion; and so she came to conclude that Jim had 'grown out of it' at last.

THE BRITISH SOLDIER AND HIS CHAPLAIN.

It is a matter for congratulation surely that the British nation, while it cares for the physical and material needs of its soldier-sons, does not forget that they have spiritual needs also: it credits them with something more than mere physical frames to be kept strong and in good fighting trim. 'Tommy Atkins,' while he has a strong arm to strike for his country, has a heart also to feel and sympathise. He is a man, not a machine; and has necessities other than those which can be met by the daily food-rations. And so England, recognising these deeper needs of her brave lads—needs which may not be always apparent on the outside, but which are none the less real—has her 'Chaplains' Department' in connection with the army. And there are never wanting men who in this path of duty are proud to go forth under her standard, not to fight, unless, indeed, some stern necessity should arise—then they can—but rather to enhearten the men, and to keep them in touch with that higher duty which embraces and covers all the lesser but essential duties of their soldier-life. The men are none the less unshaken in discipline and plucky in fight because of their Sunday morning parade service, or the quiet word of comfort and friendly sympathy spoken in the hospital or the barrack-room; or the knowledge that should they die in the service, words of Christian prayer will be reverently spoken by their graveside, even though they be laid away to rest in some far-off land, or on the red field of strife itself.

Through many long years it was my happy lot to be engaged in this work at home and abroad, both in the piping times of peace and amid the more stirring episodes of the actual battlefield. I say advisedly it is a happy work, for no clergyman or minister need wish for a more grateful and responsive constituency among whom to toil

than the lads of the British army. They are often misunderstood; sometimes, indeed—and I say it with shame and indignation—looked down upon and scorned; but I testify—and so will many another who has lived among soldiers and *knows* them—that some of the grandest qualities which go to make a noble character in man I have seen exemplified over and over again in the British soldier. Take him all round, he is a better man than those of his own station in civil life. Perhaps he ought to be, because the army is a great school of discipline, where many a man who through sheer weakness of character would very probably drift into evil ways in civil life, just gets that stiffening and backing up which he needs to keep him straight, and ultimately to turn him into a very decent fellow. Whereas, if he be utterly and irretrievably bad, he is soon ignominiously kicked out of the army, as he would be from any other decent society.

With regard to the work of the chaplains, the military authorities recognise four 'religious parties' in the army—Church of England, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan; and every soldier when he enlists is required to declare his 'religious persuasion,' he being 'at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion.' There are about eighty commissioned chaplains belonging to the first three parties: the Wesleyans, while having their corps of chaplains, and serving both at home and in campaigns, preferring not to accept commissions. This somewhat militates against the efficiency of their earnest and otherwise fully recognised work in the army; and it is perhaps regrettable that they do not choose to stand on the same platform as their co-workers. These commissioned chaplains are divided into four classes, according to their seniority, ranking respectively as Colonels, Lieutenant-colonels, Majors, and Captains; and headed by a Chaplain General—at present Dr Edgihill—who is at the War Office. The pay of a military chaplain is not great, ranging from 10s. to £1, 2s. 6d. a day; and he retires on pension when he has completed twenty years' service; except under special circumstances, when the term of service may be prolonged. He is not entitled to special fees for the performance of any duty whatever for officers and men, such as furnishing copies of certificates of baptism, marriage, or burial. His duties embrace the conduct of the parade and voluntary services in the garrison church on Sunday morning and evening respectively; the regular visiting of the sick in hospital, and of the soldiers' families in the married quarters; and the weekly religious instruction of the children and drummer-boys. These, however, are the barest lines of his duty. There are a thousand other ways by which, if a chaplain would do his work effectively, he must come into sympathetic touch with the men. No rules or regulations can make a chaplain really efficient if it be not born in him from the first. There are special instincts, intuitions, and natural powers which are essential, and which, if he have them not, he had better relinquish the work at once and for ever. I have known a chaplain who regarded the officers' mess as an unholy place, and its inmates as men to be avoided rather than

influenced; and others who looked upon the men in the ranks as beneath any kindly notice beyond what bare duty demanded. Such men are failures, and worse. On the other hand, the chaplain who is brotherly and sympathetic in the hospital, who has a cheery word for the men when he looks in upon them in the barrack-room, and who comports himself as a manly Christian gentleman in the officers' mess, is the success. The poor sick lads look eagerly for his coming, the men in the rooms hail his presence, and the officers welcome and respect him. He it is to whom the men will tell the sad secrets which perhaps have long been locked up in their own breasts; and oftentimes he is privileged to be the happy instrument of effecting a reconciliation between the runaway lad and the anxious parents, who probably know not the whereabouts of their wandering boy.

The soldier is very quick to detect the right man—the man who is his friend and well-wisher; and for him he will do anything. But woe betide the one whose ministrations he resents! There are many little ways in which he can show it without bringing himself within the reach of reprimand. The remarkable restlessness at parade service, the sudden and strange somnolence which invariably seizes the men in hospital when such a chaplain crosses the threshold, and the scantily attended voluntary service, are all indications of 'Tommy's' displeasure. Indeed, I heard of one acting-chaplain in a large garrison town who with remarkable discretion told his military congregation that soldiers were simply 'paid cut-throats and robbers.' The sergeants of the particular regiment quartered there met together, and sturdily refused ever to hear that man again; and what is more, their commanding officer did not compel them to do so.

To a man of the right stamp, the work of a military chaplain is full of happiness and encouragement, delightful alike in its experiences and in its after-memories.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN, sixty years ago, George Stephenson prophesied that his newly-invented iron horse would achieve a speed of a mile in three minutes, his words were regarded with incredulity. Possibly the great inventor himself would have been incredulous if he had been told that the locomotive engine would be gradually improved until the three minutes in which a mile could be covered would be reduced to thirty-two seconds. This marvellous speed was actually attained lately on the New York Central Railway, and for some distance a speed almost as great was maintained. One can hardly realise what such velocity means; for it is faster travelling than anything short of a projectile from a gun that we are acquainted with; faster than the 'wings of the wind,' or the flight of the swiftest bird. In every second of its progress along the rails, the American engine while maintaining the speed stated above covered a distance of one hundred and sixty-five

feet. It is very doubtful if a higher speed than this is possible, for the resistance of the air is a very important factor.

The lectures by Professor Dewar on the Atmosphere and Liquid Air, which have aroused so much interest at the Royal Institution, and are believed to be among the most remarkable ever delivered in that historic theatre, came to a conclusion with an experiment which has never before been performed—namely, the synthesis of air. Every schoolboy knows how to *analyse* the air in a rough and ready manner by burning the oxygen and leaving the nitrogen. Professor Dewar mixed together fluid nitrogen and fluid oxygen in the proportions necessary—about four to one—to constitute the air we breathe. When these lectures are published, they will be read with avidity by the scientific men of all countries.

Fish is notoriously the most perishable form of food, and the kind which for that reason is most unpalatable when not perfectly fresh. It therefore seems to be a marvellous achievement to deliver in London, in first-rate condition, a consignment of fish which is the produce of Australian waters. These fish were recently on view in the Victorian Court of the Imperial Institute; they are of a kind not met with in Britain, and were brought, together with a large quantity of fruit, by the screw steamer *Oceana* from Melbourne.

During the recent drought, an experiment was tried in South Lincolnshire which is worthy of imitation by those who are within reach of water. This was on the farm of Swineshead Abbey, which is intersected by one of the arterial fen drains. By aid of a powerful fire-engine, the water from this channel was pumped over the land in the form of fine spray at the rate of eighty tons per hour. The engine was fixed at a convenient centre, and flexible tubing several hundred feet in length carried the water from it over a large area. Many agriculturists visited the farm, and they pronounced the experiment a complete success. There are many farms situated near reservoirs, lakes, and rivers which, in times of drought, might be benefited at small expense in similar fashion.

A French paper publishes an interesting account of a new industry in Algeria which utilises the dwarf-palm of that country, a tree which hitherto has proved to be one of the chief obstacles to clearing the land, for it is profuse in its growth, has most tenacious and wide-spreading roots, and is most difficult of eradication. Various uses are now made of this tree, but the principal is the extraction of the fibres which are found in the leaves and stems. The industry is of twofold benefit to Algeria, for it clears the land of the obstructive tree, and employs a large amount of Arab labour at the numerous factories which have arisen during the past few years. The leaves are first of all plucked, then sorted by women and

children, and lastly combed in a rough form of carding-machine, the principal part of which is a rapidly revolving drum with nails fixed upon it. With this rough appliance a man is able to card upwards of one thousand pounds of leaves per day. The fibre is subsequently curled or twisted, and can then be used for stuffing chairs, couches, and other articles of furniture.

The French scientific journal, 'La Nature,' recently published an article, interesting more especially to military men, which gave details of the method of crossing rivers by means of leathern bottles. The said bottles are made by utilising the hides of cattle which have been necessarily slaughtered to feed the soldiers; and in order to turn them to account the animals must be skinned in such a way as to leave the hide as whole as possible. The holes representing the places of the legs and neck are then tied up, and the skin, blown full of air, possesses sufficient buoyancy to support two men in the water. In practice these huge air-bottles are fastened below wooden rafts, which can be rapidly put together or taken to pieces.

Among the many methods of utilising waste products may be mentioned the employment of sawdust in making building-bricks. The sawdust must be dried, and all coarse particles and chips separated from it, after which it is mixed in the following proportions: Two bushels of sawdust, one of cement, and five of sharp sand. When these ingredients have been well mixed in a dry state, two bushels of slaked lime are added, and the whole incorporated and pressed into moulds. The product is said to be satisfactory and cheap.

A curious result of issuing coin of much less intrinsic value than the sum which it represents has occurred in the United States, where for some time the dollar has only contained sixty cents-worth of silver. Some astute counterfeiters have made a quantity of dollars containing the same amount of silver as those issued by the Mint, and from the latter they cannot possibly be distinguished. The question thus arises whether a Government which issues coins of a fictitious value can prosecute individuals for doing precisely the same thing.

In a paper recently read by Mr John Ritchie of Edinburgh, before the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, on the 'Utilisation of Water for Power,' the most modern appliances for obtaining power from water were fully described, including those more especially intended for electric lighting. The lecturer has carried out several installations of this character, in one case utilising a head of water of six hundred and fifty feet, and obtaining from it thirty-five horse-power by driving the whole of the water through a six-inch riveted steel pipe. In the course of his remarks, he pointed out what an enormous amount of power was at present running to waste, which might be applied to the benefit of landowners and manufacturers.

It is interesting to observe that both water and wind power are now receiving renewed attention at the hands of engineers. All over our country there are watermills and windmills which have been abandoned, and are going to decay. Artists know where to find them, and are the first to deplore the fact that improved methods of milling corn have rendered these picturesque places

obsolete. But, as we have just seen, water is once more being regarded as a valuable source of energy, but with the dynamo-machine yoked to it as a distributor. As to wind-power—improved windmills have a department all to themselves at the Columbian World's Fair, and although they are not quite so picturesque in appearance as their four-sailed prototypes, they are capable of much more effective work.

A new method of preventing forgery of bank-notes and other documents has been suggested by a German doctor. He states that certain colouring matters can be so prepared and combined, that when paper is dipped into the mixture each tint will penetrate the fibre at different speeds, the result being that the paper will assume a streaked appearance, each layer absorbing a different colour. The exact means by which this result can be brought about are not specified; but it is stated that the plan is practicable, and that it is impossible to imitate the effect produced without knowing precisely how the mixture of colours was made.

An interesting account of the way in which olive oil is produced in Sicily is given by the United States consul at Catania. The olive-tree grows equally well in the valleys and on the mountain sides; but those on the lower ground furnish an oil which is richer, and can be stored for a longer time without deterioration. The grinding and pressing of the olives are performed in a very primitive fashion. First, the olives are placed on a circular platform of masonry about seven feet in diameter, upon which a heavy mill-stone is turned by means of a pole to which a donkey is attached. While the stone revolves, a man is constantly engaged in turning the pulped olives over and over with a spade. In half an hour about one hundred kilogrammes will have been pulped in this way, when the mass is put in soft rush-baskets, which are piled in a heap in the press—an arrangement with a heavy wooden screw, which is worked by six men. About half the oil is expressed in this fashion, the rest being extracted by subsequent operations. The fresh oil is green in colour, and is placed in earthen jars for eight days to settle and clarify. It is then ready for use.

Tobacco has generally been regarded, and has been largely used, as an insecticide. It therefore comes as a surprise to learn from a recent issue of 'Indian Museum Notes' that there is at least one insect which thrives on the fragrant weed, and is so appreciative of a good cheroot as to render that delicacy useless for human consumption. This, 'the cheroot weevil,' or '*Lasioderma testaceum*,' is a little beetle which lays its eggs on the leaf, the said eggs afterwards hatching out into white hairy grubs, which cut their way out of the cheroot, and leave tiny tunnels, which reveal their work and spoil the cigar. The greatest care is necessary in making the cheroots that the tobacco leaves should be free from contamination, for the proposal to subject them after manufacture to a heat of ninety degrees would, while destroying the eggs, spoil the flavour of the tobacco. The same insect will attack stored rice, opium, and other vegetable substances.

An effective method of closing bottles of milk air-tight is credited to a French inventor. The fastening consists of a disc of good india-rubber,

with a nipple or finger which fits the neck of the bottle, projecting from its centre. The bottle of milk is placed in a water-bath until it boils, when it is removed from the water, and the india-rubber stopper inserted. As the bottle cools, a partial vacuum is created inside the bottle, and the stopper is sucked into the neck, preventing all access of air. A metallic cover completes the operation.

Close by the North-western Railway line at Harrow may be seen a circular wooden platform about two hundred feet in diameter, standing upon which is an upright frame fitted with what seem to be Venetian blind slats. This is Mr H. Phillips's Flying Machine, the result of many years' careful experiments with a view to solve the problem of aerial navigation. Many flying machines have been designed with large plane surfaces to rise in the air on the kite principle. Mr Phillips has reduced these surfaces until they resemble, as we have said, the laths of a Venetian blind. The carriage, or frame, tethered to a central post, is driven around the track by a light but powerful steam-engine, which works an air-propeller. A high rate of speed has been attained, and the machine lifts at its rear end about three feet from the ground. The experiment is a promising one, for the machine does more than any of its predecessors; but as yet the problem of flying cannot be said to be solved.

Edison's phonograph has not yet been placed within reach of the public, although we occasionally hear of these instruments being sold at a somewhat extravagant price. It is stated by an American paper that the mixing of the composition for the waxen cylinders is a secret process only known to, and performed by one man.

Teachers of astronomy know well how difficult it is by diagrams or any other means to demonstrate to their pupils the movement of the earth and its satellite with respect to the sun, and they often have to content themselves with such homely appliances as an orange, a knitting-needle, and a candle. Mr J. B. Fisher, of North Parade, Deal, has earned the gratitude of instructors by designing a very beautiful contrivance, which he has named the Volvorb, which is small enough to stand at the end of a schoolroom table, and yet large enough for demonstration before a large class of pupils. The sun is represented by a gilt ball, which can, if desired, be replaced by a paraffin lamp; and the earth moves around it in such a way as to clearly illustrate the phenomena of the seasons with their varying lengths of day and night. Round the earth there moves, when required, a little satellite, by which can be shown the phases and eclipses of the moon. The contrivance works perfectly, and by very simple means, while the mechanism is of such originality as to justify the protection of a patent.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which is making inquiry into the state of our Sea Fisheries is gathering evidence of a very important and interesting nature. Professor Ray Lankester recommends that our coasts should be thoroughly surveyed, so that the movements and habits of the fish inhabiting them can be better studied; and he asserts that such a survey might be made to pay well from a commercial point of view, for new fishing-grounds would be discovered. He suggests that to carry out this work the

present Government grant to the Marine Biological Association, which amounts to only one thousand pounds per annum, should be trebled, and a further sum of six thousand pounds should be granted for a deep-sea vessel. Dr Günther is in favour of the establishment of hatcheries for the cultivation of sea-fish; and other witnesses have testified to the gradual depletion of the North Sea fisheries owing to the baneful practice of netting immature fish.

A member of the Government Indian Service in Arizona has recently published an account of the manner in which the Apaches prepare their arrow-poison, and he states that although there is no longer any need for the tribe to possess themselves of such warlike material, the process is gone through year after year as a matter of tribal tradition. The recipe for this poison would almost commend itself to the witches in 'Macbeth,' although it is somewhat simpler than the brew which they compounded. The Apaches use only three materials—namely, the heads of about a dozen rattlesnakes, a pint of poisonous red ants, and water. These he mixes together, and places in an earthen vessel, which he lutes with moist earth, previous to putting it into a fierce fire for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time the concoction assumes the appearance of a dark-brown paste, and is ready for smearing upon arrows. So deadly is the poison, that a prick with such a weapon will kill its victim in twenty minutes.

Once more an old scheme for making Paris into a seaport by means of a ship canal has been brought forward; and it is said that nearly half of the total cost, which is estimated at six millions sterling, has already been provided for. The suggestion is that the present water-way between Havre and Ronen should be extended to Paris, so as to enable sea-going vessels to come direct to the French capital. The total length of the water-way would be a hundred and fifteen miles, its depth about twenty-two feet, with an average width of a hundred and fourteen feet. The canal would require only four locks, and in other respects its construction would present no unusual difficulties.

The latest proposal for improved prison construction is that the cell-walls should be formed of thin steel pipes charged with water, so that the slightest puncture would reduce the pressure and cause an electric alarm to sound. Such a method of construction would, we think, be wholly unnecessary. Prisoners cannot escape from modern prisons of the ordinary pattern except with the connivance of their jailers. The days of Jack Sheppard are past.

A terror to dishonest milk-dealers has been contrived by Mr W. Belgrove of 482 Harrow Road, London. It consists of a glass jug holding one pint, with certain engraved lines upon its surface. In the first place it acts as a simple fluid measure, but its other duty is a more important one. Just below the line which marks the pint measurement, and also below that marking half a pint, there are three marks, the top one bearing the word 'Average;' the second one, 'Good;' and the lowest one, 'Very good.' These words are intended to denote the thickness of the layer of cream which will rise to the surface of the milk after a few hours' rest, and are of course

a direct test of quality. The quantity of cream in certain specimens of London milk which we have seen was so small that it would altogether defy measurement.

RUSSIAN RIDDLES.

To begin with, the Slavonic conundrum is not by any means a thing to be laughed at. No light and airy trifle, it entirely lacks the frivolity—some might say the futility—of the British specimen. Luckily for this generation, the tyranny of the English riddle is overpast. Familiarity with such a conversational kill-joy has long been reckoned the reverse of a social accomplishment. Looking, however, at the Russian variety, we at once discover that it is 'no fool,' to use an Americanism. The Muscovite quip is a stern and solid aboriginal fact. Racy of the soil, each riddle contains at least one buried myth and two mummified figures of speech. To unearth and revivify these dry bones requires the philosophic touch of a Max Müller or a Renan, tempered with the Shakespearean hilarity of a First Grave-digger.

Many of these enigmas or riddles are annually trotted out by the old crones as they gossip round the stove during the long Russian winter evenings. When the days of the Christmas festivities come round, the 'chestnut' is an unfailing source of joy. The riddle pure and simple bears a strong likeness in style to the famous riddle with which Samson defeated the thirty men of Timnath. It shows traces of a rude poetic instinct, and often, it must be added, is highly far-fetched. Ralston, in his 'Songs of the Russian People,' quotes a few that bear more immediately on his subject of folk-lore. Some of them are eminently calculated to tax the intellectual powers of the benighted peasant, were it not for the fact that the Russian peasantry have a special taste for figurative expression. Thus, such a phrase as 'The red cock has crowed' is the regular euphemism for the only too common village conflagration. 'To kill the worm,' in plain English, is to have a drink. Of course, such metaphors abound in the slang of all nations. They seem, at any rate, especially to flourish in the land which the rustic still shares with the house-demon and the Will-o'-the-wisp—where the mill-sprite and the water-nymphs have not yet resigned their dominion over the streams, nor lost their power to torment. As Byclinski wrote to Gogol, the Slavonic lower classes are still pagans at heart, with superstitions for religion; and their proverbs and enigmas bear eloquent testimony to the fact. In common with the powers of Nature, such humble domestic objects as the shovel, the broom, and the sieve enjoy the honour of personification, and almost attain to the rank of fetiches. Thus, the oven-fork is disguised in a riddle as an ox with a hayrick on his horns and with his tail in a woman's hands. Soaring into more poetic regions, we find that considerable demands are made upon our guessing powers. It needs some ingenuity to recognise the morning dew under the figure of a maiden's keys, disregarded by the moon, but picked up by the sun. Another popular enigma runs thus: 'A white ox has

restored the world, which a black cow has overthrown.' This is, perhaps, not the most obvious way possible of saying that day succeeds night. The statement that 'There are letters on blue satin which neither learned nor unlearned can read,' is only a periphrastic allusion to the stars in the sky.

Many similar riddles were collected by the Russian ethnologist Khudyakov some thirty years ago. The present writer has jotted down in his note-book a few others derived from various sources. It will be noticed that most of the enigmas are put in the form of simple assertions, and are not, like the English riddles, interrogative. For instance, 'I went down the street, I came to two forked roads, and I walked along them both at the same time.' This apparent impossibility is solved every morning by the possessor of a pair of trousers. Compare the Mexican conundrum, 'What is it we enter by three ways and leave by one?' Answer, a shirt. The two following resemble each other: 'I am blind, but show others the way; deaf and dumb, but know how to count.' 'It has neither eyes nor ears, yet it leads the blind.' A milestone and a walking-stick are respectively implied. 'It flies silently and alights in silence; but when dead and rotten, it roars aloud.' 'People pray for me, and long for my coming; but directly I appear, they hide themselves.' The first is snow; the second, rain. Here is one which requires the commentator's farthing rushlight: 'There is a little dog which turns round and then lies still. It neither barks nor bites, but it keeps you out of the house.' The answer is, a lock. 'A nine-legged bird, which faces the wind and flaps its wings, but cannot fly.' 'It lives without body, speaks without tongue; none ever saw, but all have heard me.' In other words, a windmill and an echo. In the latter connection, we are reminded of the Zulu 'sense-riddle,' quoted by Tylor, 'There's a thing that travels fast without legs or wings, and no cliff or river or wall can stop it—that is, the voice. The following is calculated to puzzle even a sphinx: 'What walks on its head and on foot, and with boots on, yet barefoot, all at the same time?' The solution is, the hobnail in your boot.

Some common objects of the household and the farmyard are thus presented: 'I have four legs and feathers, but am neither beast nor bird.' 'There are four brothers under one hat.' 'If I eat grass, my teeth grow blunt; chewing stone, they grow sharp again.' 'Black, but no crow; horned, but not a bull; with six legs, but no hoofs—what am I?' 'Four brothers run side by side, but never catch one another up.' 'I was born twice over, but not christened—a famous singer, yet over my corpse they chant no dirge.' 'A barrel of wine without staves or bottom.' 'I am not bird or beast, but sharp-nosed, thin, and shrill-voiced; killing me, you shed your own blood.' 'What walks upside down overhead?' The equivalents, taken in order, are as follows: A bed, the legs of a table, a sickle, a beetle, the wheels of a cart, a cock, an egg, a gnat, and a fly. Two miscellaneous queries may be added: 'Who are the two brothers that live on opposite sides of the road, yet never see each other?' 'What can't be caught, though you can see it close?' Your eyes and shadow, respectively.

Besides these somewhat tough and indigestible chestnuts, which serve as strong meat for senile wits obfuscated by 'vodka,' there is a more milk-and-water pabulum for the less robust intellect of the junior population. Such are the catches of an arithmetical kind. They are cosmopolitan and transparent; for example: 'A pack of wolves ran by; one was shot—how many remained?' 'If one man finds one kopeck, how much will three find there?' 'A peasant bought four scythes for four roubles; what will each come to?' 'There sat three cats, and each had two others opposite her; how many were there altogether?' The answers, I need hardly state, are, One, nothing, the ground, and three cats. Again: 'A flock of birds settled on a clump of trees: if they had perched in pairs, there would be one tree empty; if singly, there would be one tree too few—how many birds and how many trees?' A moment's consideration of this very elementary simultaneous equation will show that there are four birds and three trees. 'There was a party made up of a brother and sister, a man and his wife, and two brothers-in-law; how many were there in all?' Answer, three. Lastly, and to conclude a 'decrecendo' of bathos: 'Why does the dog bark and the cow lie down?' Because he can't talk, and she can't sit.

There only remains to add, that in Pskov and in other parts of Russia it is a peasant's custom not to allow the bridegroom to enter upon his honeymoon until he has answered correctly all the riddles propounded by the bride's companions. His lady-love would not be kept long in suspense, if the 'vivà-voce' examination involves no more baffling ordeal than that contained in the last few questions I have adduced.

TO THE SEA.

WHY art thou grieving evermore, O Sea?
Lo, through the long night-watches, I, awake,
Have heard thee cry. Hast thou a heart to break,
A human heart to suffer just as we?
What is the trouble that unceasingly
Maketh thy cry go up? Is it for sake
Of the dark secrets that the rivers take
From the great cities, bearing them to thee?
White faces thou hast rocked upon thy breast
With crooning song, like mother's lullaby;
And thou hast bound with sea-weed many a tress
Of hair most golden in its loveliness:
Ah, should it seem a marvel unto me
That thou shouldst grieve and grieve, and know not
rest?

MARY FURLONG.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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ROUND ABOUT THE MENDIPS.

THE Mendip Hills, in the northern part of the county of Somerset, extend in a south-easterly direction from the coast of the Bristol Channel at Uphill to the neighbourhood of Frome, some twenty-five miles in length; at their widest part they are six or seven miles broad. The main range consists of an undulating plateau, 'highly diversified with elevated rounded swells and gentle hollows; its declivities are picturesque, and occasionally skirted with woods.' The hills attain their highest elevation in Blackdown, near Blagdon, and Beacon Hill, some two miles from Shepton Mallet, both of which are more than ten hundred feet above the sea. Large tracts of the Mendips anciently constituted a royal hunting forest; now, the plateau is very largely brought under cultivation, though there are still thousands of acres of open moor and common.

The sides of the Mendips are grooved with many combs, rugged in their grandeur, or exquisite in their beauty. Rickford Combe is of the latter description. The road winds at the bottom of the combe, between woods composed of beech, oak, fir, and larch, which clothe the sides of the valley, the foliage affording exquisite harmonies of rich colour both in spring and autumn. Burrington Combe is stern and wild; here cliffs of limestone abut on the road; and there the stony slopes of the hills shelve down, leaving only the width of the roadway between them at the bottom. But the most remarkable of all the Mendip combes is the pass or gorge at Cheddar. The road winds in serpentine form up the defile for two miles. At the lower end, on one side, rise precipitous cliffs to the height of four hundred and eighty feet from the road. They are almost perpendicular, and are castellated, as though the work of cyclopean builders. In places, the lines of their rugged beauty are softened by festoons of ivy and other creepers; while numerous daws build their nests in the inaccessible rifts, their shrill cries breaking upon the impressive silence of the pass. On

the other side of the road is a series of rugged bluffs of rock and hill. Gradually shallowing as it ascends, the ravine opens on to the Mendip plateau.

It is evident to the most casual observer that water must have been an active agent in the formation of these combes. They are winding, or zigzag, just as a stream naturally carves out its course. Burrington Combe is a fine example of the zigzag. Once between the sides of the defile, the traveller can see only from point to point. The serrated sides of the combe come so close together that he feels as though he were in the grip of a gigantic rat-trap.

The Mendips abound with subterranean streams, which gush out in springs at different points at their foot. These streams are supplied by the drainage of the extensive Mendip plateau. Sometimes the water collected on the hills plunges into a swallow-hole. This is the case at Priddy, where the waters of the river Axe go down a swallow-hole, and pursue their subterranean course for two miles, until they gush from the cavern at Wookey Hole. The subterranean course of this stream has been demonstrated by throwing chopped straw and colouring matter into the swallow-hole at Priddy, which emerged at Wookey Hole. A tributary of the Axe, which flows through Cheddar, after running some distance on the hills in the open, is lost underground, until, lower down the valley, it emerges again to the light of day. Cinders have been thrown up by the natural springs at Wells, which were made miles away on the Mendips. By some means they have got into the subterranean streams which supply the Wells springs. Similarly at Banwell, where a copious spring of excellent water rises, discoloration of the water has been noticed after a heavy downpour of rain on the Mendips, when none has fallen in the village itself.

These facts afford a clue to the formation of the combes. Rain falling upon the hills has soaked into the ground, and found its way through the numerous fissures and joints of the

limestone, till it has formed a stream underground. Gradually the stream enlarges its channel by the mechanical action of the water, the friction of the silt and gravel carried with it, and the chemical action of the carbonic acid which is held largely in solution, and which rapidly dissolves the carbonate of the limestone, until the roof of its subterranean channel is so worn away and weakened that at last it falls in. Frost and snow weather the sides of the open water-course, and thus, as the result of quiet waterwork, through innumerable ages, an open combe or hollow is made.

This process is now actually in operation at Wookey Hole. The valley in which the hamlet nestles insensibly narrows into a ravine, which is closed abruptly by a wall of rock two hundred feet high. At its base, the river Axe issues in full current. The ravine has been formed by the roof falling into the excavation made by the stream beneath. The rock which terminates it is undergoing denudation; and if the process continue long enough, the subterranean course of the Axe will be laid open to Priddy, and another combe will have been formed.

The Mendips are very rich in caves. Some of the stalactite caverns are among the most beautiful of their kind in the world, notably those at Cheddar. The Cheddar caves were accidentally discovered about fifty years ago. Half-a-dozen, or more, are united by apertures, and form a suite of underground apartments. Here, for ages past, nature has been at work, and her marvellous products, now exposed to the eye of man, excite wonder and astonishment in all beholders. The walls of these caves are in places covered with stalactite tapestry, the marble drapery of which hangs in folds, semi-transparent, rich in manifold colours and musical bells. Pendent stalactites hang like icicles from the roof, each tipped with a pellucid drop of water; while beneath, the stalagmite slowly grows from the congealing carbonate of lime held in solution by the falling drops. Here and there, a pool of clearest water, contained in a natural font, reflects the wonderful and fantastic creations of stalactite around.

Many other caves in the Mendips are most interesting to the archaeologist, such as the bone caverns at Hutton and Banwell; the hyena den at Wookey Hole, and Goatchurch and other caverns in Burrington Combe.

The most remarkable of the bone caves is that at Banwell. It consists of two large chambers: the upper contains thousands of bones of bison, horse, reindeer, &c., taken out of the red silt which originally filled it to the roof. This bone cavern is noticed by Dr Catcott in his treatise on the Deluge, published in 1761. The same writer describes the bones of the Hutton Cave as projecting from the sides, roof, and floor of the excavation in such quantities as to resemble the contents of a charnel-house. The immense quantities of animal remains these caves contained can best be realised by a visit to the Museum of the Somerset Archaeological Society at Taunton.

How were these vast numbers of bones deposited in the caves? Dr Buckland suggested—a suggestion endorsed by Professor Boyd Dawkins—that they were introduced from the surface by streams falling into swallow-holes, which have now, under the changed physical conditions,

ceased to flow. Animals not infrequently fall into swallow-holes and perish. Carnivorous beasts lurk for their prey at the places where they come to drink. The bones left by these means were carried by the stream at its ordinary height, or by floods, into the cavern. It is evident from the nearly perfect skulls of the bear and wolf which were discovered, that the cave was not used by the hyenas; for these animals are in the habit of cracking and splintering all but the most solid parts of the bones of their prey. Hyenas, however, are proved to have lived close by at the time, since their skulls and the gnawed antlers of reindeer have been found.

The most noteworthy of all the Mendip caves to the archaeologist is the hyena den at Wookey Hole, discovered in 1852, and explored in 1859 and subsequent years by Professor Boyd Dawkins and other savants.

In the exploration of the cave, evidence was found of the presence of prehistoric man. Implements of flint were discovered, and chert and bone arrow-heads, undoubtedly of human workmanship. As these flints were found under one of the old floors, it is evident that man was contemporary with the hyenas which frequented the cave and the animals on which they preyed. Many of the bones were gnawed and cracked into fine splinters, a proof that they had not been deposited by water, but left by the hyenas. The mere list of animals whose remains were found in this cave affords a vivid picture of the fauna inhabiting the Mendips at that remote age. There were bones of the hyena, cave-lion, cave-bear, wolf, fox, mammoth, rhinoceros, horse, urus, bison, Irish elk, and reindeer.

'All the facts taken together,' says Professor Dawkins, 'enable us to form a clear idea of the condition of things at the time the hyena den was inhabited. The hyenas were the normal occupants of the cave, and thither they brought their prey. We can realise these animals pursuing elephants and rhinoceroses along the slopes of the Mendips, till they scared them into the precipitous ravine, or watching until the strength of a disabled lion or bear ebbed away sufficiently to allow of its being overcome by their cowardly strength. Man appeared from time to time on the scene, a miserable savage, armed with bow and spear, not acquainted with metals, but defended from the cold by coats of skin. Sometimes he took possession of the den and drove out the hyenas; for it is impossible for both to have lived in the same cave at the same time. He kindled his fires at the entrance, to cook his food and to keep away the wild animals; then he went away, and the hyenas came to their old abode. While all this was taking place, there were floods from time to time, until eventually the cave was completely blocked up with their deposits.'

Goatchurch Cavern is the largest cave in the Mendips, and is situated in a ravine which opens into Burrington Combe. Its exploration was undertaken in 1864 by Professor Boyd Dawkins and others. The cave has several large chambers, which extend under the hill a considerable distance, and descend to a great depth. At the extremity, the explorer looks down upon a stream of water flowing underground. Another cave in this combe was opened in 1795, when from

forty to fifty human skeletons were found in a recess near the entrance, lying in regular order, their heads against the side of the cave, and their feet towards the centre. A later search discovered traces of charcoal, sheep-bones, flint knives, and a set of counters or dice, used by the Romans in games. Some have supposed it was a cave sepulchre.

Traces of prehistoric man are found not only in the caves but also on the hills. Numerous barrows are scattered in places, on Blackdown, at Priddy, and elsewhere. There are also several camps, which are alike in their general features, and are placed either on isolated hills, or on spurs which jut out from the main range with steep and almost inaccessible sides. These camps were evidently points of defence and observation. They overlooked the marshes, and commanded the ancient British paths, which have been traced in various directions.

The Romans have also left their traces on the Mendips. They occupied the camp on Beacon Hill, near which some of their roads intersect. The road to Old Sarum runs along the hills, and evidently descended to Axbridge, where there was a Roman station. The Romans worked the lead mines at Priddy and Charterhouse-on-Mendip, and appear to have carried the ore, via Axbridge, to the sea at Uphill, where they shipped it.

Fine panoramic views may be obtained from many a 'coign of vantage' on the hills. From Blackdown, the vale of Wrington is seen to great advantage, dotted with hamlets and homesteads, fertile and well wooded everywhere. Wrington itself is noted as the birthplace of John Locke, the philosopher, though the house in which he first saw the light is now demolished. Close to Wrington, peeping out from its woody knoll, Barley Wood may be seen, for many years the favourite residence of Hannah More. She and her four spinster sisters, varying in age from sixty-nine to eighty-eight, lie in a vault in Wrington Churchyard; and a tablet in the church perpetuates their memory.

North-west of Blackdown, at the end of a low range of hills which jut into the Bristol Channel, is Clevedon. Here Coleridge lived for some time, and the cottage in which he did most of his work is still shown. Clevedon Church contains the tomb of Hallam, the historian, and his son, whose memory is enshrined in 'In Memoriam.' The cold sea, bounded on the west by the hills of Glamorgan, still breaks on the pebbly shore, as described by Tennyson in his peerless lyric:

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

If the spectator changes his position to some eminence on the southern side of the hills, he gets a wide extended prospect of the rich moors of Somerset, which extend for miles, bounded by the Quantocks and the Blackdowns in the west and south-west. At no distant geological period these moors were sea-covered plains; but gradually the hills were worn down by denudation; the earthy deposits kept back the sea, and the rich alluvial stretches of country were eventually brought under cultivation. From these grassy plains the far-famed Cheddar cheese is now produced.

Occupying a picturesque situation at the foot of the Mendips is the ancient city of Wells, taking its name from three springs, which rise in the grounds of the episcopal palace, and afford copious supplies of pure water. The first church was founded at Wells in 704 by Ina, king of the West Saxons; and the present cathedral was commenced about the year 1180. The cathedral is one of the finest and purest examples of Early English in existence. It has a magnificent west front, with niches for three hundred statues, representing kings, saints, angels, principalities, and powers, the whole being supposed to illustrate that grand old hymn of the Christian church, the 'Te Deum laudamus.' Internally, the noble proportions of the building strike the visitor. It is rich in monuments; and in the northern transept is the famous astronomical clock constructed in the fourteenth century by Peter Lightfoot, a monk of Glastonbury, and brought to Wells after the dissolution of the monastery.

Macaulay describes the miners pouring from 'Mendips' sunless caves' on the alarm occasioned by the Spanish Armada. But the Mendips do not figure largely in national history. Nevertheless, to the lovers of nature there is an indescribable charm about the hills, and the sequestered nooks of quiet beauty which abound in them.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN CORDAN, Author of *Master of L. is Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—'EVEN SO!'

ON the last night of the year, after dinner, Isabel sat with her Aged companion waiting. She sat with *The Sand-paper Review* in her lap, from which she had been reading a very grudging and supercilious criticism of Alan Ainsworth's play. A tall lamp was lighted, and diffused a soft, rich glow through its wide flounced shade of amber-coloured silk. Isabel was arrayed in a golden-tinted tea-gown of the material which ladies know as *crêpe*, and her abundant dark hair was arranged with a seductive negligence peculiarly her own. She wore no ornament but her beauty; her only jewels were her dark lustrous eyes. When she rose to go to the piano, the yielding material of her gown subtly suggested the lovely lines of her supple but superb figure; and her expression of meditative melancholy gave her more than a touch of imperial repose, which seemed to crown her with perfection. She had resolved to tell Alan that night of her engagement to her cousin George; and to soothe her mind and nerves, strung high with expectation, she now lighted the shaded candles, opened the piano, and sat down to play from Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words.' From these she passed to the beautiful air which Mendelssohn wrote for Burns's exquisite song:

Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee!

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She was thus occupied when Alan Ainsworth entered. She ceased at once, and rose to greet him, and the Aged companion discreetly slipped away. He looked much more festive than usual. He was attired in evening dress, which became his tall, lithe, broad-shouldered figure much better than it becomes most figures upon which it is seen: he had a white flower in his button-hole; his fair hair was somewhat rumpled; and there was a flush of excitement on his cheek, and a sparkle of excitement in his eye. When she saw him, she forgot all the pain and constraint of her last meeting with him.

'Why!' she exclaimed, 'you have shaved!' Yes; his moustache was gone; and there was revealed a strongly-curved lip, which suggested stern resolution and a something else which Isabel could not name.

'Yes,' laughed he freely; 'I have. I suppose it's the influence and the example of the men I've been mixing with lately.'

'Are you so easily influenced?' she said, still considering him.—'I don't like it!' she exclaimed, without thinking whether her liking or disliking it concerned Ainsworth.

'If you don't like it,' said he, 'I'll shave no more: I'll let it grow again. Shall I?'

Isabel felt that the air was becoming electrical, and she moved to the window to open it, saying: 'I think you had better.'

'Let me do that,' said he, following her. 'Though it will be an hour or two before the bells ring out the year.'

He opened the window, and stood by it with her. He looked at her; he had been looking at her since he had come in, but his look had been the only homage he paid to her appearance. Now, however, he spoke, saying: 'That is a very becoming gown you are wearing;' and he blushed when he had said it. 'I haven't seen it before.'

'Have you not?' said she, with a spice of mischief in her manner. 'Are you sure?'

'I am sure,' he answered. 'I know all the frocks and gowns I have ever seen you in, and all the frills and furbelows.'

That was a fuller answer than she had expected. But though disturbed, she was not displeased by it; and she began to perceive very plainly that it would be difficult to tell him of her engagement to Cousin George. Though the air still felt very electrical, she moved away from the window.

'Come and sit down,' said she, 'and tell me about your play. I have been reading what *The Sand-paper* critic has to say.' And she took up the paper and sat down; and Ainsworth sat down near her, with an evident consciousness of being near.

'Don't say "critic,"' said he; 'say "fault-finder."'

'I remember,' said Isabel with a smile, 'a certain critic in Lancashire, less than a year ago, who was a good deal troubled because his editor complained he was too much given to finding fault: he thought he was only a judicious critic.'

'Your thrust,' said he, with a laugh, 'is quite fair.'

'You told me in your note,' said she; 'but I don't quite understand why you suppressed your name; at least, I don't see that you had sufficient

reason for it, and especially for keeping the date of the production hid,' she added in a tone somewhat aggrieved.

'No; you don't understand that,' said he; 'but I could not put it all in the note I wrote you.'

He unrolled and rolled again the paper in his hands, and looked at her with an earnestness which made her at once fear what he might say, and yet long to hear it.

'When I began that play,' said he, looking at the paper, which he rolled and unrolled, 'months ago, I began it with a very definite object in view. I worked at it day after day and night after night with my eye on that object. Sometimes I should have liked very much to come and discuss it with you, but that did not suit my purpose: it had to be planned and written all by myself without suggestion or help from another. My immediate purpose was to make, if possible, a popular success.'

'Oh fie!' said Isabel, scarce knowing what she said. 'To seek a popular success is reckoned very unworthy—is it not?—and is very unfashionable among literary people!'

'I have no patience,' said Ainsworth very earnestly, 'with that shallow and absurd pretence! It is good and pleasant to know that very many, instead of very few, people like your work, if so be you do your work honestly. Why should it be thought less worthy to touch the hearts of the simple many than to tickle the heads of the knowing and cynical few? But it is not really so thought. It is all a pretence, made by some men to enable them to bear up against the disappointment of having their work received with indifference.'

'You think,' said Isabel, half consciously endeavouring to lengthen out his explanation, to postpone that end which alarmed while it fascinated her, 'that it is a case of "*Nolo episcopari*?" "I don't want to be a bishop: I wouldn't be a bishop if I could."'

'It is,' said he. 'I know men who are pining and fretting for a popular success, and who yet—or, perhaps, I should say "therefore"—are constantly sneering at what I heard one call the "humiliation" of popularity. Mind you, if a man sets himself to win popularity, and wins it by insincere work and false sentiment—and he does sometimes; for the big public is not well able to distinguish between the false and the true—then that man is to be denounced. I can honestly say,' he continued, 'that my work was not done insincerely. I set myself at the first to expound a subject that would appeal to many, and to express sentiments that would touch many, and then I wrote it all as sincerely and as well as I knew how.'

'I really believe you did, Mr Ainsworth,' said Isabel. 'I don't think you could be insincere. If you had written insincerely, I have no doubt you would have failed.'

'I *might* have failed!' said he, with the look of a man who has escaped a great peril. 'If I had failed—you would have heard of me no more! That was why I kept the thing from you!'

Again he looked at her earnestly and long. She returned his look, with something of dread in her eyes; and her breath began to come fast and thick, and her breast to heave under the soft folds

of her gown. Then he fell to rolling and unrolling the paper again.

'I think,' he continued in a low tone, 'that I would have failed—I was so despondent about it sometimes—I would have failed but that I had a great inducement and inspiration to go on.'

He paused; and she, in her dread of the pause, said lightly: 'What? The hope of fame and fortune?'

'Fame and fortune!' he exclaimed with a laugh. 'As for fortune—look here. I have just come from the treasury—the treasury of the theatre.' He took from his vest-pocket a folded paper, unfolded it, and handed it to her: it was a cheque for sixty pounds. 'That,' said he, with a sly touch of simple boyish glee, 'is for this week. I shall get a similar slip of paper every week. Is not that fortune?'

She was inclined to be offended, till she looked in his face and saw the boyish pleasure expressed on it; and then she understood that he had but impulsively set that before her, even as he would cast all his tribute at her feet.

'So,' said she, with a deliciously sharp sense of willfully misunderstanding him, 'you have now got all you worked for?'

'Worked for?' he exclaimed. 'What? That?—That is but the sign or token of the real, the intangible, end I had in view! Don't you understand? Haven't you seen that I felt bound to become as much of your equal as I could be? Have you not seen that?—Now, now,' he said softly, letting the paper drop and taking her hand impulsively, 'I come to you!'

'Oh,' said she, closing her eyes, 'I must not let you speak like that! It is wrong! It is wrong!' A shudder as of horror passed over her, while she grasped his hand convulsively.

'What have I done?' he said. 'Have I been a fool?'

'Oh no! It is not you! It is myself! It is myself! I should not have listened to you! But it was so sweet to hear you!'

'Isabel! Tell me!—tell me frankly! Do not shrink from telling me out of mistaken kindness! If it be that you do not love me—that you cannot!—'

'Oh yes,' she cried—and gave him one wild look—'I love you, my dear! I love you!—No, no!' she cried; for he had kissed her hand, and now sought to embrace her, to kiss her lips. 'You must not do that!' She rose hurriedly, and paced to and fro, and he rose too. 'I should have told you at once!—I have sinned against Heaven! I have sinned against the light! But I did not understand!—I have been living in a vague dream! I have been as if walking in sleep; but one word from you would have waked me! Oh, my dear, my dear! why—why did you not say that one word to me?' She threw herself sobbing on his breast for one brief moment, while he strained her close. Her wild emotion tended to produce in him an intense calm. He strove to see and to think clearly.

'Tell me—tell me,' he murmured. 'Is it that something has happened while you have been down in Lancashire?'

With one great sob she released herself to answer him. 'How foolish and vain a creature a woman is!' she exclaimed. 'I thought I understood! I thought I was wise! I thought I knew

perfectly what I was doing! But I did not.—Yes; it was in Lancashire!'

'Your cousin,' said Alan, 'said last Whitsuntide that he would ask you again in a year!'

'Yes, yes,' she answered; 'you remember: you heard him, and then I saw your look!—It was in the conservatory.'

'And he has asked you?—though it is not a year?'

'Yes, yes,' she answered again. 'I was asleep! I was blind!'

'Isabel! My own! my life!' said he, seizing her hands, 'you must give him up!—You are not married to him?' he cried in sudden alarm.

'No, no!' she exclaimed with a shudder. 'Oh no! Not that!—Not yet!'

'Then you must give him up—you must, my sweetheart!—my love! You must!'

'How can I? He is not to blame. And he is happy in my promise. How can I destroy his happiness?'

'And how can you destroy your own happiness?—and mine? To go on with him will be to commit the sin unpardonable! It will be nothing, and will breed nothing, but misery! If you should marry him——! Do you think that a husband will not quickly find out when his wife does not love him?—A loveless marriage! A loveless life! A loveless family!—Into a loveless family—children with the cold affections of fish!—discord comes, and envy, and dislike! So fools and worldlings marry, and so the earth is filled with strife!—If you had loved him, and not me, I would have gone away, and said no word!—But can I see you put your foot on this horrible way that leads to living death, and not try to hold you back by every means in my power?—I love you!—you love me, and I will not let you go! he said, as he drew her to him again, and she sank her head an instant on his breast. He kissed her hair.

'No, no, no!' she said, resuming possession of herself. 'This must not be, my dear.—I am losing myself!—I am forgetting! There is another thing that has troubled me—that has helped to lead me asleep—asleep and blind, my dear!—into this great sin!'

'What is that?'

She swept to the writing-table, unlocked it, took out Uncle Harry's Journal, and from its pocket drew the sheet of note-paper. 'You know this book!' said she. 'You have read some of it. It is Uncle Harry's last Journal.—Two or three weeks ago I found that in this pocket! Read it.'

He read it slowly—a first time, and a second; and then he looked at her. 'Your uncle says, "If you see your way;" did you see your way, my dear?'

'I thought I did!' said she. 'I was carried along fast—and blind!—I heard at that time that Uncle George might be ruined—by speculation!—I thought you were quite indifferent to me; and I resolved to give up everything—my money and myself both—to the family that had loved me and cared for me all my life long!'

'You were going to surrender both yourself and your wealth? Might not your wealth have been enough, my dear?'

'The money is not needed—there is no ruin threatening!—But the last time I saw you, you

were specially cold and reserved with me, and I could not endure it!

'I was wrong, I see,' said he; 'I have been wrong all through!—Proud, conceited fool I have been to imagine it was necessary to make myself your equal in wealth!'

'Your error is nothing to mine!' she said. 'But I did not understand, until it was done, what a horrible thing I was doing. I was asleep!—You had said no word to wake me!—And I believed that you were thinking we ought not even to be friends!'

'Oh, my Isabel!' cried he, taking her hands in his, 'how dear and sweet you become when I see you can make a mistake too!—and a big one!'

'This is more than a mistake,' said she, shaking her head.

'Now, my sweetheart!—my dear!' said he, 'I refuse to take this tragically! This—turning and fingering Uncle Harry's unfinished letter—has no right to influence your decision. Will you be guided by my advice?'

'Yes,' said she, with a touch of abandonment in her manner; 'advise me, my dear—advise me!'

'Give the money up!—as you had intended.—I also have heard suspicions of dangerous speculation on your cousin's side—I suppose that is what you mean—and the money may be needed soon. Then say to your cousin: "I have no fortune! We thought I had!—Let our engagement cease! We both made it under a mistake!"'

'No, no, Alan!' she cried. 'Surely, surely, that would be mean! You do not understand him!—You are not just to him!—I believe he loves me truly!—That's the pain of it—the pain of giving him pain!—To wrong him, and then to insult him!—That would be to insult him!—No, no! I cannot do that!'

'The pain of it is,' said he, 'that some one must be pained.'

'Then,' said she, 'I should be that person.—It is I who have done wrong!—I should suffer!—But then,' she added, with a thin appealing smile, 'you would suffer too, would you not?'

'So,' said he, 'out of your own mouth, my love, I can show you what you must do!—Which is better? That he should suffer pain for a little—from having lost a woman who did not love him—or that we both should suffer all our lives long?'

'Then,' said she, sitting down wearily, 'what about my dear uncle, and my aunt, and Phemy? I shall hurt and offend them.'

'Do you know,' said he, sitting down by her and speaking with decision, 'what I shall do?—I shall tell your cousin that you do not love him—that you cannot marry him! And then, my dear—then I will carry you off, whether you will or no!'

'Yes, yes! my dear, my dear!' she cried, resting her head against his shoulder. 'Take me away!—Make me go with you!—But, no, no!—That would look as if I ran away because I was afraid!—But help me! Decide for me, dear!—I thought I was strong, but I am not!—I have no decision—no will!—do not leave me to myself!'

'My sweet one, my dove!' he murmured, gently caressing her. "'Who comes to me as to her haven!'"—Shall I tell you what you must do

first? Get rid of that money!—I hate it!—It has come between us since ever it appeared!—Get rid of it!—Make your uncle take it!—One thing at a time. Will you try to do that, my sweet?'

'I will, my dear!'

'So let us say no more about it now. I will come in to-morrow—shall I?—to-night you should rest. Your nerves have been too much tried.'

'Do not go yet,' she murmured. 'It is not late. Stay with me a little!'

'I would stay for ever and ever, my dear!' said he. 'Would not a little music soothe you? What was that you were playing as I came in?'

'Oh yes!' said she, rising at once and going to the piano. 'It is beautiful. You shall sing it.'

So they sat down in tolerable calm. She played the air, and he—who was not a practised singer, but who was ready to do aught to please her—sang the song after a shy failure or two. The last quatrain he sang to her with point:

Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen!

GEOLOGY IN PRACTICAL USE.

ONE of the most pressing problems at present before the country is that of technical education, and County Councils are everywhere striving for a practical solution of the same with the money placed at their disposal. Of the many branches of scientific knowledge which it may be decided upon to teach, none can claim to be of greater importance to the country generally than Geology. This seems obvious when we reflect that the wealth of the country depends primarily upon the earth itself—whether by the cultivation of its surface, or the extraction of minerals from it—and that geology is the science of the earth, and therefore lies at the root of both these pursuits. For the ability to deal profitably with any subject must ever be in proportion to our knowledge of the same, and with regard to our dealings with the earth such knowledge is geology. Hence, to a mining and agricultural nation, no scientific knowledge can be of more importance than this.

The value of such knowledge was clearly shown in the early days of the science, and by the labours of William Smith, the 'father of English geology.' Smith was eminently a practical man; his favourite theme was 'geology applied to practice'; and he showed how it may be used in solving the great problems of scientific agriculture, engineering, and mining. He came of a race who had for generations cultivated the oolitic lands of Southern England; and by applying his geological knowledge to the problem, he greatly improved their agricultural value. And it was by an improved system of drainage, founded on correct geological principles, that he was able to do this. His reputation for this sort of work led him out of Oxford into the surrounding counties, Gloucestershire, the Isle of Purbeck, Wiltshire, and elsewhere. An interesting example of the superiority of the geological method may be quoted. A Warwickshire farmer

had originated a system of drainage which had been successfully applied to a large class of lands. He had received a parliamentary grant of one thousand pounds for his invention, and a trial of the process was made by the Board of Agriculture. The place selected was Prisleigh Bog, and the experiment was a failure. Smith then came on the scene, and by an application of his more scientific method, easily accomplished the task.

As regards soils, again, geology is intimately connected with agriculture. For not only is the soil itself a geological formation, but its agricultural value is largely influenced by the rock below. Hence the farmer should not only be familiar with the geological formation of soils, but should also be sufficiently familiar with the rocks to know how they will influence his crops. As indicating this influence, it has been pointed out that many of the more noted cheeses—Stilton, Double Gloucester, Cheddar, &c.—are produced on the rich pastures of the lias; that the best malting barley is grown on the chalk; and that the best apple orchards are upon the red sandstone. The chalk pastures of the South Downs, again, are celebrated for their mutton; while the rich clay lands of Norfolk and Suffolk are more favourable for cattle-rearing and wheat-growing. And so a knowledge of geology may help a farmer to decide upon the most profitable crops.

When it comes to the question of renovating an impoverished soil a knowledge of geology is decidedly useful. If a soil rests on limestone, then a deficiency of calcareous matter may be remedied by deep subsoil ploughing; if on clay, chalk or marl must be sought for: in either case geological knowledge is wanted. A knowledge of geology may also indicate to a farmer the existence of building-stone, limestone for burning, road-metal, or deposits of phosphates on his own land, and thus save much expense in importing the same from a distance.

Not less clearly did Smith show the advantage of geological knowledge in engineering. During the six years he was engaged as engineer in the construction of the Somerset Coal Canal between Bath and the coal-field, he had ample opportunity of putting his gradually increasing geological knowledge to practical use. This canal is cut through the alternating strata of clay and oolitic limestone which characterise the district, and which offer peculiar difficulties to such undertakings. Smith was here able, as we read in his 'Memoirs,' daily to make use of his knowledge of the rocks by 'informing the contractors what would be the nature of the ground to be cut through, what parts of the canal would require unusual care to be kept water-tight, what was the most advantageous system of work.'

Again, the advantage of geological knowledge is noted in the following passage: 'In the execution of the canal, Mr Smith had found the means of applying his newly-acquired knowledge to useful practical problems, such as how to draw the line through a country full of porous rocks, so as best to retain the limited supplies of water which frequent mills left to the navigation—where to place bridges on a good foundation—how to intercept and conduct the springs, and where to open quarries of proper stone.'

By way of contrast may be mentioned the case

of another canal in the same district—the Kennet and Avon Canal—which, though the work of one of the ablest engineers of the day, was not constructed with that careful regard to the geological structure of the district as was the Coal Canal. As in the case of this latter, the nature of the rocks presented special difficulties. When cut through the clay beds, the water was easily retained; but when in the open porous limestone, unless carefully managed, the water would run through and disappear. And the numerous springs to which the alternation of the porous limestone and impervious clay give rise, unless found and properly managed, would burst through the canal wall and cause disastrous results. So bad became the state of this Kennet and Avon Canal, that in 1811 Smith was called in to report upon its state and suggest a remedy. And with the aid of his geological knowledge he was able to give the required advice.

We find again in the same 'Memoir' an interesting application of geological knowledge to a special problem connected with drainage. The year 1799 was an extraordinarily wet one, and owing to the geological structure of the neighbourhood, vast landslips occurred about Bath, carrying with them houses, trees, lawns, and fields. 'To remedy such disasters and prevent their recurrence was exactly what Smith had learned from geology, and had reduced to practice on many occasions while cutting the canal. Naturally, therefore, and as a matter of course, operations of this kind were placed under his care in the vicinity of Bath and Batheaston; and his reputation for success in draining on new principles rose daily.'

Another illustration of the application of geology to a water problem may be noted. In 1810 great consternation prevailed in Bath at the cessation of the warm spring on which the greatness of the city depends. Smith was sent for, and in a short time the water was flowing in its old channel.

But it is in connection with mining that geology attains its greatest practical importance, for mining is itself nothing more or less than the practical dealing with geological facts. And although the practical work of the 'father of English geology' was more in connection with agriculture and engineering than with mining, we may again quote an instructive example from his experience in connection with the latter. A certain property of seven hundred acres of poor land on the magnesian limestone of the county of Durham was reported as possessing no mineral wealth. Smith was called in to survey the estates of Colonel Braddyll, of which this formed a part. He was specially interested in this portion, which was thought to have nothing but a surface value; and by a survey of the neighbouring coal district he perceived that the magnesian limestone was merely an unconformable cover to the coal-measures. He estimated the thickness of this cover, and declared that coal would be found beneath it at a workable depth. In spite of the old Newcastle prejudice of 'No coal under the magnesian limestone,' Colonel Braddyll followed Smith's advice; and as a result the great South Hetton Colliery was established. Others followed; and now the more important seams of the great northern coal-field are worked beneath the mag-

nesian limestone in the county of Durham. This illustrates perhaps the most important function of geology in mining—the pointing out where coal may be expected at a workable depth.

One of the most interesting and important modern examples is afforded by the recent discovery of coal at Dover. As long ago as 1855 the question of the possible extension of the coal-measures beneath the newer rocks of the south-east of England was discussed by an able geologist, Mr Godwin-Austin. In a paper read before the Geological Society he expressed the opinion that the coal-fields of Bristol and Somerset were prolonged beneath the chalk and other rocks of the southern counties into the coal-fields of Northern France and Belgium. Certain striking points of resemblance between the coal-field of Somerset and that of Belgium, along with other geological considerations, led Mr Godwin-Austin to infer that these coal-fields were united by a ridge of carboniferous rocks passing under the younger rock of the south of England and Northern France. The practical question then was, 'Is there any point along this ridge where the coal is near enough the surface to be profitably worked?'

A few years ago it was determined to put the matter to the test, although a boring put down previously in the Wealden area to a depth of nineteen hundred feet without reaching coal did not offer much encouragement. The experiment was superintended by Professor Boyd Dawkins, and a boring was put down through the chalk of Shakespeare's Cliff, near Dover. And in 1890 the somewhat startling announcement of 'the discovery of coal at Dover' was made.

The spot for the trial seems to have been chosen with great geological insight, for it appears to be just where the younger rocks thin out rapidly against a bank of the older carboniferous strata, and coal was reached at a depth of eleven hundred and sixty feet. At the present moment, the number of seams met with is seven, with a total thickness of a little over fourteen feet. A shaft is also now being sunk, while the boring is continued.

It is, then, among the possibilities of the future that Kent, the garden of England, and hitherto far removed from the smoke of collieries, may become an important mining centre. And if this ever happens, it will be an example of the practical application of geological knowledge.

The probability of finding coal beneath the younger rocks in other areas is at present under discussion among geologists. There can be little doubt, for example, that coal-measures exist beneath the younger rocks on the south as well as on the north of the Mendip Hills. Yet they are at present only worked on the north. The reason is that on the south these younger rocks attain in places a thickness of three thousand feet, while on the north their thickness is often less than two hundred feet. Yet there may be portions of this southern area where the covering may be thin enough to admit of coal being profitably worked. It is a question of geological probability where such sites may be found. One well-known geologist, Mr H. B. Woodward, suggests the neighbourhood of Evercreech and Glastonbury; while another, Mr Ussher, suggests Highbridge, Burham, Wedmore, and other places,

where he thinks the thickness of the younger rocks will not be found to exceed one thousand feet.

Again, the possibility of coal existing at workable depths in the eastern counties has been suggested, and the more likely sites for boring indicated.

For the complete solution of these problems more geological knowledge is perhaps required, and they must be considered at present as merely under discussion. But if the geologist can, as the result of his special knowledge, often point out to the miner where coal may reasonably be expected, he has also often to warn him of those places where labour and money would be wasted in the search. Thus, as we learn from Professor J. Beete-Jukes in the Memoir of the South Staffordshire Coal-field, large sums of money had been from time to time spent in sinking for coal in the Silurian rocks of that district. A very little geological knowledge would have prevented such a waste of money and time.

In the old days, when geology was in its infancy, thousands of pounds were thus frequently thrown away; and many cases are known where the Kimmeridge clay, the Oxford clay, or the old red sandstone, have tempted the unlucky speculator to his pecuniary ruin. The labours of the Geological Survey have gathered together in their maps and Memoirs a mass of information of inestimable value to all engaged in practical dealings with the rocks. No mining engineer can afford to neglect its aid in working any district. But a certain amount of geological training is requisite before they can be profitably used, and hence, again, the need of geology in technical education.

Another plea for the instruction in geology of all those engaged in mining, &c., may be founded on the return benefit which would be reaped by the science. For it is those who are engaged in the actual working of the rocks, who, provided they have the requisite geological training, can best advance the science by the collection of new facts, and thus aid in the further development of those mineral resources to which England owes her present position among the nations.

ELSI E.

By JOHN STAFFORD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

It is many years ago now, but it all came back to me to-day at the sound of an old tune which she used to play when loneliness sat hard upon her, and she would take up her fiddle and wander off into a spirit-world of her own making. She often went off so, making me think, as I watched her unawares, of Shelley's *Ianthe* when her spirit and its habitation parted company for a while. And when she would stop, and I knew she was all at Norton Priors again, I would walk away wonderingly, feeling, among other things, very coarse and humble beside such as she.

It was not always so, for, till she was fifteen or thereabouts, she had raised no thought in me beyond an admiration of her slim uprightness and her grace of movement, which always put

me in mind of the does in the Castle park, and pleased me, maybe, in the same way. But perhaps because I was slow to see it, or because I had known her from a child and taken her as part of the daily life of the place, I never felt the smallest tremor from her beauty, till one day when she ran into the shop all covered with dust from a fall that she had had, and held out her hand for me to draw from it the thorn that was paining her. Tenderly as might be I removed the thorn and bandaged with her handkerchief the little red place, like an adder's bite, which it had left; and I had no sooner done it than, child-like, she threw her arms round my neck and kissed me. I was a hulking lad of twenty then, and a bit sheepish over softness of that kind; but while she hung on to me that instant, and drew her head back before untying her arms, I saw that in her face which, when she was gone, went on vibrating within me, and playing such a tune among my heart-strings that I could get no sleep that night for listening to it, so to speak.

From that day I was never the same, and I hardly knew why. But, heedless-like, I let my thoughts go as they would, and Elsie was always their pivot. It was distracting at first, till I got used to it, and could work on in a dual way, thinking hard on the matter in hand, but knowing her presence within me and grateful for it. In this way she wound herself into the common life of each day, becoming a part of it—a golden thread among the homespun. And so it grew.

But she never dreamt it; and as she got older, and the Misses Gatten shaped her into quiet young-ladyhood, our mental and social differences moved her farther and farther from me, till I began to feel no better than a sort of thistle doing homage to a rose nodding far above me. All the same it was good to keep her where she was, and to go on day after day saying nothing of it. It was not a 'sweet sorrow' exactly, such as Shakespeare speaks of, though it became one in after-years, and is one now, maybe. So long as I could see her occasionally, and feel that she lived so near me, breathing the same air and sharing the same village life, I felt content; and, now and again, a quiet little hope would stir in me that by study and hard work I might raise myself nearer to her level. For, after all, I told myself, she was only a miller's daughter, and her widowed mother, whose father had been a major and one of the swells of Cheltenham, could not forget that she had married plain Dan Onslow out of love and nothing else. But it was like clay trying to shape its own vessel without the potter's hand. I was big and awkward, and the most I could do was to fill my emptiness with such knowledge as the few books and little leisure would let me. When my father died, however, and I came into the business, as well as a nice little sum at the bank, I felt a little less afraid of her; and when I put up the new sign which told the folks that I was 'George Crannock, Carpenter and Wheelwright,' I forgot my sorrow and loneliness in the pride of the moment, for I was twenty-four, and a master-man, and the thought puffed me up.

She was away at that time, I remember, staying with some relations at Gloucester; but I got to

know the day she was returning, and when the 'Nemoton Arms' bus passed through on its way to the station at Wonley I gazed after Tom Belson with a touch of envy that he should have the first sight of her. Tom, like Phaethon, was not an over-careful driver, and I could see him swaying in his seat as he turned the corner at the finger-post as if he had lost some of his ballast. I remembered then that it was market-day at Nemoton; but Tom had driven the bus for ten years or more, and I thought nothing more of it as I took up mallet and chisel for the spoke-hole I was making.

Three parts of an hour went by, and I found myself listening to the sound of wheels, though I knew the bus must be a couple of miles off at least. But the minutes went on till it really was due. Jem was sawing a thickish piece of ash, and I stood up and asked him if his buff Leghorn had hatched yet. His saw stopped midway, and I got a moment's stillness as he wiped his brow. He talked on for five minutes or more, then bent to his sawing again. I picked up the spoke, but threw it down, and moved to the door impatiently. Then a distant rumbling reached me, and I went in again, trying not to notice my own fluttering. But the wheels stopped in front of the door, and looking up, I saw it was only Farmer Waghorn in his gig.

'There be a job for thee at Two-mile Corner, Garge,' said he. 'Nemoton bus run agen Squire's cart an' lost near-wheel. No one hurt; but Parson thinks yo' can put wheel right if yo' go down. Him an' his son were in it, along wi' Miss Onslow. They're walkin' up, an' mebbe yo'll meet 'em.'

And meet them I did, coming quietly along by Arbury Wood. Mr St John, the new vicar, spoke first; and while he was telling what had happened, I looked at Elsie, and for a moment our eyes met. She flushed a bit and turned her head, for my glance had been too long, and I reddened myself at the thought of it. Her companion, Henry St John, without noticing me, motioned to go on; but she stood her ground, and when I turned to go, she came straight to me and looked up with her hand touching my arm.

'I am so sorry, Mr Crannock,' said she.

'But there's no harm done, Miss Onslow,' said the vicar. 'Crannock will get a stroke of work, and the bus a new driver, let us hope, after this.'

But I knew what she meant, with a sudden pinch of remorse; for I had thought as much of my own advance as of my father's death. I thanked her as well as I could, and seeing her hand extended, I took it in mine, and could feel the gloved fingers tighten ever so little with the sympathy that moved her. I forgot her fine-lady aspect and everything else, as I looked into her eyes and saw what was in them.

'God bless you, Elsie!'

She flashed another look of kindness, and went her way with the others. But I had seen Henry's brows arch at my impulsive familiarity with her name, and looking back, noted his bent attitude of attention as he walked beside her.

I wondered uneasily how much of the Long Vacation he would spend at Norton Priors. For it must have been he who had brought the happy

flush to her face by his Oxford talk and his well-favouredness. I walked on; but there was something gone from the sunlight, and the tool-bag seemed as heavy as two.

ON CERTAIN FLAVOURINGS.

ONE of the most curious investigations that could be carried out would be a consideration of the various food-substances, condiments, or flavourings and seasonings and food-adjuncts of different nations. Let us confine ourselves here to but one group of plants, which have a wide range of employment for food, from their pungent character—namely, those having allyl compounds, ranging from the onion through the crucifera and other plants with strong flavours.

All the members of this family are more or less esteemed for food and seasoning in different countries. Their strong smell and taste are due to a small quantity of a pungent volatile oil which they contain, rich in sulphur. The importance of the onion will be conceded by all, being wholesome and nutritious, and especially valuable for its antiscorbutic properties. All the plants of this alliaceous group agree in their stimulant and expectorant properties, differing only in degree of activity. The cruciferous plants are also characterised in most instances by their pungency, as in the radish, turnip, cresses, mustard, &c.; but these we cannot enlarge upon.

The onion is probably indigenous to India, whence it extended to China and Japan, and has spread to North Africa and Europe. Onions and garlic are amongst the most important articles of food of the Greeks and other natives of the Mediterranean coasts and the East. These bulbs are prepared in all possible fashions: boiled, baked in hot ashes, made into salad with oil and vinegar, or eaten raw. Both the onion and garlic are cultivated with great care in Greece; also in Malta, the exports from which amount to twenty-two thousand hundredweight in the year.

The ordinary onion, which grows wild in Turkestan, succeeds even in equatorial countries. It is much cultivated and used in the United Kingdom, to the extent of some forty thousand tons; and they are also largely imported from abroad, the imports having doubled in the last ten years, and reached over four million bushels in 1891, valued at about seven hundred and thirty thousand pounds. They are brought in chiefly from Germany and Holland, Portugal and Spain, Turkey and Egypt. Spain takes the lead with a value of £170,735 in 1891; next comes Egypt, £165,825; and then Germany, £106,885. Those grown in the Peninsula are larger and milder than the English ones. The onion is one of the staple products of Bermuda, and those grown there are chiefly shipped to the United States.

The onion and the garlic are extensively cultivated all over India. The onions of Patna and

Bombay are of a very high quality, and are now exported to Australia. It is surprising how powerfully the climate of India seems to affect the onion. In one province excellent onions are to be had, while in another they are very inferior. The cibol or Welsh onion is met with in Central Asia. The onion was one of the principal culture-plants of ancient Egypt. Mohammed never would eat these strong-flavoured bulbs, on account of his assumed converse with the angels. But he allowed his followers to do so, except when appearing in his presence, entering a mosque, or joining in public prayers. The pious Moslem still eats his onions with these limitations. Some sects, however, as the Wahabis, considering them abominable, avoid them on all occasions—they are forbidden because of some supposed relation to beef.

The bulbs of garlic are extensively grown in Turkestan, and used in Lassa. In Yarkand, however, the people do not seem to care about the plant; but they use, according to Dr Aitchison, large quantities of a wild onion, which they collect during the summer, smashing up the whole plant between two stones in a thick green pulp; this they make into patties, which they string together by a hole in the centre, like so many beads, and then hang them up to dry. The country people may be seen on market days bringing into Leh strings of these onion patties for sale. They keep well during winter, and make an excellent condiment. In Spain and Portugal the onion forms one of the common and universal supports of life. It is not merely as a relish that the wayfaring Spaniard eats his onion with his humble crust of bread as he sits by the refreshing spring, for he finds that, like cheese to the English labourer, it sustains his strength, from the amount of flesh-formers and heat-givers which it contains, ranking in this respect with the nutritious pulse and grains.

In North America, the onion not only enters largely into consumption, but is a considerable article of export; 80,275 bushels were shipped from thence in 1890, valued at £12,550. The onion is not likely to become a drug, from the fact that it cannot be easily raised as a winter-keeping vegetable in southern latitudes. The bulb is much inclined to sprout or grow after being harvested, and the condition of success in keeping them is said to be a low dry temperature without frost. Onions and garlic are extensively grown in the south of France, the latter especially on a large scale on the sandy borders of Durance.

The delicate kind of onion called popularly shallot or eschalot is stated to have been brought to Western Europe by the crusaders, who named it after Ascalon, in Palestine, where they found it; but the specific name had already been used by Theophrastus and Pliny. Having a stronger taste than the onion, yet not leaving the strong odour on the palate which that species of allium is accustomed to do, the shallot is often preferred and employed instead, both for eating in its natural state and seasoning. The garlic of Ascalon is an indispensable condiment in modern cookery as a seasoning, and also used in pickles, salads, and to flavour vinegar. The species known as chives is a native of Britain, and available

for salads and condiments. They form a favourite addition to soups in Scotland. Chives are grown in Europe, North America, and Northern Asia, and cultivated as far north as latitude 70° 22'.

The British leek is common in Middle and Southern Europe and Western Asia and Northern Africa. It is called in culture the summer leek, a variety of which is the pearl leek. The whole plant is eaten, being employed in soups, &c., and is by some persons boiled and eaten with meat. Leeks are much more used now than they were at one time.

Garlic is used both in hot and temperate climates. It was cultivated in ancient Egypt. Garlic is eaten to a much greater extent than the onion by the natives of India and Spain, the aggregated white bulb or cloves being offered for sale in every bazaar. A considerable demand has lately sprung up here for garlic oil and garlic vinegar for sauces, pickles, and seasoning. Garlic was formerly held in great repute in medicine, but is seldom employed now in England, although so used in the United States. The cloves of garlic steeped in rum form a favourite remedy among country-people for the whooping-cough, the infusion being rubbed into the skin of the patient's loins. A clove of garlic or a few drops of the juice introduced into the ear are also believed to be highly efficacious in atonic deafness. The tops of the bulbs of *Allium canadense*, of eastern North America, are much sought for to give pickles a superior flavour.

Rocambole, the sand-leek, the Spanish garlic of Europe and North Africa, resembles in some respects garlic, in others, shallot.

The bulbs of *A. Leptophyllum* are eaten by the hill-tribes of India, and the leaves are dried and preserved as a condiment. According to Deslongchamps, the Institutes of Menu prohibit the higher castes from eating the onion, the garlic, and the leek. These three plants are, however, generally cultivated in India at the present day; and the leek, it may be observed, bears the Egyptian name 'khorat.' A Greek word used by Homer is considered to have reference to the leek; and Pliny expressly mentions the presence of this plant in Egypt, where at the present day it is commonly cultivated. The tree onion and the wild garlic of Kamchatka are other species of the *Allium* family.

Among the ancients, condiments to stimulate the sluggish appetite seemed to be in chief demand. Amongst these, *asafetida*—which is to-day highly relished in Persia and the East—was an indispensable ingredient; and it is even now used moderately by cooks in Europe, to give flavours to some meats and dishes. A few words on these alliaceous gum resins of Asia may be interesting.

The gum resinous exudation known as *asafetida*, obtained in Persia from several species of *Ferula*, is largely consumed there and in India. It has a nauseous alliaceous smell, but loses some of its odour and strength by keeping. It is locally known as *Anguzi*; and in India the pure drug is called *Hing*, and the coarser kind *Hingra*. India seems to be the principal consumer, as the imports there range from seven to nine thousand hundredweight annually. It is much used by the Hindus as a flavouring for food, being a

favourite ingredient in their curries, sauce for pillaus, &c., on account of its stimulant stomachic properties. The Turkomans are very fond of the young shoots dipped in vinegar. Its uses in Persia are very numerous, especially as a medicine. There are people there who are so accustomed to its use for nervous complaints, that it is like opium to the opium-eaters, one of the necessities of life. Its excellent anti-spasmodic qualities are too little known and appreciated in Europe.

The liquid form of *asafetida* has from the remotest times been held in great estimation by Eastern doctors, and was once regarded as worth its weight in silver. It is highly esteemed as a carminative and condiment, also as an anti-spasmodic. If taken daily it is said to prevent the attacks of malarious fever.

Galbanum is a product of Syria and Khorasan. Liquid Persian galbanum is derived from an undescribed species of *Ferula*; several of this genus of plants furnish gum resins of an alliaceous odour. Certain others yield the exudation known as *sagapenum*. It is met with in the form of yellow-brown or reddish agglutinated grains, of garlic odour, intermediate between *asafetida* and galbanum, and of acrid bitter taste, softening with the warmth of the hand. When heated, it evolves a peculiar smell, partaking of garlic and juniper, which is neither so powerful nor so disagreeable as that of the fetid gum.

THE GOLDEN BRICKS.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

'Now, boys, let's push this thing through. I've a deal better work on my hands before the sun goes down.'

And the auctioneer went on with a few stereotyped jests, at which he himself laughed, as also did the majority of the men who were lolling within easy sound of his voice.

But there was one man who did not laugh. Crank Partick was old and bent, and he wore his gray hair and beard like a veteran who has long lost his interest in life, and has no women-folk about him mindful of his exterior presentment. Crank Partick had edged his way to the auctioneer's feet. There he sat on the ground with a look in his bleared old eyes like that of a dog with a bad master, from whom one caress may, however, atone for fifty kicks. He took no notice of any one except the auctioneer.

With Partick was another man, some thirty years his junior. This was Steve Brown, his son-in-law. Steve, who seemed much entertained by his father-in-law's appearance, smoked a short black pipe, and winked at the other boys off and on, nodding in a half-compassionate manner towards old Partick.

A stout person with a hooked nose found this little group so interesting that he edged up to Steve and whispered: 'What's the game, Steve?'

Steve merely hitched his shoulders as, with a smile in the corner of his mouth, he replied, against the back of his hairy brown hand: 'Oh,

just a bit of a craze in the old un, nothing more, as I know of. There never was such an old fool.'

This seemed to satisfy the hook-nosed man, though he paid profound attention to Crank Partick, even when he had withdrawn and set his shoulder-blades against the tumble-down bit of wall that supported most of the other bystanders.

'Now, then,' resumed the auctioneer, 'you all know the biz. There it is; look at it, and stump up your offers. Make your offers, gentlemen, and a tall drink for the one that begins with any decency.' He pointed as he spoke to the red house behind him.

It was not much of a house, just a two-storeyed red brick building, with five windows in front, no glass in its windows, a broken chimney, and the words 'President Villa' impudently staring at the small crowd from a stone cross-piece over the door. The bricks showed unmistakable signs of crumbling. The house had clearly served its turn.

'Gentlemen, gentlemen'—the auctioneer was beginning again, when old Partick wrenched out a cry of, 'A hundred dollars!'

'Thank you, Mr Partick,' was the ironical reply. 'One hundred dollars! There's a drink booked for Mr Partick at the Beggar on Horseback.—You may just as well know, all of you, that it's only the bricks and fittings that are going. Guess you thought the land was with it when you made your offer—eh, Mr Partick?'

Crank Partick did not move a muscle. His parchment-face was upturned towards the auctioneer, and the renewed laughter of the boys was nothing to him.

'One hundred dollars for building material of the very first water!' cried the auctioneer derisively. 'Gentlemen, what on airth are you dreaming about? This is one of the oldest edifices in the township. You'll not match these bricks in a hurry. It's a house with a history, I'm told—and all for a hundred dollars.'

'I'll rise twenty-five,' observed the hook-nosed man. 'I fancy them bricks—good colour, you know.'

'One hundred and twenty-five dollars bid!' exclaimed the auctioneer.

'Fifty!' said Partick.

'One hundred and fifty! Tell you what, gentlemen, you'd do well, any one of you, to buy this house and retail its bricks as keepsakes. Or, better still, pack it all slick off to Chicago for the show. There'd be no worrying around with it there. There's a thousand millionaires who'd jump at it for their garden-plots and all that. Talk about your Ann Hathaway's cottages from England! This beats it hollow. One hundred and fifty dollars offered by Mr Partick.'

'Didn't know you were worth all that—the lot of you, Steve!' whispered the vendor in an aside to Crank Partick's son-in-law.

'Nor me,' was the rejoinder. 'He's off his nut, but I can't help it.'

'Another twenty-five!' said the hook-nosed man.

'That's two hundred dollars, less twenty-five!' said the auctioneer.

'Two hundred, sir,' sighed Crank Partick. This time, at any rate, the old fellow showed some emotion. There was a flavour of ripe human despair in his voice.

'Two hundred!' cried the auctioneer. 'Ah, gentlemen, make room there for Mr Bex, the famous photographer. Didn't I tell you I was offering you a rare good thing, and only two hundred dollars offered!—Come along, Mr Bex—you've come to make a picture of this most remarkable building, haven't you?'

Mr Bex the photographer nodded, and, the sun being favourable, straightway fixed his camera.

'Old place, sir, ain't it?' continued the auctioneer.

'Well, for this part of the world, it *is* old,' the photographer admitted. 'There's been some famous paper signed in that house; there wasn't much township when it was raised. I guess there's enough interest in it in the State to pay me my trouble.'

'That's so,' ejaculated the auctioneer.—'Hear him, gentlemen! Mr Bex ain't the man to delude you. He's a business man, like the best of us.—Now, I ask you straight, where's *my* profit on this morning's work if I let the whole house go to Mr Partick for a couple of hundred dollars?—What did you say, Mr Partick?'

'I said as there was the work of pulling it to pieces, I did,' was the weak, tremulous reply from the old man.

'And twenty-five,' said the hook-nosed man promptly. Mr Partick's evident terrible earnestness impressed him.

Crank Partick began to shake violently. He muttered to himself, and the auctioneer saw red agonised streaks in his yellowish eyeballs as he rolled them in his sockets.

'Reckon that'll stop you,' observed Steve, thrusting his little finger into his pipe-bowl in a nonchalant manner.

'Two twenty-five—any more, gentlemen?—any more, I say? Once, twice'—

'Two fifty,' screamed Crank Partick, with foam about his lips.

The auctioneer seemed amazed; so did the bystanders. But the former instantly recovered himself, and looked towards the hook-nosed rival—to behold him fall suddenly on his face.

The sale was suspended while they crowded round to ascertain what had come to Solly Moss. They turned him over, and tried to put him on his legs again. But it was no good. Solly Moss's heart had given out, with not a moment's warning. When this was understood, six of the boys carried him off to his wife, commenting over his body between their gasps upon the strangeness of the occurrence.

It was a sight to see Crank Partick's face while this was happening. The old man's eyes had dilated, and an expression of brutal triumph sat therein and upon his thin worn lips.

Mr Bex the photographer soonest recovered self-possession. Having taken the house, he took the death-group with professional celerity and

unobtrusiveness; and then he took Mr Partick's face, the like of which he had never yet seen.

So five minutes passed. Then the auctioneer returned to his duties. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'this is a most extraordinary and unparalleled occurrence. I've seen a good deal of the world, but I've never before had a bidder drop off like that. But, as the Bible tells us, all flesh is grass: we're here to-day, and gone to-morrow; and so we must make the most of the flying moments while they're on the wing.—Any rise on Mr Partick's two hundred and fifty dollars for the bricks?'

'Two hundred, I said!' protested old Partick, writhing as if he had been pinched.

The auctioneer pursed his lip. 'I guess that's a lie, sir,' he said solemnly. 'Think of what's just happened, sir, and remember Ananias and the lady in the Acts of the Apostles. I've two hundred and fifty offered by Mr Partick. Any rise—once, twice—twice—thrice!—There, it's yours; and I'll trouble you for settlement right away.'

The auctioneer had to accompany Crank Partick to his bit of a shanty hard by. Here, to Steve Brown's surprise, the old fellow went to a board in the floor and took from beneath it greenbacks and silver for the requisite amount.

'How much more have you got, dad, under there?' Steve inquired, when the auctioneer had gone.

'There was only three hundred altogether, Steve darling,' was the old fellow's excited reply. 'I'd have died, I would, if that other one hadn't dropped off. There's glad times coming for us, Steve. I'll tell you all about it to-night, every word.'

'Well, I'm a bit bothered,' said Steve, as he went off to digest this purchase with more tobacco, and also to find out what had killed Solly Moss.

'Shut the door, Steve,' said old Partick, 'and jam things agin it. There ain't no room in what I've got to say for any besides you to hear it.'

'My sakes, what's a-coming?' laughed Steve Brown. 'They say Solly's got his billet through the visitation o' God, whatever that may mean. No larks, dad: you ain't going to turn wild and fix me up for the boys to say the same of, eh?'

'I've been waiting for this day five-and-thirty years, and it's come. Run that there bed agin the door and put the bottle near, and then I'll tell you about it.'

'Grave serious, dad?'

'You'll say that this time a week, my son, when we've split up them bricks, you and me, and never another in the world, mind that.'

'Sounds lively. Well, I'll just humour you, boss. Guess I ought to be a match for you if you begin to rave.'

So saying, Steve Brown ran the bed to the door of their bit of a cottage and pressed it tight. Then he shook the lamp, as if to menace the oil with something worse than burning if it refused to do its duty to the best of its ability; fetched the whisky bottle and banged it upon the rough table by old Partick's chair. 'Liquor up, dad, and reel out,' he exclaimed genially.

The old man poured himself a dose of the spirit, and with trembling hands tossed it down his throat. 'Eh, but that's fine!' he muttered;

'Oh, it's that way, is it?' said Steve sharply. 'I'm all ears, then.'

After a brief spell of gasping and lip-licking—for the whisky was fiery as well as palatable—Crank Partick plunged into his story:

'There was me and a pal, name of Johnson, that worked together at them diggings up Sacramento way when fust they was talked about. I can't exactly remember what year it was, but it was a dreadful lot of Christmases ago. I mind the Christmases because it was Christmas week as that cursed cow of a Marshal took the bricks from us to build that there house. He didn't take them from Johnson neither, because Johnson had turned up his toes the day before. If it hadn't ha' been for that, we'd ha' fought for them, Johnson and me, City Marshal or no City Marshal, and abode by the consequences.'

'I tell you, Steve, lad, we didn't do bad at all, Johnson and me. We was there among them rivers and rocks, and as wild a crew of fellers as ever I see, for two months just. I was to marry Jane if I did pretty well. She were your wife's mother, after all, for she were a stickfast sort of a one; and once her heart was given, it warn't took back. But, good sakes, lad, what a difference it made me, marrying her! Wimmen, Steve, wants to be kept under. I pined foolish, and didn't let on as what the matter was; and the consequence was she stuck her spurs into me right and left long as she lived. Nance, our girl, would ha' been just the same if her fust baby hadn't done for her. There's comfort in them kind o' thoughts, Steve, and so I tell yer.'

'Not much,' observed Steve, who had been very fond of his young wife.—'But drive on. I like your tale, dad, a deal better than your sentiments. You can ent them, if you like, and steer straight for the bricks.'

'I'll try, Steve,' was the reply, 'for you were a good husband to Nance, you were that.—It was this way, then. Johnson and me had got about as much gold as we could stick on our backs and do a day's tramp with without screeching. And so I says to Johnson, "Let's go off with what we've got;" and he says, "Right you are."

'There were sixty pounds of it between us. How lovely it was to daunder it through our fingers all a trickling like yellow water with the sun on it! Sixty pounds, Steve, only think!'

'Great Jupiter!' ejaculated Steve.

'But,' resumed Crank Partick, 'they were mighty bad times there then, and we warn't over-much sure of getting through with our pile. Still, try it, we meant; and try it we did.'

'I can't kinder remember how many days we footed it; but we come by-in-by to the funniest thing you ever see in a place where there warn't no town nor nothing. It was a pit of red clay with a bit of a kiln, and two carts, and just three men working it. We stopped the night and talked with them, and they told us how a chap was going to raise a town not five miles off, and he'd bought up all the bricks as they could turn out. "All?" said Johnson. "Couldn't my pal and me have one cartload to our own use?" I didn't take him at fust; but when he cranked at me, I knew something was in the

wind, and I backed him. The men thought we were crazy; but all the same we bought horse and cart and a good load of them red bricks for a matter of five pounds of dust. It warn't cheap: it were dear; but them was times as you couldn't pick an' choose in.

'That night, what must Johnson and me do when the others were asleep, but melt our ounces into hot lumps of gold, and cut 'em into bricks of, I guess, nigh on three pounds each. Then we got clay—there was lots of it about—and dumped it round the gold; and so in the end there were one-and-twenty bricks which had our fortunes in their bellies, and which we meant to get baked and take along with us. Reckon you begin to see now what's coming?'

'Reckon I do,' gasped Steve. 'Go on, dad.'

'Well, we got off, Johnson and me, and made up to fetch a round route away from the blistering new township they'd told us of. It was that as wrecked us. Johnson were took ill and died, and I buried him, and knew that it made me twice the man I was before. And I were that impatient, I pushed on and on, and dreamed a heap of fine dreams about what I'd do *when* the gold was all in bank.

'But it was in the middle of them dreams that one day up druv the Marshal and collared the horse and cart and bricks. "Where's your pal?" he asked; and when I told him, he said that yarn wouldn't wash, and that I'd done away with him for the gold we'd got between us. You see, Steve, what a fix he put me in. I swore as we'd got no more gold; and he searched me, and said it was lucky he found none, or I'd ha' been strung up—and he were the man to do it. And he pinched the bricks, and said they were his; and if I didn't disappear, it would be all up with me.—Steve, I can't think of it without trembling; it seems to me that my best manhood went out of me after that day.'

'And those scrumptious bricks are in the house we've bought to-day?' cried Steve, heedless of the pathos in his father-in-law's story.

'They are. I sneaked in after them, and lay hid till I'd seen them made into walls. Then I took my hook, swearing I'd never rest till I'd got my own agin.'

'And Johnson's too, dad. The drinks and square meals we'll have when we've laid the thing flat!—But let's hear it all while we're about it.'

'I guess there ain't much more to tell. That dog of a Marshal lived fifteen years after building the house, living in it all the time. When he was dead, I crep back to the township, and here we've been ever since. I've never took eyes off it, and I've scraped and saved to buy it, let alone hammering and scratching at every brick as I could reach when I could do it without being seen. I thought the day would never come; but come it has at last!' Old Partick helped himself to more whisky.

'By Jove!' exclaimed Steve, 'I'll believe it all, dad. It would have been pizen for you if Solly Moss had filched it off us.'

It was as Crank Partick had said. But the gold was not found on the first day of the search for it; nor the second; nor the seventh.

The dead-heads of the township thought their

work in the gutted interior of the old house a great joke, and did not keep their opinion to themselves. The interest they showed in the business maddened Partick. He would fain have had a ten-foot wall built round his newly-acquired property. But Steve's saner mind tackled the problem more effectually.

'The old un,' said that discreet young man to the idlers, 'is head downwards. He thinks we've a fortune to make out of split bricks, and so split 'em—every mother's son—we mean to. There *is* some of a market for 'em; but I reckon we'll do well 'if we see our money back. Besides, the boss who owns the land, he wants it cleared mighty quick. That's what it comes to—see!'

Those of them who *saw* were vastly entertained. The others smoked and chaffed, and when they grew tired of watching the two men picking at the bricks—and breaking one about once in a minute—slouched off to more congenial fields of idleness.

But you should have seen the frenzied way in which the two men worked when they had the place to themselves. It was the heart of the summer-time, and they watered the dry soil and dust about them with the sweat of their brows. The toil told on Crank Partick. After the first day he was woefully exhausted. On the third evening he was evidently nearly worn out.

'You'd better knock off and leave it all to me, dad,' said Steve.

But this did not satisfy Crank Partick. 'I'll do it, lad,' he stammered—'I'll do it on liquor; that'll hold me up.'

'I ain't so sure about that,' objected Steve—quite to no purpose, however, for his father-in-law soaked whisky into himself every evening.

It was wonderful with what a spurt of renewed energy old Partick began each of the succeeding days. For an hour or more he put Steve in the shade as a destructive mason. Then the vigour would rapidly weaken in him, and by noon he was incapable of doing aught but on a heap of the rubble using his pick mechanically. Even then, however, his eyes were aglow. They missed none of Steve's movements, and burned in hatred at any visitors who lounged into the precincts.

On the sixth day, thanks mainly to Steve's abounding pertinacity, they had reduced the villa so that it was merely a shell some eight feet high. The aid of an expert had been requisitioned to batter the walls. *Their* work was to split the bricks merely, and cast the débris outside.

The seventh day found Crank Partick unable to do aught but swallow whisky.

'You just stick to your bed, boss,' said Steve, 'and leave it all to me. I ain't a-going to steal a run on you, so don't think it. I ain't so dead sure you've remembered the history of that there gold right; but I'll go through with it now and chance it; and soon as I strike anything good, I'll bring you word.'

But this did not please the old man. He had therefore to be led tottering into the house and set where he could still overlook Steve's exertions.

A fortnight went by. There was now nothing but a parapet of red bricks waist high environing them. Crank Partick's mind seemed quite unninged by excitement, and a grim terror lest

somehow he had been overreached, after all. He would sit in a heap all day, groaning and glowering.

'Dad,' said Steve at last, 'I've lost a'most more flesh over this biz than I had to start with. I'm ready to knock under.'

'Knock under! Oh, you fool, Steve! It's there; it must be there! I seen 'em *all* laid with these very eyes—*all*, I tell you, and the gold uns was with 'em. They'll be at the bottom.—Oh, sweet heaven over us, don't you let me jine Johnson till I've had it between these fingers!'

Steve shrugged his shoulders and again grasped the moist-handled pick. 'Perhaps you're right—I dunno. Anyway, I won't say die yet.'

'And Steve, dear, it'll all be yours—remember that, for I'm a bit shaken more than I'll bear, and I shan't live long.'

And again the clink, clink of the iron sounded in the enclosure. The echo in the place was very feeble now. There was next to no wall to trifle with the sound.

The old man was prostrate the next day—speechless and limp, with positive signs of approaching death upon him. Steve fetched a doctor, who did but confirm the evidence of the parents visible even to unprofessional eyes.

'He may splutter a bit, and then he'll drop off,' said the medical man. 'I'm no use.'

'Dad,' cried Steve in the dulled ears of the dying man, 'I'm going to stop with you to-day—you're above a bit off colour.'

For five or six moments there was no coherent response to these words. Crank Partick was struggling to say something, but nothing would come. Then, however, he half rose with a jerk and hurled the one word 'Go!' at his son-in-law, dropping back afterwards with a thud.

'Pretty' murmured Steve; but he went, having arranged with a woman-neighbour to look in upon the sick man every half-hour.

It was nearly one o'clock this day when Steve came upon the first of the twenty-one bricks. The 'clink' was different from that of the rest, and at the blow the thing broke into scales, beneath which there was a yellow gleam that made the young man's heart leap. Another knock, and the cake of gold was disclosed. He shook it clear of the dust and spikes of baked clay, and ran with it under his jacket to his father-in-law.

'Look here, dad!' he cried, flourishing the gold above the pillow—'look here, I say—it's all right. If there's one, there's bound to be more.'

Crank Partick was at the last gasp. He opened his eyes wearily, and the shrunken lids closed over them again.

'It's the gold, dad—it's found,' whispered Steve in the old man's ear.

The words reached him now. His lips slowly parted. 'I told you so!' the lips said, faintly as the rustle of trees far, far away. The right hand moved feebly, with a widening of the fingers; and Steve, rightly understanding the sign, put the gold brick into the palm. The fingers gripped it tenaciously for an instant, then it fell on the ground, and, with a gasp, Crank Partick died—a smile of strange triumph on his face.

Steve recovered the gold from all the bricks;

it made weight enough to bring him twelve thousand dollars. The township people wondered why he gave his old idiot of a father-in-law so expensive an interment.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

A YEAR or two ago the 'Standard' contained an account sent by its Berlin correspondent—of a fight between a hare and an eagle owl, which had an unexpected termination. The owl, it appears, attacked the hare with the intention of making a meal off it, but met with a resistance for which it had not bargained. In the end the hare became the victor, escaping apparently unhurt, and left its formidable antagonist tumbling about on the ground with a broken wing.

Such turning of tables by the weak on the strong, when the strong is the aggressor, is by no means unprecedented in the records of the animal world. At the same time, any one who is acquainted with the eagle owl—and what visitor to the London Zoological Gardens is not?—will have a high opinion of the courage—although it was the courage of despair—shown by poor puss on this occasion. The eagle owl is an alarming-looking bird at the best of times; but when he is angry or excited, his appearance is truly fiendish. At such times his feathers stand out on end all round him; his eyes burn like live coals; and how he hisses! Until one has heard him, one can form no idea how expressive of hatred and contempt a mere hiss can be made. The hiss gradually increases in volume until the culminating point is reached, and then the owl projects itself violently against the wire of the aviary, and the startled visitor beats a hasty and undignified retreat. Such at least are the manners and customs of the eagle owl in other places of confinement. In the London Zoological Gardens these birds have grown so accustomed to being stared at, that they seem to think it scarcely worth while to indulge in any display of animosity. They take refuge in sulky, silent dignity.

The hare certainly showed her mettle in this case; but then, she is not altogether so timid as we commonly imagine her to be. She readily flies from man indeed, except during the month of March, when her proverbial 'madness' is upon her, and when she shows a curious deliberateness in all her movements utterly at variance with her usual habits. But she has been known to stand up boldly against attacks made upon her, or more especially her offspring. Bishop Stanley gives an account of such an event. A small hawk, probably a kestrel, was seen to be carrying an animal of some kind in its talons; while on the ground immediately below, a hare was observed keeping up with the hawk. The bird being evidently over-weighted, was unable to rise, and flew close to the ground, sometimes almost sinking to the earth; and each time it came within reach of the hare, she struck it with her paws. At length

this persecution proved too much for the hawk, which relinquished its prey and soared off into space and peace. It was found that the hawk's quarry was a young leveret, which its parent thus rescued from death.

Kestrels, keen-sighted though they are, sometimes get into trouble on their piratical expeditions. One of these birds was seen to drop, in the characteristic stone-like fashion of its kind, on some object in a field over which it had been hovering. It rose with a small animal struggling in its claws; but soon began to show signs of distress, and to fly heavily and painfully. At last it fell fluttering to the ground. On the man who had watched the proceedings going up to see what had happened, a weasel, apparently uninjured, slipped from the body of the dying bird, and disappeared. A wound in the throat of the kestrel explained matters. The hawk in catching the weasel had caught a veritable Tartar. The weasel, objecting to be made a meal of by the hawk, had managed to wriggle his lissome body round and inflict the wound. Last April, a gamekeeper in Norfolk found a kestrel and a small rabbit in the same trap. The trap was one of the ordinary toothed abominations which close with a spring, and had been set close to the mouth of the rabbit's hole. Once closed, such a trap remains closed till it is reset. How, then, could both kestrel and rabbit have been caught in it? Probably the kestrel struck the rabbit a little way from home, and the victim in its struggles dragged the murderer into the trap's deadly grip.

It is of course chiefly in defence of their young that birds and animals show most courage. Black-birds often succeed in driving cats from the neighbourhood of their nests; while it is upon record that a rook, single-handed, drove away with ignominy three ravens which had approached her young with marauding intentions. Those terrible harriers of farmyards, sparrow-hawks, are frequently put to flight, and sometimes even meet with their death at the beak and claws of the infuriated hen whose chickens they seek to capture. Indeed, some hens, as most people know, will not allow a strange human being to approach their broods without rushing at him with ruffled plumage and extended wings.

One would imagine that a cockchafer was a still more harmless 'beastie' ordinarily than a hen, and yet a cockchafer has been known to prove more than a match for a bat. It happened in this wise: Two people were out walking one summer evening in the country, when they were startled by something falling suddenly at their feet. Stooping to see what it was, they found a small bat with a cockchafer clinging firmly to its side, just under the wing. The cockchafer was removed, and the bat resumed its flight.

A few years ago, in one of the low-lying parts of Surrey, a snipe was picked up dead with a freshwater mussel firmly attached to the end of its beak. The valves of the shell had closed on the snipe's beak, and the unfortunate bird was thus held prisoner till it died of starvation. Both bird and shell were preserved as a literal example of the biter being bit.

A wasp caught in the meshes of a spider's web proves a very ugly customer for his capturer to tackle. The wasp says to the spider, in language

there is no mistaking: 'You had better beware my sting.' The spider, keeping at a respectful distance, does her utmost to set her unacceptable captive free. She makes no attempt to 'rope' him by throwing her toils, thread by thread, around him, as she would do if it was only a blue-bottle with which she had to deal. On the contrary, she seconds the efforts of the wasp to escape by shaking her web violently.

A cock-pheasant once found himself placed in a very awkward predicament, thanks to his inveterate love of fighting. A young lady, wearing a red cloak, was walking in a country lane, when she was flown at and set upon violently by a handsome cock-pheasant. The pheasant seems to have taken the lady, from her scarlet cloak, for some large strangely-plumaged bird trespassing on his domain. The young lady tried in vain to repel his attacks, until at last she was compelled to seize him and carry him home with her bodily. When she reached home, she let her prisoner go free, and off he stalked, trying, by a show of dignity, to conceal his chagrin at having thus caught a Tartar.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

SHE was never married, our dear old Aunt,
Our mother's old Aunt Bess;
We girls could never imagine why,
Though we often tried to guess.

Her sweet old face, her wistful smile,
And her eyes that seemed to say:
'I too had a lover once, my dears,
In a long past yesterday.'

We were a party of merry girls
Who never had known a care:
Our heads full of lovers and love affairs,
And our hearts as light as air.

One evening, our youngest, our winsome Kate
(Her own wedding day was near),
Said: 'Why had *you* never a wedding day?
Ah! do tell us, Auntie dear.'

But the sweet blue eyes grew sadly dim
With tears that did not fall,
And a faint flush tinged her cheek as she said:
'My dear, he ceased to call.'

A sudden hush fell over us then—
Our heart-beats you might have heard,
As she slowly rose and left the room
With never another word.

* * * * *
Ah me! since that April afternoon
I have seen both shower and shine,
Katie married—and Winnie dead—
And a lonely hearth is mine.

And oft in the quiet evening hour,
When the silent shadows fall,
I think of my dear old Auntie Bess,
And her lover—who ceased to call.

MAUD HOUSTON.

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LIMITS AND LIMITATIONS.

BESIDE the Limits which human beings have to acknowledge as such, there exist a man's own personal Limitations to be reckoned with. The practical philosopher, in the person of Mr Besant—vide his *Eulogy of Richard Jeffries*—bids him find out those limits, work in them, and be content. This advice, though little other than the heathen sage's, 'Know thyself,' since to know one's self argues a knowledge of one's limitations—to carry this advice into effect requires a certain amount of insight, acquired by an uncertain amount of effort. One may be the 'limited little brute' Miss Bella Wilfer called herself, and yet never attain her insight to perceive and her candour and courage to avow her limitations. There are those whose limitations, perfectly perceptible to those about them, remain a profound secret to themselves all through their lives; and there are those whose apparent limitations—patent enough to all appearance—are in reality mere sheaths and husks, which in the course of their development will be sloughed and cast aside, as they emerge and make 'a large room' for themselves. Genius may be safely trusted to find this room for itself; sometimes it takes the expression of a belief in its limitations as the signal for it to transcend those limits, as Lord Byron did. Or it will retire into a ten years' silence, as did Lord Tennyson, before finally emerging as one of the Immortals. Or it will be magnificently indifferent, as was Burns, as to whether what he had in hand would turn out 'a sang' or 'a sermon.'

And not in poetry only may genius be found overstepping the ordinary limits of mankind. In one profession, notably, where nature would seem, at first sight, to have fixed the boundaries of a man's career, she will, by endowing him with a Promethean spark, enable him to conquer what looked like her own limitations. Though the man to whom she has given a commanding presence, a tragic cast of countenance, and a deep voice, restricts himself, if he be wise, to playing

tragedy and melodrama; while he who is gifted with comic features, insignificant stature, and endless drollery, labours in his vocation when he plays the fool; a third, of ordinary, or even plain and unattractive form and features, but whose lips have been touched with a live coal from the altar, will, like Rachel, secure histrionic triumphs to which the merely beautiful or graceful in vain aspire.

And while thus considering the large room genius makes for itself, it may not be out of place here to inquire why it is that the mothers of men of genius are credited with so large an influence in the development of their sons' capacity, and that an attempt is seldom or never made to lift the fathers on to a similar pedestal? It may be that a man, without being exactly incredulous of his offspring's intelligence, has been made, by experience and contact with the world, cautious in crediting any one, even his own son, with a capability of doing, until something has been done, and that this atmosphere of incredulity, unfavourable to the development of talent, as it is allowed on all hands to be, constitutes the difference of training which the child receives at the hands of its parents.

As the soil is to the plant, so is its environment to the young soul, which, though it may, by flattery or over-indulgence, foster the ill weeds of conceit and self-sufficiency, may, and does, on the other hand, dwarf and warp its growth by a stunting diet of incredulity or disparagement. It is a common observation that youth can do itself more justice, be more 'itself' among strangers, than at home, where nothing is expected of it; and thus it is perhaps that home-keeping youths have ever homely wits; while abroad, free from the heavy, incombustible atmosphere that a presumptive acquaintance with their limitations imposes, they branch out into sallies of sense or humour. Falstaff complains jestingly that not only is he witty himself, but the cause of wit in others: in a similar manner, there are those whose dullness is a cause of dullness in others. The limitations of Napoleon III.'s intel-

ligence, the influence of his entirely negative intellect, are said to have been such as to infect the consciousness of all who came in contact with him. 'I cannot talk, with Civet in the room,' says Cowper, 'a fine puss gentleman who's all perfume.' The perfume may be a very fine perfume, an art-jargon that babbles of the 'tender rendering' of a boot-jack, or the 'sympathetic *timbre* of a baritone;' or it may be merely the perfume of the 'shop' to which the speaker is attached, but it suffices to choke the general auditor. A man of Dr Johnson's extended powers no doubt was right in feeling complimented when he heard that a lady had said of him—speaking to one who complained of having been in a company where only 'runts' were talked of—'Well, sir, Dr Johnson would have talked of runts;' yet even he confessed to Boswell that he felt the tediousness of the company of his old schoolfellow, whose 'talk'—like that of the man in Ecclesiasticus—'was of bullocks.'

That it is of great importance to a man in any walk of life to find out his limitations cannot be denied. It is a pitiful waste of time for a man to pass half a lifetime trying to catch hold of something which he has no real power to grasp. Yet this ignorance of the limits of his powers is often the result of outside influence. 'That which one can do, another may do,' is re-echoed around the neophyte; and giving credit to this untruest of axioms, he allows himself to be entered for a race beyond his strength; urged and goaded into attempting that which is permanently beyond his powers. An addiction to a study, an art, or a business which comes spontaneously and from within, may generally be trusted; while that which is the result of pressure, or a morbid and over-stimulated ambition, usually bears but one fruit—failure. On the other hand, to dwell on one's limitations, or to have them daily insisted on, is comparable to placing a transparent but impassable globe over a butterfly, and then demonstrating the futility of its powers of flight. We have seldom admired the surpassing beauty of the 'Prentice's Pillar' in Roslyn Chapel without an inward conviction that it owed its creation in no small degree to the absence of the Master, an absence which left the 'Prentice free to find out his own capabilities for himself.

In some directions, the limits of a man's powers are not difficult of determination. For instance, there seems to be a point in the game of chess beyond which an ordinary player does not easily pass. His capacity to unravel the intricacies, foresee and provide against the contingencies of that wonderful game, is, so to say, exhausted; and he who constantly succumbs to his opponent's power of combination and dexterity in marshalling his forces, may fairly be said to have found his limit—in that direction at least. He, too, who perpetually loses his head, or his way, in the analogous game of life, may safely suspect the limitations have been reached of his own perspicacity and foresight.

But it is obvious that, while certain of our powers seem doomed to the strictest limitations, there are other and not less noble ones, capable, apparently, of almost unlimited expansion. That by no manner of means may an oak-tree be evolved from a cabbage, we freely admit; but

unless a soul is granted to a cabbage, or denied to a man, the analogy will not hold good. While the limits of speculative thought first discovered have in scarce any direction been since overstepped, the delimitations of the frontiers of morality are—and have been—progressive. As in the world, so in man; while incapable perhaps of adding an intellectual cubit to his stature, he may—nay, frequently does—exchange a capacity for an acquirement. It was possible for him to be charitable; he is beneficent. Few suspect the depth of their own power of endurance until an inexorable fate calls it forth, and it becomes—heroism. Pity is exalted into a divine compassion. Under the nettle Disappointment, grows the flower Humility. From the perception of benefits spring gratitude and love, and the joy of living on so beautiful a globe, hung like an iridescent air-bubble in the firmament! Even the brevity of the allotted span of life—its incertitude, its mystery, its pain—is but the exchange of an earthly vitality for a divine vitality. In short, while a Darwin converts himself into a machine for grinding out facts, by means of which may be evolved an all-important law of nature, each human being possesses within himself the power, not merely of observing, but of enlarging the limits of the divinest part of himself—that which constitutes his character, and is, so to speak, the protoplasm of his soul. Self-possession, self-control, self-command, all that made the glory of the philosopher, are merged in the humility which trusts in the highest, the greatest, and wisest, as well as the most infinitely tender of Guides.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE TAME PHILOSOPHER IN DANIEL'S DEN.

ALAN AINSWORTH went to his rooms that night treading on air, singing and making melody in his heart. He loved his love, and his love loved him—loved him truly, freely, and unreservedly, as only a noble, generous-tempered woman does love. There were difficulties, to be turned rather than surmounted; but they only added a zest to his feeling, for he was in no doubt about the issue. His sweetheart had surrendered herself to be guided by him: she had sweetly bent to him; and he was a new man. He felt strong, and he rejoiced. His two successes coming together had this great effect on him. He had been very doubtful whether the public would care for his play: and they had received it with acclamation. He had frequently been despondent in his love—had often wondered if a rare creature like Isabel could find in him anything at all: and she, who had hitherto appeared stronger than he—stronger in mind and in heart—had yielded to him as the lord of her life. So he was strong and of a good courage—of a temper to be daunted by nothing that might arise. He knew that it was rather because of her own generous quality than because of his supreme desert that Isabel had yielded herself so ungrudgingly, but yet the effect on him was the same as if his own merit and his own hand had gotten

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him the victory. Herein is the infinite reward of true love, that, with the flattery of feeling on the one side, and on the other—of homage and devotion—we come to believe our poor little best qualities to be active and constant, and in so believing we cultivate them into activity and constancy.

As for Isabel—when her lover had departed, she began to brood despondently upon the pain she must give to George. It seemed more difficult than ever that she should break with him. She imagined herself going to him and saying: 'You have generously loved me, I believe, all your life, since we were boy and girl together; and you asked me to be your wife, and I have agreed and have led you to suppose that I loved you. I now find that I do not love you truly, and that I cannot marry you! For your faithful love of a life all I can give you is a broken promise!'—and she shrank from it with shame and alarm. It would be easier to write that, but it would be cowardly to seek to shun the full shame of speech; and she could not come to speech with George at once. But, as Alan had said, 'One thing at a time.' She had promised to go to her uncle on the morrow and make him take over her money. But would not her uncle laugh at her, and think her gone mad? Yet she had promised, and she would go, and perhaps something might come of it.

On the afternoon of next day, therefore, she went to Rutland Gate. She asked the important person in black who opened the door if her uncle were in; and he replied that Mr Suffield was not at home—was gone back to Lancashire—but that Mrs Suffield was at home. That seemed to her strange and ominous, but she followed the footman into the drawing-room, where Mrs Suffield sat alone, with a book in her lap, as if she were reading.

'Is anything the matter, aunt?' asked Isabel, 'that uncle has rushed off again to Lancashire?'

'Is anything the matter, my dear,' retorted her aunt, 'that you have rushed in now, when we only parted from you yesterday?'

'Yes,' said Isabel, on the inspiration of the moment; 'for some time I have had a feeling that something was going to happen to uncle. The feeling has come and gone; but to-day it has been specially strong. Is anything wrong? You know all my money—all I have—I would gladly give to help uncle!'

Her aunt considered her closely, and then went to her and kissed her with tears in her eyes. 'You are a good girl,' said she. 'All I know is that that M'Fie came to him this morning with some strange story; that he was very much upset, and said he must go down to the north at once. I never,' said Mrs Suffield anxiously, 'never knew him do a thing like that before—go off without telling me what was the matter.'

While Isabel is talking with her aunt, it is necessary that we should occupy ourselves with this business of M'Fie's. He had come to the horse betimes that morning, looking—as the footman said to his master—'very ill, indeed, sir—wuss than usual, and 'is 'ead tied luv!'

The Tame Philosopher had, for once, a story to tell instead of a rhapsody to deliver. But his manner of narration partook largely of the

rhapsodical from sheer habit; for certainly he was too much moved and too much in earnest to be consciously choosing his words.

'Bless my soul!' exclaimed Suffield when he saw how pale he looked with his head tied up in a white handkerchief. 'What in the world have you been doing with yourself?'

'Ah, my dear sir,' said M'Fie, wringing his patron's hand, 'the pains of Gehenna have gat hold upon me! I have had an adventure, sir, which to my poor experience in that kind surpasses everything I have ever read of *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*—of barbers, and negroes, and one-eyed calenders. It is so strange that you cannot imagine it even in dimmest, most indefinite prefigurement. And when I tell it to you, you are likely to listen with incredulous ear.'

'Well, my friend,' said Suffield, 'I make no promise of listening with one sort of ear or another; but I must bargain that you tell me only the truth. Come into the library.'

'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate,' quoted M'Fie, as he followed his patron, 'and would not stay for an answer.' I would have you observe, sir,' said he, when they were in the library, 'that I am about to give you an unvarnished narrative of my adventure, and I have to bespeak your earnest attention, because it concerns yourself, sir.'

'Concerns me—does it? Well, fire away, and let me hear.'

The Philosopher was too much interested in his adventure even to correct his patron's un-literary expression. He began his narrative, and Suffield listened with interest. In effect it was as follows:

On Thursday evening—that was Tuesday—the Philosopher, having his time on his hands while his patron was making holiday in Lancashire, and having read in the newspapers of the success of his young friend Ainsworth's play, resolved that he would spend half-a-crown for a seat in the pit to witness the play and judge if the approval of the public was justified. When he took his place in the throng waiting for the doors to open, he observed a little way in front of him a white turban. When he had pushed his way in and taken possession of a seat, he found himself immediately behind the white turban. While studying his bill of the play and his halfpenny newspaper, and considering the talk and the countenances of his neighbours before the play began, he negligently observed that the owner of the white turban—who he could casually see, had the dark face of an Indian or Hindu—kept taking surreptitious sucks at a bottle which he produced from the pocket of the dark overcoat he wore. The play began, and he was interested in it, and incurious about the owner of the white turban, who had seemed progressing so rapidly on the way to tipsiness. But at the end of the first act, when all around began to discuss the play, the owner of the white turban began also. He addressed himself to his neighbour, a harmless, good-natured-seeming young man, who rather encouraged than resented his conversation.

'This is silliness,' said the white turban. 'I am regret that I give away my half-the-crown to sit here to listen with regard to this. Do you

think the same, sir? I must say the times the halls of music visited I pay one shilling—not half-the-crown!—and I am handy for the pipe and the glass, and I am not squeeze by my respected ones next me. With regard this is not good, not economical. And in the halls of music they make me laugh down to my stomach, with regard here if care should be taken I make a simper of pleasure. This is silliness!

There was no mistaking that guileless voice and that wonderful turn for correct English: a single peep round the dark man's cheek assured the Philosopher that the owner of the white turban was none other than Daniel Trichinopoly.

'Of course—Daniel,' said Suffield. 'Taking his Christmas holiday in London, and enjoying himself in his own way.—But how, my friend, does that concern me? My son told me he was in London.'

'Oh, did he?' said the Philosopher. 'Well, my dear sir, I am not at the end of my story yet. Wait, sir, and listen.'

At the end of the second act—during which Daniel frequently partook of his private refreshment—the same kind of talk was resumed, Daniel adding to such comparative criticism as he had before uttered that he knew the gentleman who had 'made' the play, and that he hoped that he and his friends were well, and that they would continue very well. As for him (Daniel) he did not care for anybody: he could spend his 'half-the-crown' or his 'one shilling' with as much freedom as any 'Ki-lis-tian' gentleman in the Queen's empire, and—with that the play went on again.

'Still I don't see, my friend,' said Suffield, 'what the tipsy twaddle talked by Black Daniel has to do with me.'

'My dear sir,' said the Philosopher, 'you will see in a precious moment.'

It was after the third act that Daniel—being then very tipsy and communicative—drew from his inner pocket a large envelope, from which he took some folded sheets of tissue-paper. He spread them before his neighbour, and boasted of the value of the drawings on them.

'I beg to mention,' said Daniel, 'that these pictures, lines, circles, etcetera, etcetera—in red ink and in black—are with regard to a very clever machine valuable for the manufacture. With attention to these I now take away and make, and I may say I shall have a small or large fortune by the favour of it.'

A strong suspicion made the Philosopher rise to look at these drawings over Daniel's shoulder. He discovered that the lines had clearly been first traced with pencil and then gone over with ink by a somewhat awkward hand, and that they were undoubtedly copies of drawings he had seen before. What drawings?

'Now, what drawings would you guess, sir, in your acutest and directest vein of guessing?'

'What drawings should they be,' asked Suffield, 'that I know ought about? What should be done wi' a sheep's head but make broth o't?'

'Mr Suffield,' said the Philosopher, 'with listening to the havers of fools and rogues in Parliament, I must tell you your wits have become dulled. Your business activity, since it ceased to be active, has lost its sharpness. What drawings should they be that I'd take trouble to tell you this

screed of a story about but the drawings of your own cherished, secret machine?'

'What? The black scoundrel! He has copied the drawings, has he? That's George's carelessness!—But go on wi' thy story. What didst thou do?'

The Philosopher answered, he could do nothing there and then; but he considered that, since Daniel had stolen copies of the drawings for use, he could hardly intend to return to his post in Lancashire. Waiting, therefore, till the play was over, he followed the white turban from the theatre and down the Strand to Chancery Lane, where it mounted to the top of an omnibus going eastward, and he followed. The Philosopher confessed that he had no thought of committing violence—even if he had been able—he was only steadily resolved to see where the black Daniel was going to bestow himself. On the 'bus they sat almost back to back, and the Philosopher could not but imagine that a powerful man might just twist himself round in his seat, put his arm about, and garrotte the head that wore the white turban, and abstract the large envelope from the inner pocket. Thus they rode eastward and still eastward, Daniel murmuring to himself without ceasing all the way. Somewhere in Whitechapel—the Philosopher could not tell where—the white turban descended from the 'bus, and the Philosopher followed. He followed along strange alleys by queer turnings, slippery and noisome, until he began to suspect that the white turban was aware it was followed; how it had become aware the Philosopher could not guess; but the Philosopher had never before tried to be a detective. The white turban twisted this way and that, and now and then drew up in a pause, when the Philosopher drew up, too, and caught the gleam of a bright eye from under the turban. At length the white turban disappeared into a doorway; the Philosopher moved carefully up to observe the number, when the white turban pounced out upon him, the hands of Daniel gripped his arms to his sides, and the voice of Daniel murmured: 'Ah, it is the old Guru! It is the sayer of wise things! It is the wise one himself alone without his disciple! I am regret to say that my entertainment is very little for a Guru. But with regards come to see where I have the dwelling.'

There was that in Daniel's eye and manner which hinted that his invitation was not to be refused; and the Philosopher, who was not a man of great physical courage, yielded to the gentle urgency and pressure of Daniel's muscular black hands, and went along with him, saying: 'Certainly; I will look at your dwelling.'

'Do you know what you should have done?' said Suffield, who was now marching up and down the room. 'You should have called a policeman, and given him in charge for being in possession of property of which he could not give a reasonable account. That would have nailed him.'

'But,' said the Philosopher, 'there was no policeman to be seen: it was a terrible savage region!'

'I mean,' said Suffield, 'you should have done that as soon as you left the theatre, instead of following him all the way to the Docks; that, I suppose, is whereabouts you were?'

'Not quite,' answered the Philosopher. 'But I should have denounced him to a man in blue at once—should I? I did not know,' said he despondently. 'I am not familiar with the methods of dealing with crime and its detection. And the whole business,' he added with a flash of virtuous indignation, 'was as smoke in the eyes and stench in the nostrils!'

'However,' said Suffield, 'go on wi' thy story.'

The Philosopher passed on, while Daniel guided him by the arm into a narrow court or alley. They went on, stumbling in darkness and dirt, until they arrived at a door above which was a small oil-lamp. Daniel lifted the catch and walked in, and the Philosopher to his amazement saw he was in a place like the fore-castle of a ship. The room was filled with a peculiar brown vapour or smoke, such as the Philosopher had never before seen, smelt, or tasted.

'Opium,' said Suffield.

'And that is just what it was, my dear sir,' said the Philosopher.

Daniel entered into converse in an unintelligible tongue with the Chinese master of the place, who came and bowed and grinned before the Philosopher, and said: 'Come; smokee pipee. Velly cheap; not velly dear!' The Philosopher protested that he did not wish to smoke a pipe of the noxious drug; that while thanking his 'friend' for the offer he would much rather not. But the Chinese master of the place insisted with Celestial politeness, and took the Philosopher by the sleeve to lead him along. The Philosopher resisted, and angrily remonstrated, while sundry dark heads with lack-lustre eyes lolled over the edge of certain bunks. At that he received a blow on the head, which made him drop, stunned: he believed the treacherous Daniel had dealt it.

'Humph!' exclaimed Suffield. 'And that accounts, I suppose, for the clout about your head. And you saw the Daniel Nathaniel no more. I thought that was to be the end!'

'But that, my dear sir,' said M'Fie, 'was not quite the end. I came to myself'—

'It was the end so far as Daniel was concerned,' said Suffield, still marching up and down. 'He had got rid of you. And you came to yourself, I'll be bound, with being made to swallow opium smoke or a bit of opium; and they kept you there sick and sleepy, and you did not get out of that for some time.'

'Now,' exclaimed the Philosopher, 'it is very clever of you to guess that; for that is just what occurred. The Celestial person made me smoke one, two pipes of his obnoxious preparation, and I could not leave the place till late in the afternoon of Sunday.'

'Sunday! Of course!' said Suffield. 'That was all arranged! The Daniel creature wanted to get away, and to make sure that you could not come and tell me or any one else that you had seen him until he had time to do something! Where can he have gone? Why didn't you let me know at once, my friend?'

'I thought, my dear sir,' answered the alarmed Philosopher, 'that you were still in Lancashire. I wrote to your son as soon as I got back to my lodgings; and then I came here to-day, thinking that peradventure you might have heard, and come back.'

'You wrote to George! And he knows then!

—if he's at home!—That rascal Daniel must be found, you know! I must go to the police!—You'd better come with me.'

They went out together at once, took a cab, and drove to Scotland Yard. The Detective-Inspector to whom they were introduced saw clearly the importance of the matter.

'The thing's not patented, you see,' said Suffield; 'and if it is made public, or if it gets into another manufacturer's hands, it means thousands of pounds loss to my business. So spend as you think necessary to find the black scoundrel.'

'You do not know yet,' asked the Inspector, 'if he has taken anything else?'

'I can't tell till I've seen my son, who has been managing the business. Where can the creature mean to go to?'

'Back to his own country, probably,' said the Inspector. 'But is it of any use his taking plans of machines there? He may have gone to the States; but Liverpool would have been better for that. Yet—haven't I heard that they are building cotton mills in Bombay now?'

'They are,' answered Suffield; 'and depend on it that's where he's gone!'

'Very likely,' said the Inspector; 'but we must look all round.'

Suffield returned to Rutland Gate to eat his lunch with little appetite—and to tell his wife what had happened—to get a few things packed into a portmanteau and to take the train for Lancashire.

HOW TO JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY.

In these days of keen competition for employment, when men of moderate means scarcely know what to do with their sons, it is surprising to find how comparatively few parents are acquainted with the rules governing the admission of candidates to the public services. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why boys who display no very strong bent for any particular calling so frequently follow in their fathers' footsteps. Sometimes the sons of well-known professional men do succeed in the same line; more commonly they attain but moderate success; but it is indisputable that young Englishmen very often follow the parental lead simply because Paterfamilias has neglected, until too late in the day, to study the rules of entry to other professions. How often one finds, for example, that a military officer puts several sons into the army, that lawyers' sons are trained to be lawyers, and that a clergyman's sons drift into the Church; and how very, very frequently in after-life the unsuccessful man has cause to regret his father's lack of imagination. According to Mr Beerbohm-Tree, this desirable quality is highly developed in actors, yet it is notorious that actors' children usually take to the stage. Now, there is at least one profession open to young English lads which is not, strictly speaking, overcrowded. We allude to the Royal Navy; and although we may fairly claim to be the greatest maritime power the world has ever seen, there can be no doubt that universal ignorance prevails among civilians as to the rules of entry to this attractive service. Our object in the following paper is to give parents

some authentic and definite information on this subject.

When we hear that young hopeful is going to adopt a naval career, we usually assume that his ambition is to become a British admiral—perhaps even a second Nelson. This is indeed a very laudable ambition; but whilst there are only a few admirals—at all events on the active list—there are several other branches of the service open to lads with an inclination for a sea-life. The combatant or executive branch of the navy affords greater opportunities for distinction than the non-combatant; but although there are more prizes in the former, there are also more blanks; and many a soured old lieutenant, with no prospect of further promotion, has wished, ere now, that he had adopted one of the other branches of his profession. These other branches are as follows: The Royal Marines, Engineering branch, Accountant department, Chaplains' department, Naval Instructors' department, and Medical branch.

The Combatant branch.—Every young man who aspires to become a combatant naval officer is required to pass an examination for admission to the Cadets' training-ship at Dartmouth. This system was established in 1859; but it is noteworthy that the system of open competition—introduced into the army on the abolition of purchase by Mr Gladstone—has never been fully extended to the navy. The entry of naval cadets, for example, is regulated by strictly limited competition, and this is effected by issuing nominations. The Admiralty are now entering about one hundred and twenty cadets annually, and this number is likely to be maintained for some years to come, owing to the deficiency of lieutenants. The examinations of nominated candidates are held twice a year, and not more than three candidates are usually permitted to compete for each vacancy. As may be imagined, these nominations are eagerly sought for, but often too late by parents who are unacquainted with the rules. We must not pause here to criticise the system under which the nominations are bestowed, but cannot refrain from stating that it is distinctly open to criticism and unlikely to last many years longer. It is sufficient for our purpose to explain that, with a few exceptions, all the nominations are in the gift of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The individual members of the Admiralty Board have a few at their disposal; whilst every admiral is allowed one nomination on his appointment to a command, and every captain can also claim one nomination within six months of assuming his first command. If one has no connection with the navy, the only chance of securing a nomination for a cadetship is to make early application to the First Lord of the Admiralty, or to enlist the sympathies of some influential friend. It must be admitted, however, that this branch of the navy is still a close preserve.

Candidates for the 'Britannia' are required to pass the examination between the ages of thirteen and fourteen and a half years; and some special preparation—in other words, cramming—is invariably required. The test is not a difficult one; but as there are not fewer than three candidates for each vacancy, it is necessary to obtain more than merely qualifying marks. From six months to a year's cramming is usually needed for an

average youth whose previous education has not been absolutely neglected; but even clever boys should be sent to one of the crammers for a few months. It would be beyond the scope of this article to give any particulars of the subsequent examinations to be passed by a cadet before he is fairly launched on his naval career. We need merely state that although a naval officer has many tests to pass before he attains the rank of Lieutenant, these examinations present few obstacles to young men of average ability, owing to the excellent system of training.

We may now pass on to the rules governing admission to the other branches of the navy.

The Royal Marines.—This is a distinct and also a combatant branch of the naval service, and although the officers are virtually soldiers, they are under the control of the Admiralty, and are paid out of the naval votes. The Royal Marines are divided into two separate corps, the Artillery and the Light Infantry, the officers of the former receiving special training in artillery-work. The Royal Marines affords a very good career, and is much less expensive than the Army, only a small allowance being needed by officers in the junior ranks. But we have no space to draw any comparisons between the advantages of the different branches of the navy, and must assume some knowledge on these points on the part of our readers. Candidates for the Royal Marine Artillery are required to pass the same examination as those for the Royal Artillery, and this is the only branch of the navy, except the Engineers, which is open to general competition. Candidates must compete between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years. The number of vacancies rarely exceeds six in each year; but although this appears to indicate keen competition, the bulk of the successful candidates elect to enter the Royal Artillery in preference to the Marines. Still, the test is a very severe one, for, as we have explained, the standard of knowledge is precisely the same as that required for admission to Woolwich. The successful marine artillery candidates are subsequently trained at the Royal Naval College, and at the naval gunnery and torpedo schools. They do not go through Woolwich at all.

Candidates for the Royal Marine Light Infantry are also entered by open competition, and are required to compete with the Sandhurst candidates. This system ensures the entry of young men of the same mental capacity as the future officers of the infantry of the line. Hitherto, the limits of age have been between seventeen and twenty; but this summer the maximum has been reduced by one year. Candidates for this branch of the navy are required to be not less than five feet five inches in height. The number of vacancies offered half-yearly has varied of late between four and ten, according to the flow of promotion in the corps. The successful candidates are gazetted to the three Marine Divisions at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Plymouth, and are usually attached to the same division throughout, except when serving afloat. The two branches of the Royal Marines make up a force of fourteen thousand officers and men.

The Naval Engineering branch.—The entry to this branch of the navy, which has greatly in-

creased in importance of late years, is regulated by open competition; but the Admiralty reserve the right of nominating candidates for one-third of the vacancies. These nominated candidates are admitted if successful in obtaining qualifying marks, and are not required to compete, in the ordinary sense of the term. The nominations are exclusively bestowed upon the sons of naval or military officers killed or injured in the public service. Three nominations are also offered to the sons of colonial gentlemen, with the object of tightening the bonds between the mother-country and her colonies, and bringing about what Mr Morley might describe as a naval 'union of hearts.' Including these nominated candidates, from thirty to thirty-four engineer students are entered annually, and the competition is about five to one. The age of admission is between fourteen and seventeen, and cramming is considered necessary, although no technical subjects are included in the examination. The students are educated at Keyham College, near Devonport, and here they remain between four and six years, according to their progress. During this course of training, parents are required to pay forty pounds per annum. A student's outfit costs about twenty pounds; and the total fees, including washing, amount to under seventy pounds. In return for this moderate outlay, the students receive a first-rate technical education; so thorough, indeed, that it has been found necessary to guard against the possibility of parents subsequently withdrawing their sons from the navy with a view of making them civil engineers.

There is also another way of becoming a naval engineer, and for this method of entry candidates are eligible up to twenty-three years of age. They are required to pass an examination for direct admission as assistant-engineers, but are not accepted unless they have previously undergone three years' training in an approved engineering establishment. About ten such appointments are offered annually; but very few engineers enter the navy through this channel, very possibly because the regulations on this head are imperfectly understood.

Medical branch.—The rules governing the admission of surgeons to the navy may be briefly dismissed. The candidate must be fully qualified to practise medicine and surgery in the United Kingdom, and must be under twenty-eight years of age. The exigencies of competition have, however, led to the necessity of imposing further tests, the vacancies being awarded in order of merit by the examining Board. The competition varies so much that it would be difficult to estimate accurately the average number of candidates. In 1888, only seven surgeons were entered; but the average number of vacancies has been twenty-two during the past four years. The medical officers of the navy receive higher pay than the combatant and engineer officers of corresponding rank, and the regulations governing retirement are framed on a liberal scale. This is chiefly due to the influence of the medical profession on shore, which, some years ago, successfully resorted to the expedient of boycotting the navy, until the Admiralty were forced to make concessions. After eight years' service, a naval surgeon has the option of retiring on a gratuity of one thousand pounds; and after

twenty years' service, he can claim a pension of £365 per annum. Higher pensions than this can, however, be obtained by additional service, and by officers who rise to the top of their profession.

Naval Chaplains.—There are probably thousands of struggling clergymen in this country who would be glad to join the navy as chaplains, and it is certain that a great number of applications are received by the Admiralty when a vacancy occurs. The superabundant supply of candidates is no doubt partially attributable to the fact that no examination has to be passed, although perhaps this would be the fairest way of deciding the claims of clerical applicants. There are only ninety-six naval chaplains, including the Chaplain of the Fleet; but during the past ten years we find that, on an average, five fresh appointments have been gazetted. These posts are in the gift of the Admiralty, and a good deal of interest is required to obtain a chaplaincy. The pay of a naval chaplain begins at twelve shillings a day, and increases to four hundred pounds per annum; whilst those who are also qualified to act as naval instructors receive considerably higher pay. Like all other officers of the navy, chaplains are entitled to pensions; but no pension is granted for less than ten years' service, except in cases of injury sustained on duty. It may be interesting to mention that naval chaplains formerly ranked with rear-admirals, although the pay was no higher than at present—but that nowadays they do not take rank at all, the regulations merely specifying that they are to be treated with the respect due to their sacred calling.

Naval Instructors.—The duties of a Naval Instructor are to instruct the midshipmen in sea-going vessels in mathematics and navigation; whilst a few are employed on board the cadets' training-ship, and also as lecturers at the Royal Naval College. Of late years, the policy of the Admiralty has been to combine the duties of chaplain and naval instructor in sea-going vessels; and the plan has worked so well, that it will no doubt be continued. More than half the chaplains have qualified as instructors; but a small number of naval instructors not in holy orders will always be required for the 'Britannia' and the Naval College. Several of the original naval instructors have become chaplains, just as the chaplains have qualified as instructors, although it may be considered that this is not a responsibility to be as lightly undertaken as the teaching of middies. Candidates for the position of naval instructor must be under thirty-five years of age, and are required to pass rather a severe examination in mathematics, Latin, and French; and the vacancies are offered for open competition. The successful candidates are subsequently sent to the Naval College to study navigation and a few other technical subjects, and are then subjected to a final examination. The pay of a naval instructor is the same as that of a chaplain, and pensions are granted on the same scale. The duties are light, and the naval instructor enjoys the status of a commissioned officer; but capable young schoolmasters are not greatly attracted, as a rule, by this branch of the navy, which has little beyond a fair pension to recommend it.

The Accountant or Paymaster branch.—The

officers of the Accountant branch are entered as assistant clerks, under the same system of limited competition that governs the admission of naval cadets—that is to say, nominations are required. The number of nominations issued by the Admiralty varies from year to year; but about four candidates are allowed to compete for each vacancy. Candidates are eligible for the examination between sixteen and eighteen years of age, and of late years about eighteen vacancies have been offered annually. The examination is not a difficult one, apart from the competition; but it is essential for candidates to be well grounded in arithmetic, elementary mathematics, and composition, and also in French. This branch of the navy can be entered at smaller expense than any other, and although the pay is not very good in the junior ranks, the Paymasters are well paid, and can retire on six hundred pounds a year after twenty-seven years' service in that rank.

In this paper no attempt has been made to do more than briefly describe the general rules governing the admission of officers to the several branches of the navy; but it is hoped even those few particulars will be of some service to parents with sons on their hands. Fuller particulars can always be obtained by application to the Secretary to the Admiralty; whilst much useful information will also be found in the quarterly issue of the 'Navy List.' It is perhaps scarcely necessary to add that candidates for every branch are required to pass a strict medical examination, and that robust health and normal physical powers are as essential to a future surgeon, paymaster, or engineer as to a midshipman or an admiral. To be sure, many officers lose their health, and sometimes even a limb, during service; but good physique at the outset is a *sine quâ non*. If Lord Nelson had lived half a century later, our greatest naval hero would probably have been disqualified by a medical Board, in which case many important events might have happened which need not here be discussed.

CHARLES GLEIG.

ELSIE.

CHAPTER II.

As time went on, I found myself thinking as much of young St John as of Elsie. He had come into the peace of our village life like a dragon-fly in a garden, giving one a sense of disquiet, which the butterflies and bees never do. I speak for myself, for every one else said how quiet and nice he was. Before a week was over, half the women in the place were in love with him, and I didn't wonder at it, though I got to hate his suave ways and his marvellous blue eyes. I knew which way they were turning, and that Elsie had looked into them, and had caught something from them which was altering her daily. He acted indeed like a sun on her: she seemed to grow taller, more queenly: her eyes took a soft dreaminess to them, and in the curves of her lips there was a richer swell.

For her sake I ought to have been glad that love had come to her with its creative touch, making the world all new again, and hallowing it with sweeter meanings, which before she had

never known. But all the while I had misgivings when I thought of the vicar's pride of birth—he was an Hon. Rev.—and the possibility that the young graduate was only butterflying after all. I misjudged him, as I came to know afterwards; but jealousy had twisted me, and my thoughts worked 'out of the true,' like a wheel on a bent axle.

But as far as Elsie was concerned she seemed happy enough, till the day after their picnic in the park, when something occurred which made my heart ache for her. I thought it was coming when the vicar passed on his way to the mill-house, for there was anger in his face and a hard uncharity quite foreign to it. In the space of twenty minutes, and while I was putting on my coat to leave, he reappeared, and with a lift of his hat came away. As he passed now his look was changed, and there was a beam of satisfaction in it, with a dash of sadness which set me all agog to know what it might mean.

I could only surmise, however, and wonder painfully how much it might concern the weal of Elsie. I was doing so at my fishing that night—for all taste for study had left me—when Henry came by with a spring in his step and a tune in his head, which he hummed gaily as he passed on his way to the mill. Some black-thorns screened me from the path, and I watched him till he disappeared behind the granary. The cherry orchard was beyond, and there Elsie, no doubt, was awaiting him. Here a fish gave a tug at the rod, and I landed a perch. I threw the line out anew, but couldn't keep still, through thinking of the tryst in the orchard; so I put up the tackle and went home.

Next day about two the Nemeton 'bus, instead of passing straight on, turned up the lane to the vicarage. It drove by presently with the two St Johns in it, and on its roof were three trunks marked in big white letters, 'H. ST J.' Jem had been repairing the millwheel since the morning, and crossed the road as the 'bus turned the corner.

'Sunmat wrong wi' young Missie this marnin', guv'nor,' said he. 'Her passed down brook-side just now, wi' t' collie, white as a daisy, an' arl red about the eyes, as if her'd bin cryin'. Th' old ledly's arl right too. Thought perhaps her'd had another fit and frightened the gell. That wheel o' theirs won't turn much longer, I'm thinkin'—it's gone reg'lar rotten, it has. Seems to me there ain't too much money movin' there, Mester Crannock.'

I went on with my planing, whistling a lame tune to myself, till, as thought joined thought, and one thing fitted into another, like mortise and tenon, my bile got the better of me, and I threw the plane down, telling Jem to jump into the sawpit. When we had done, and made lengths of a good-sized tree, Jem climbed out and wiped his face with a slow stare at me, which set me smiling; for quietness had come to me, and after three hours' distilling of it, I had found a soul of good in the evil that had happened. I told Jem to go home, and soon after went myself, and sat up till twelve o'clock that night book-reading.

Then I walked out in the stillness, and yielding to the inward pulling I could feel, went over to the millhouse, and gazed up at the little leaded

window of the room where Elsie had slept from a little one. I mounted the stile of the croft, and, under a tree-shadow which the moon made, sat listening to the weir, and castle-building on the ruins of her lost happiness. A little click came athwart it all, and I could see the casement swing outwards, and there was Elsie among the ivy, her hair all loose, and falling in brown waves on the whiteness of her bed dress. But her face was as white as it, as she looked up at the moon, her eyes glistening in its light like two dewdrops on a jonquil. There was a distraught eerie look in them which gave me an inward aching that she should take it so hard. Then she leaned her chin on her hands and gazed straight before her with a set stare. Presently her thoughts moved her lips, and became sounds in the stillness.

The broken sentences would look nothing on paper; nor is it for me to write down the doings of a maiden's soul when it comes forth in the solitude, thinking no one nigh to hear its soft plaints and its moanings. But as I listened, my head bowed, and my hope died away that I could ever turn such love to me, now that its tendrils had so wound round another's image. As well ask the brook to flow back from the river, or the flowers to look away from the sun in the morning. A cloud came between us and the moon, and when it had passed, Elsie's face was no longer in the ivy.

CHAPTER III.

But time brings its own heart-case to those who will submit to its healing, and not nurse their wound as some mothers do dead babes. It went hard with Elsie for some months, as I could tell by the looks of her; but gradually her sick-visiting—to which she had turned, as sore hearts will—brought peace to her, and some of the roundness of feature which she had lost. The life took her out of herself, and gave play to all that was finest in her nature; so that, as time went on and she ripened to fuller womanhood, the beauty she had become less physical, and more the expression of a fine spirituality. It was not saintliness exactly—though Farmer Waghorn said she was an angel in woman's gear—for it was something her violin and her reading had given her as much as her good-doing. She was in that state when love and renunciation, working together, force the soul into sight of higher issues, towards which it grows because it must, or faint. I didn't think it then, but I do now.

I was one of those who shared in this larger life, though for a long time I felt that I was no more to her, as we walked together from church, or met on the brook-side, than any other son of Adam with whom she exchanged words as neighbourly. But gradually she became more careless of the reserve behind which worked her inner nature, and we grew more visible one to the other, though I strove always to hide my secret for fear of frightening her off, and she said nothing of hers, appearing seldom to think of it but only of what we talked on.

Then hope grew big within me; and I worked on with a will and a good heart, careless of the meaning in her great wistful eyes, or of the weird throbbing melodies which came sometimes

from her violin as she played in the twilight across the soft murmur of the weir.

She was playing so one June evening as I lingered by the granary on my way to the brook-side—which was my favourite walk, because, perhaps, it was hers—when Dobson, the mill foreman, joined me. Something in his face made me look again at him.

'Some strange talk at "Crown" to-night, Garge,' said he, walking on beside me with eyes straight in front of him.

'Do they all look as sour as you on it?' I asked, ill-humouredly, for I wanted to be alone just then.

'Look sour, do I?—Well, I ain't that: I'm downright sorry, lad. One o' Lawyer Sharp's men is there, half-seas over, an' he's let it arl out. There's goin' to be a meetin' o' creditors. It's Higgins's doin'—the corn factor. He put in a writ; an' the others got wind of it, an' they arl swooped down like a lot o' kites on a lame sparrer. If he'd on'y bided his time a bit, there'd a' bin no harm done: there's plenty o' money out, on'y it's a bit tight.'

I stood still in surprise, and he stopped too, and across the momentary silence came the wail of Elsie's fiddle.

'Do you mean that there's money enough out to pay all debts?' said I, stepping on again.

'I'm pretty sure on't,' said Dobson. 'Higgins on'y did it 'cos her refused to give him a bill o' sale on the mill. He's had his wall eyes on th' old place these ten years or more. He's for pushing things to bankruptcy now, so as he may buy it up and run it hisself. Rawlins thinks so, and so do I.'

Rawlins was Mrs Onslow's clerk and manager, and I asked Dobson where he was. He told me, and I sought him out. Half an hour later I was in Mrs Onslow's parlour. She rose, in her quiet lady-like way, with some surprise in her face, which always had in it the half-dazed look of a confirmed epileptic. Saying nothing of what I had heard, I asked her at once whether I might put four hundred pounds in the business—three-fourths payable at once, and the remainder in a month. Higgins's debt was two hundred and sixty pounds. I watched her closely while the offer worked its way well into her mind. She was a proud woman, and unwilling to state how things were. At last she said—and I remember the shake in her voice—that she would accept the offer subject to her and my lawyer's approval, after conferring together on the value of the business.

'That'll be all right, ma'am,' said I heartily. 'I'll go to Nemoton in the morning and see the pair of them. Maybe you'd like to send some written instructions by me.'

She took the hint, and started to write a line or two to Mr Sharp; but seeing her hand was unsteady and something trickle down on to the paper, I took my leave hastily, saying I would call again in an hour's time. I did so; and Elsie and her mother were there together, waiting with glad faces to see me. It was the happiest night of my life; and when sleeping-time came, I hardly got a wink through thinking of Elsie's smiles, and the kiss of her hand she allowed me to take when I held it in mine for the parting.

The upshot was that Higgins was paid, and the other creditors argued into good sense at a private meeting we called. And when the mill-wheel had turned another three months or so things were all safe again, and I—I was engaged to Elsie.

Ay, it is true; and I was the blithest man in Norton Priors or anywhere thereabouts. How it happened would take too long to tell, and, moreover, I have little heart to do it, as I look back now and recall the foolishness of my Paradise. It was nothing else; for all the while it was not me she loved at all, but Henry St John, who had taken orders, and avowed himself a celibate, as some do. But she had given him up, as I well knew; and there was enough affection in her manner to make me believe that I had won my way into her heart, and not only into its vestibule. She was a gentle loving thing to all about her; and I believe now that she took me only out of kindness, seeing me so far gone that she hadn't the courage to say nay to my pleading. Then Mrs Onslow helped it along, having taken a fancy to me, and seeing in the match, perhaps, good likelihood of happiness to Elsie. I was to go and live at the mill-house, and after a time to leave off wheelwrighting and manage the business, Rawlins having grown a bit old and 'dotty,' as we said in our parts. And so it was planned out, and love shone all about it, and I was no more capable of seeing spot or blur in the picture than the sun is of seeing darkness. Yet it was only a vision and a vain thing.

SOME NEW ZEALAND PECULIARITIES.

For so small a country it is remarkable what a variety of climates New Zealand presents, and how gradually the one merges into the other. In the extreme south—say in Stewart Island, or round Invercargill—we have the four seasons, in one of which the enthusiastic Scot may even enjoy 'the Roaring Game.' But as one proceeds northwards the climate becomes gradually milder and milder, until, in the district around the Bay of Islands, we have an almost tropical climate, with only two seasons—dry and rainy—no snow, no frost, but a land for the orange and citron, the banana and the guava. Yet all this variety falls within a very limited range of temperature. There are no extremes; and, in truth, winter is a name rather than a reality for all the North Island and the South Island too. The cause of this tempered climate is due to its configuration and position. It resembles Italy in shape—long and very narrow; stretching north and south a length of eleven hundred miles; whilst its extreme breadth is no more than one hundred and forty miles. To project such a country in the northern hemisphere, it would stretch, say, from the centre of France over Spain and the Mediterranean into the middle of Morocco. On account of its narrowness, no part is distant more than seventy-five miles from the sea; and it lies out far in the bosom of the Pacific Ocean.

The ocean swell that ceaselessly dashes itself against the east coast can travel with an unbroken course more than four thousand miles from the coast of South America; while on the

west side Australia is the nearest mass of land—twelve hundred miles off. It is therefore essentially a maritime country, and it is this surrounding expanse of water that tempers so delightfully its climate and supplies it with such abundant moisture, that it compares favourably with Australia, where often man and beast languish under the sweltering, scorching heat and long droughts that dry up vegetation until it is ready to fall into dust. It is never blighted by land-winds such as blow from Africa upon Italy, or even from the Continent upon Great Britain. It is pre-eminently a land of coolness and greenness, where grass and bush all the year round wear a living vivid green. So mild and equable a climate as this allows the colonials, one might say, to live an outdoor life. Even in the night-time they can scarcely be said to be confined, as open windows and the slight framework of their wooden houses give free access to fresh air.

Nowhere can one obtain more beneficial conditions for maintaining or recovering health. The tables of flourishing life-insurance companies attest this general healthiness, and a story widely reported illustrates it. A judge of a rather testy but withal humorous disposition, who had presided over a large district in Otago for seventeen years, was asked by official authorities to make out certain returns about the mortality of the district. His answer was that there was no death-rate for his district, for during the past seventeen years there had occurred only two deaths, and these were of strangers, one of whom was murdered, and the other hanged for the murder.

This isolated position of New Zealand has, however, this manifest disadvantage, that the colonist has to go far to find a market for his produce. Yet science has to a great extent bridged this difficulty, and enables him to compete profitably in the home-market. Its application to practical purposes has no more remarkable instance than the process of refrigeration applied to preserving meat. All the mail steamers are now fitted up with chambers which can hold from twenty to thirty thousand carcasses. The Gear Freezing Company allowed for a small sum—less than one pound—the privilege of sending a frozen carcass to one's home-friends. It was greatly taken advantage of, particularly at Christmas time, so as to provide the Christmas dinner with the novelty of 'lamb' instead of the ordinary turkey.

Again, this complete isolation of New Zealand affords undoubtedly an explanation of many of its peculiarities in animal and plant life. No animal of the larger type is found in New Zealand. Indeed, the only native quadruped—and even that is doubtful—is a small rat called 'kiori' by the Maoris. This rat and two kinds of bats are the only representatives of land mammals. On the other hand, there are a good many kinds of moths, butterflies, and gnats, but only two insects. It teems with such life on the borders of the bush. The writer well remembers how one hot summer evening, when the windows were thrown open, the moth tribe thronging in, heaped themselves upon the light until it was stifled—a holocaust celebrated by the trumpeting 'ping' of half-a-dozen mosquitoes. The only other active and therefore vicious insect beside

the mosquito is the sandfly; but its activity is confined to the daytime.

Native birds are very interesting, though, like the Maoris themselves, they are becoming rarer and rarer. The moa is already supposed to be extinct, and we know it only from its vast skeleton and egg, to be seen in the colonial museums. There are, however, still existing two birds of the moa kind, though on a diminutive scale: these are the weka and kiwi—both provided with only the most rudimentary form of wings. The weka is an intensely curious bird, with more oddities and greater knowingness than even Barnaby Rudge's raven. But the best loved of all is the 'tui.' Once one has heard its clear liquid bell-tones, on the fall and rise of which one's very soul hangs, it will never be forgotten. Young New Zealand calls it the 'Parson Bird,' by reason of the white spot on its breast, representing, as it were, the cleric choker. Besides these, there are a few varieties of hawk and parrot kind.

Its reptiles are confined to a few varieties of the lizard, and these are quite harmless, although held in great terror by the Maoris. Among all these animals there is no one dangerous to man. Perhaps exception should be made in the case of the katipo, a small dark spider with a red spot, the bite of which is said to be highly venomous. It is very rare, and we never had the satisfaction of falling in with it.

But surely the most curious of all objects is that which the Maoris call 'aweto.' One is uncertain whether to call it an animal or a plant. In the first stage of its existence it is simply a caterpillar about three or four inches in length, and always found in connection with the rata tree, a kind of flowering myrtle. It appears that when it reaches full growth, it buries itself two or three inches underground, where, instead of undergoing the ordinary chrysalis process, it becomes gradually transformed into a plant, which exactly fills the body, and shoots up at the neck to a height of eight or ten inches. This plant resembles in appearance a diminutive bulrush; and the two, animal and plant, are always found inseparable. One is apt to relegate it to the domain of imagination, among dragons and mermaids; but then its existence and nature have been accepted by the late Frank Buckland. How it propagates its species is a mystery. One traveller, after describing its dual nature, calmly states that it is the grub of the night butterfly. If so, then the grub must also become a butterfly, or what becomes of the species? One would be ready to suppose that the grub does really so, and that some fungus finds the cast-off slough congenial quarters for its growth. But as far as present observation, the grub never becomes a butterfly, but is changed in every case into a plant.

This singular deficiency in animal economy furnishes the Maoris with a plausible excuse for their past cannibalistic practices. We must suppose that the absence is due to the isolation of these islands, for there are no natural conditions antagonistic to animal life. On the contrary, nowhere has acclimatisation been so successful as in New Zealand. All kinds of animals from the house-fly up to the horse have been introduced, and have flourished and multiplied in an almost miraculous manner. Early settlers

tell us that the few pigs set loose by Captain Cook at Gisborne had increased to such an extent as to overrun the whole of the North Island, and were eagerly hunted by the Maoris. It is well known how the country's permanent prosperity depends upon its unique adaptability for raising the sheep, cow, and horse. You can now get a good riding hack for three or four pounds.

All home birds are quite common—too common for the farmer's liking. Though most of the rivers have been stocked with trout, there has been a hitch in the introduction of the salmon. The ova are hatched, and the young fry, full of vigour and life, make their way to the sea; but they never return. What becomes of them is uncertain.

The bee has had a wonderful history. The whole country swarms with them; yet, according to Mr Froude's account, they are all the offspring of two hives taken out by Cotton of Christchurch. It is told that he was accustomed to keep them in his sitting-room, and they had become so attached and familiar with his person, that a squad of them used to attend him at lectures and chapel. However this may be, we know from personal experience that the rate at which they multiply is marvellous. In a township of Wellington, a colonist had got a chance swarm about the beginning of the season, and by the end he had several swarms from this single hive. In the following season they simply poured forth until all available boxes and barrels about the steading were exhausted, and then swarm after swarm was allowed to take flight. These would find a habitat in the bush, which is rapidly becoming as rich in stores of honey as the prairies and backwoods of America. Indeed, bee-hunting would be quite profitable, were not honey so plentiful and cheap.

The acclimatisation of animals in New Zealand has not been without some curious changes in the structure and habits. All of them seem to breed oftener and to attain a much larger size. The average weight of the sheep is sixty-eight pounds, double that of the home-sheep, and its fleece is twice as large. Trout are often caught more than thirty pounds, and they seem to take as well to sea-water as to fresh. Many birds that lived on insects in the home-country have become quite destructive to the colonist's crops. The lark here often sings during the night, and has become so indolent that it perches upon the fence whilst it sings. This change of natural instinct has been shown in a curious manner in the case of the kea, a native bird. It is a common parrot, green and brown in colour, and, until some years ago, a strict vegetarian. All at once it developed a strong taste for the fat that surrounds the sheep's kidneys. It attacks the live animal, and tearing open with its strong bill the side of the helpless sheep, it gorges itself, and then leaves the animal to die.

The glory of New Zealand is not its hot springs, with terraces; not the wild and weird scenery of its sounds and highlands. These are certainly grand; but the unique wonder is its 'bush.' And, reader, if you desire to behold this wonder, you must make haste, for fire and axe are making sad havoc, and in a few years naught will be left but unsightly charred stumps. But let us hope at least that ere its disappearance

some poet will arise to sing its grandeur and beauty, and to give articulation to the mysterious sighs and sounds that issue from its depths. Take your stand upon this grassy hillock, that has long ago been cleared; and, lifting your eyes northward, you behold a sea of foliage with no very bright colours, but dark, cool, and vividly green. Starting from the bottom of the hillock, it surges onwards until, some leagues away, it beats against a hill-range; but this forms no barrier to its onward progress, for its heights are sealed; and this forest, I may tell you, unbroken save by a small clearing called Norsewood, a Scandinavian settlement, merges into what is termed 'the Forty Mile Bush'—a piece of bushland well known to stagecoach travellers. This bush is quite unlike that of Australia. It is Australian bush plus a dense jungle impervious to wind and sunshine. Mighty pines of many kinds, the rata, totara, rimu, and others, raise aloft their heads from one to two hundred feet. The space between their trunks is closely packed by festoons of creeping plants, wild vines, supplejacks, and other parasitic vegetation. There, too, you see the graceful fern-trees raising aloft their slender dark stems from twenty to forty feet; you see the long sword-blade leaves of the nikau, the only palm of New Zealand; and most beautiful of all, and certainly the most characteristic feature of New Zealand forest-land, the tuft-topped cabbage-tree. These three plants give a peculiar tropical look to New Zealand scenery, and at once impress the immigrant with the remembrance how he is in a strange and distant land—a fact which otherwise one is apt to forget in New Zealand.

Now turn and look southwards. What a different scene! Naught but a waste of charred stump and blackened trunks, with here and there a tree standing, grimly raising its blasted arms to the heavens, as it were in condemnation of man's desecration and vandalism. A more desolate and disheartening sight one can nowhere see! Yes; that is what the settler accomplishes with his two instruments—axe and fire. But you may be assured that he looks upon the scene from a far different point of view, and not without cause, because it is a herculean toil to attack that impenetrable bush, and requires a stout heart with a vast amount of energy and hopefulness to carry the clearing operation to a successful issue. The bush-feller is full of expedients to lessen his labour. He makes use, for instance, of the larger trees to knock over others in their vicinity half cut through; and then he attacks the tree, not at the root, but as high as he can reach, so that stumps four or five feet in height are left. When the felled timber is thoroughly dry, he sets fire to it; and if he gets a successful 'burn,' when the rain comes on he sows his grass seed, and in a few days the tender grass springs up in a marvellous way out of the fertilising ashes, and by the end of winter his land is ready to be 'stocked.' The bush-land once cleared, compensates him for his toil and hardship. He has secured a present competence and an ample field for the employment of his family, however numerous. Then each year adds to the value of his property.

In the best of communities there is always found more than a sufficiency of black-sheep, and

New Zealand is no exception. But there has recently been a great diminution in the number of criminal offences, so much so, that many are quite sanguine that crime shall die out altogether or become very rare. The most thoughtful ascribe this result to the influence of their thorough educational system. The experiment of a 'First Offenders Act' was first tried in New Zealand, and though laughed and jeered at as a piece of absurdity and sentimentalism, its results, both from an economic and moral point of view, have been highly satisfactory, and now the mother-country is following in the footsteps of her child. Occasionally, indeed, a Cassandra voice is heard denouncing the rowdyism, or, as they style it, the 'larrikinism,' that is becoming more and more prevalent throughout the country. The young colonist, overfed on meat and 'flown with insolence' and high spirits, if not with wine, is apt to become a source of annoyance to his neighbour and to those who come in contact with him; but for the most part these irrepressible high spirits of his find an outlet in the more violent form of recreation, such as football, rowing, horse-racing, and the like.

New Zealand is the workman's paradise, where the four eights, so longed for by radical reformers, are a realised fact. It does not, on the other hand, present many facilities for making a fortune; nor do the colonists desire to have amongst them millionaires or billionaires; but what they want is steady progress without poverty; and let us hope that they may have it. It is true that that crying evil of modern civilisation, centralisation, has already begun to show its evil effects in 'the four colonial cities.' Men will cling to the town, preferring the enjoyments of the bar and cheap theatre to solid independence up the country. Politicians and municipal authorities encourage the evil by finding employment for these 'loafers.' We remember seeing a squad of these so-called unemployed in Dunedin. They were getting four shillings and sixpence a day, and it was currently reported that they were going out on strike for an increase. Yet the country is simply crying out for an able-bodied class, either as occupiers of their own land or as hired labourers; for it is the men who can wield the pick and shovel that have the ball at their feet.

PURVEYANCE.

EVERY year, on the anniversary of the birthday of the Prince of Wales, a gathering of some two hundred of the 'Royal Warrant-holders' takes place at one of the principal London restaurants, in order to loyally celebrate the happy event. Such a gathering together of those who enjoy the privilege of holding the 'Royal Warrant of Purveyance' affords a striking contrast to the condition of things which existed, in regard to the purveyance of the royal household, prior to the period of Charles II., in whose reign the old and pernicious system of purveyance received its death-blow.

Purveyance, or 'pourveyance' as it was termed in the middle ages, signifies the providing of necessaries for the sovereign and his or her family

by buying the commodities at an appraised value in preference to all others, and even without the owners' consent. To trace its origin is no easy task. Suffice it to say that there may be found many biblical references to a system of 'tribute,' an operation which would seem to have a somewhat close connection with purveyance; an organisation introduced, no doubt, by the Romans, and so handed down to their successors. The subject affords but little interest until the reign of Edward III. is reached. An amusing incident, however, occurring as far back as the reign of King Edgar, as told by Chauncey in his *History of Herts*, is retold here in order to show the cunning practices resorted to by royalty in those early days.

It would seem that, except by special charter, the inmates of the monasteries, in common with the rest of the king's subjects, were not exempt from purveyance; thus, they were frequently liable to the visits of royalty and its retinue, such visits being considered as part of the system of purveyance. The Abbey of St Albans had, we are told, a large lake adjoining it, to which the king, with his no small troop of retainers, made frequent visits for the purpose of fishing. After satisfying themselves with sport, the king and his followers invariably made themselves the guests of the Abbey. These frequent visits becoming inconvenient to the inmates of the Abbey, the wily Abbot, in order to rid himself of such troublesome guests, adopted the plan of draining the pool, under the pretence of extending the Abbey, which from that time forth had no attraction for royalty.

To return to the period of Edward III. We find the office of purveyor to have been one exercised with much oppression, so much so, indeed, as to necessitate continual applications to the king for redress, and, as a result, the passing of numerous Acts of Parliament to restrain the abuses complained of. We are told that, as a response to some of the appeals, he changed the title of the much-abused office to that of *Acheteur*, or buyer. The new title does not appear to have lasted very long, nor does it in itself seem to have been a remedy for the evils that existed; but the change was followed by a certain amount of reform—that is to say, regulations were framed by which one of the king's household was appointed to inquire into the conduct of the *acheteurs*; and if they took more than they delivered into the royal larder, and did not pay for what they received—errors not infrequently committed—from the people, they were to forfeit their lives.

Burke, in a speech in Parliament on the proposed reformation of the king's household, seems to have had a pretty clear conception of the character of these officers, whom he described as 'sallying forth under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, inspiring terror, and finding a flying and hiding country.' These officers not only had power to raise food for the royal household, but the carriages and horses of the subject, however inconvenient it might be to the owner, were likewise liable to be impressed into the king's service at a 'fixed price.' Even the ships of merchants arriving in port laden with wine were not exempt from visits of the king's pur-

veyor. We are told also that this officer had the right of choosing two hogsheads of wine—no doubt he chose the best—for a payment of twenty shillings for each, with the option of taking more if he chose at an appraised value. A fishmonger pursuing his trade in this reign was precluded, by royal command, from going out of the City of London to purchase fish until the king's purveyor should have first made his purveyance for the king.

Such was the condition of things in the years of Edward III.'s reign, in which many Acts were passed with the view of relieving the oppressed people from the rapacity and extortion of the 'purveyors' or 'acheteurs,' but to little purpose. Until Elizabeth's reign little or no change took place in the condition of things under which the people suffered. Then it was that the royal authority was exerted by the hanging of one of her purveyors for having forcibly taken provisions without paying for them. Notwithstanding this salutary example, the purveyors still gave trouble to her subjects by withholding the money due to them for goods supplied; causing them at last to petition the Queen that she would accept the value of goods in money, that is to say by means of a composition. This, at first, she would not assent to; but after some hesitation an agreement was arrived at as to what proportion of goods each county should supply. Hence compositions in each county were made by the Justices of the Peace for serving a certain quantity of provisions at rates fixed by them in consultation with the officers of the royal household; the difference between the price fixed by the justices and the market value being raised by an assessment on the whole county and paid to the owners of the goods. As an indication of how far below the market value were the royal or justices' prices, the following table is given of an assessment made in Middlesex:

		Royal Prices.	Market Prices.
		s. d.	£ s. d.
Wheat.....	200 qrs. at	6 8	2 0 0
Veals.....	40 qrs. at	12 0	1 2 0
".....	100 qrs. at	6 8	1 2 0
Greene Geese.....	10 doz. at	3 0	1 8 0
Capons.....	10 doz. at	4 0	0 16 0
Hens.....	20 doz. at	1 6	0 12 0
Pullets.....	20 doz. at	1 6	0 10 0
Chickens.....	40 doz. at	2 0	0 6 0
Hay.....	200 loads at	4 0	1 10 0
Oats.....	211 qrs. at	4 0	0 12 0
Litter.....	180 loads at	4 0	0 10 0
Wood.....	200 loads at	3 0	7 0 0

—the difference on the whole being in favour of royalty to the extent of nearly one thousand pounds. By this method of taxation, though falling somewhat heavily on the county, those serving the royal household received the market price for their goods, less the proportionate difference between the royal and market prices, which they, in common with their neighbours, were called upon to pay by way of assessment; besides which they were relieved of the personal presence of the obnoxious royal purveyors, the duty of raising the provisions required by the royal household, from that time forth, devolving upon the High Constables.

In the following reign, however, as most readers of history are aware, the unhappy system of purveyance, with its attendant evils, was com-

pletely abolished; in consideration of which, Parliament settled upon the 'Merrie Monarch' the hereditary excise of fifteenpence per barrel on beers sold in the kingdom, and a proportionate sum on all other liquors.

No doubt, in the times when the court moved very frequently from one place to another, as it was accustomed to do, when markets were few and provisions not so abundant as now, an honest system of purveyance was a necessity; but in these days of luxury and convenience, so far from the abolition of the old mode of purveyance being a matter for regret, the contrary is the case: the people, instead of, as in days gone by, fleeing at the approach of royalty, now welcome it, and none more so perhaps than the fortunate 'Royal Warrant-holders.'

AN INCIDENT IN THE WILD WEST.

THE story which we are going to relate has nothing to do with cowboys on the sprec, or any of those shooting affairs in drinking saloons of which we hear from time to time, and which are, unfortunately, still common enough in the Wild West, but has to do entirely with the widely prevailing custom of punishing criminals by lynch-law, instead of waiting for the proper authorities to carry out their duties. Possibly many people in this country suppose that lynch-law—that is, the taking of the law into their own hands by the dwellers in Western settlements—is only resorted to when there are no constituted authorities at hand to carry it out. We shall show that it is frequently put in action even after the State itself has already begun to move in the matter; and that, consequently, instead of being practised because there is no other law in existence, lynch-law and the State sometimes come into conflict in such a way as to tend to additional bloodshed.

The scene is the little town of Graham, situated about a hundred miles from the State capital, and not far from the Rio Brazos, which flows through the centre of the enormous State of Texas, the largest of all the United States. Although Graham is but a small place of some six hundred inhabitants, it is the chief town of Young County, and is dignified, according to Western usage, by the name of a city. In the centre of the town stands the jail, a plain square building, whose barred windows look right into the public open space around, so that the prisoners within can, if they choose, hold conversation with their friends outside. We need not speak of the interior of the jail, for the events which we are going to describe happened chiefly without its walls.

In the month of December 1888, four brothers named Marlow were imprisoned in this jail on a charge of horse-stealing. There were five brothers altogether, and their home, a rough shanty, was situated four or five miles outside Graham. They bore an indifferent character, and were commonly known as 'Those Marlow Boys.' The sheriff of the county at the time was one Marion Wallis, a much respected citizen and official. A sheriff in an American county may be described as a combination of jail-keeper and policeman, and occupies something of the position of a superintendent who has charge of a lock-up

and police division in one of our English counties. A few days before Christmas, the Marlows were released from prison on bail. They had hardly left the jail before Sheriff Wallis received a warrant to arrest them on a charge of murder. Wallis was a kind-hearted man, and he determined not to execute the warrant at once. He would let the men have, he said, one day to see their old mother and their wives. The next day he went, accompanied by his under-sheriff, one Collier, to the home of the Marlow Boys. It was about mid-day, and they were seated round the dinner-table.

'How d'ye, Wallis?' said one of them. 'Come and have a snack.'

'Don't mind if I do; believe I will,' replied the sheriff. He turned to the door and beckoned to Collier. No sooner had he turned, than one of the men seized a Winchester rifle which was ready to his hand and shot him through the back. Collier, seeing his chief fall, made for his six-shooter, which was in the saddle pouch on his horse outside the door.

'Hie, Collier!' cried the Marlows, 'put down that six-shooter, and you may come and attend to Wallis; but if you don't drop it at once, you're a dead man.'

Collier had already had a narrow escape, and accordingly he concluded to drop his weapon, and the murderers fled from the hut.

He procured assistance, and carried Wallis back to Graham. The poor man lingered for a few days; on Christmas Day he died. During the whole of the short time that he continued to live, he was wandering and delirious, now calling out, 'Do not hurt the Marlow Boys,' and now imagining that he was tracking his own murderers through the scrub. The men had not gone far from their home, with the exception of one who had jumped on to a horse. Citizens had gone out on the night of the day on which Wallis had been shot, and had brought four of the brothers to Graham, and lodged them in the jail again, amidst the yells of the inhabitants, with whom poor Wallis was very popular. It must be remembered he was not yet dead, or something might have been done that night. When, however, it was known that Wallis was dying, the populace was aroused. On Christmas Eve an attack was made on the jail. It was but a half-hearted one, for, though the gate was burst open, the Marlows armed themselves with iron bars, and threatened to strike down the first man who entered. The under-sheriff managed to secure the jail again, and no further attack was made on the building.

Wallis was buried on New-year's Day, the whole population of the town attending his funeral. By the middle of January it was known that the Marlows were to be moved to the town of Dallas, either for more safe custody, or that they might stand their trial there. Dallas is about fifty miles from Graham, and some of the Grahamites had determined that, if they could prevent it, the prisoners should not reach Dallas alive. At dead of night an official sent from Dallas proceeded to remove the prisoners. He had the four brothers chained two and two by their feet, and they were placed in a sort of van, called a 'hack,' together with two other prisoners. No armed men rode with them, for fear, it was said, that their weapons might be wrested from

them by the desperate Marlows; but some men who had been engaged for the purpose, rode, armed with Winchesters and revolvers, in another hack behind. The road led through a ravine just outside the town. This ravine had been lined on each side by a gang of masked citizens, who fired down indiscriminately on the party below. The wagons stopped. The Marlows jumped out, ironed as they were, and wrenched some of the weapons from their assailants. The night was pitch-dark. The shooting was wild and furious in the midst of the confused crowd. It was never known exactly by whom the many fatal shots were fired in that terrible darkness. Two of the Marlows fell dead, and so did three of the citizens. Many others, both of the prisoners and of the attacking party, were wounded. The guard in the second hack were but of little use. One young man jumped off and ran back to the town in a fright; the others were useless either to keep off the mob or to secure the prisoners. The two surviving Marlow boys jumped on to one of the hacks in company with one of the other prisoners, and drove home through the streets of Graham shouting and singing. The inhabitants who had not taken part in the plot, aroused from their sleep, and warned of what had happened by the young man who had been the first to escape, made their way to the scene of action, and brought in the dead and wounded from the blood-stained road. The bodies were those of the two Marlows and of three citizens. When the masks were removed from the faces of the dead, their fellow-citizens were horrified to see what respectable and prominent inhabitants of the town had taken part in this lawless enterprise.

The Marlow survivors arrived at their shanty blood-stained and wounded. There they remained for some days. The townsfolk seemed to be completely cowed, for they allowed themselves to be kept off by the five women, wives and widows, who kept guard with Winchesters and revolvers over the hut where the wounded men lay. A doctor was admitted to attend to them; no other man dared to pass.

The United States Government now interposed in the matter; and after a few days, the Marlows gave themselves up to the officials, were taken off to Dallas, and then, strange to say, liberated on bail. One brother was still at large, the man who had ridden off on the day when Wallis was shot. He went by the name of Boom Marlow, and a reward was offered for him dead or alive. Some young men went out from Graham, tracked him, shot him, and brought in his body. The young men who did this found themselves, to their astonishment, arrested for murder, but were also, according to the prevailing custom, let out on bail. In the meanwhile, proceedings had been taken against the leaders of the night attack; but they were let out on bail as well. Seven lives had already been lost over this affair.

After a lapse of more than a twelvemonth the two Marlows were at last brought to trial, and, to the surprise of all who knew anything of the case, were acquitted of the murder of Marion Wallis. Of course the original charge of murder on which Wallis went to arrest them has been entirely lost sight of. As to the citizens who made the midnight attack, they are still out on

bail, and whether or not anything further will be done in their case, no one can say.

The inquiry naturally arises: Why do these exhibitions of mob violence take place? Why does not the law proceed in its ordinary course? We have been describing no isolated case. Such a state of things is only too common out West. Only about ten years ago a very similar case took place in Graham itself. Three men were arrested for a most cold-blooded murder. They had killed a man on his farm in the absence of his wife, and when the woman returned, told her that her husband had sold the farm to them, and had moved elsewhere. Well, these men were shot down as they were being conducted through the streets of Graham. They fell on the footway, perfectly riddled with bullets, one Sunday morning as the people were walking to their places of worship. The reason must be the strange uncertainty of the law, the uncalled-for delay, and the too ready granting of bail. So many red-handed murderers have got off in one way or another, that the criminal law has come to be regarded in certain districts with distrust, and the consequence is that Judge Lynch has taken its place. There is a sense of honour, however, amongst these assistants of Judge Lynch. They do not wish to be lawless, they say; they only want to carry out just retribution, which they fear may not come in any other way. For instance, in the second case which we have described a gunmaker's store was broken into, and the weapons and ammunition were seized for the attack on the murderers of the farmer. After all was over, every weapon was returned. The incident reminds one of the guinea left in the rope-maker's booth in Edinburgh in exchange for the rope taken thence for the hanging of 'Porteous,' as described in the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian.' The remedy for the evil is a more efficient police system, and what is far more important, the immediate trial of prisoners charged with murder, to be followed by their immediate, or at least not too tardy execution if found guilty. It is only in this way that any confidence or belief in the law can be implanted in the minds of the dwellers in the Wild West.

THE HISTORY OF NUGGET-FINDING.

THE history of the great Californian and other Nuggets of the precious metal is in many respects interesting and romantic. Thus, the discovery of one of the finest Californian nuggets was made under very singular circumstances. It is known as the Oliver Martin Nugget, and was found near Camp Corona, in Tuolumne County, and weighed 151 pounds 6 ounces. Martin and a companion named Flower were camped in a cañon, when a terrible rain-storm came on in the night, and the water in the stream suddenly rose. The miners attempted to climb the hill, but the flood overtook them, and both were carried down the stream. Flower was drowned; but Martin, though severely injured, escaped.

While trying to bury his companion's body by the roots of an upturned tree, Martin discovered the rich nugget that bears his name. He was too weak to move it. He attempted to reach some neighbouring miners, but fainted from

exhaustion, and was found on the trail by them. When able to walk, some weeks later, Martin took them to the spot, and the nugget was removed. The gold was mixed with quartz, but the nugget was valued at over twenty thousand dollars.

But the largest nugget ever found in California was discovered in November 1854, at Carson Hill, Calaveras County. It weighed 180 pounds. Another, weighing 149 pounds, was soon afterwards found at the same place.

In August 1869, W. A. Farish, A. Wood, J. Winstead, F. Clevers, and Harry Warner, were partners in the Monumental claim, near the Sierra Buttes, in Sierra County. During the last week in that month they discovered a huge nugget, which weighed 1593 ounces troy. It was sold to R. B. Woodward, of San Francisco, who paid 21,637 dollars for it for exhibition purposes. It was afterwards melted, and realised 17,655 dollars. Sierra is justly famed for the nuggets it has produced. It was in this county, at a spot known as French Ravine, that a nugget valued at twenty-three thousand dollars was found in 1850.

The biggest nugget of gold ever found in Shasta County was discovered in 1870. One day three Frenchmen, two of whom were named Oliver Longchamp and Fred Rochon, drove into the old town of Shasta in search of a spot to mine. They happened to have some business with A. Coleman, a dealer in hardware. The three asked him where was a good place to mine. He carelessly pointed in a northerly direction and said: 'Go over to Spring Creek.' They took his advice, located a claim on the creek about eight miles north of Redding, and in a few days one of the little party picked up a nugget worth sixteen thousand dollars.

Plumas County, though one of the richest mining districts in California, has yielded but few valuable nuggets. The largest was found by a Chinaman in 1861, and was sold for 9600 dollars. A miner named Archie Little found one in the same district that brought him 4906 dollars.

In Placer County, in 1859, Edward Gilbert, in a drift-mine near Butcher Ranch, about a dozen miles from Auburn, found a nugget of gold and quartz that weighed twenty pounds, which he disposed of for five thousand dollars. A little later on the same man discovered another valuable nugget. The gold was embedded in a mass of crystallised quartz with clear-cut corners, the sides of whose cubes shone with great brilliancy. He sold it for 6206 dollars.

In El Dorado County, at Spanish Dry Diggings, a nugget weighing 105 ounces was found in 1853, and sold for 1800 dollars. Another was found near Kelsey in the same county, and sold for 4700 dollars. In 1863 a mass of gold weighing 360 ounces was discovered at Columbus, in the same county, and was valued at 5236 dollars; and not far from the same spot, a poor Frenchman found a nugget valued at five thousand dollars. The rich mass of gold rendered the miner insane, and on the following day he had to be sent to the Stockton Asylum. The money was sent to his family in France. Near Knapp Ranch, in the same county, John Strain discovered a nugget that weighed 50 pounds. There was a large percentage of quartz in it, but the gold fetched 9500 dollars.

Near Magalia, in Butte County, on August 14, 1859, Ira A. Willard found a nugget weighing 54 pounds; and on the strength of his find, he and his companions held a grand drinking bout.

The largest nugget ever found in North Carolina weighed 80 pounds. The largest ever found in Siberia weighed 96 pounds 4 ounces; while the heaviest nugget of gold ever found in the world was found in Australia in 1852. It weighed 223 pounds, and was known as the Water Moon Nugget.

A curious fact in connection with gold-finding has just come to light in the United States. George Nay, an old Colorado miner, asserts that he has at last found the Mojave Mine, one of the famous lost gold mines of the desert, whose existence has been unknown for nearly thirty years. This mine was notable among the Mojave and Hualapai Indians for a long time before the arrival of white men. The Mojaves used to bring the gold out and trade with it along the Colorado River. The location could not be found, however, as Arataba, the old chief of the Mojaves, kept it a secret. Many whites have hunted for the mine since the death of Arataba, which took place about twenty years ago, and Nay now claims that he has discovered the location of the mine. He says it is twenty miles over the Colorado River, in Arizona, and on the edge of the Sugar Loaf Mountain. He has discovered distinct traces of the old Mojave workings, and has gone to San Francisco for the purpose of forming a company. If he is not mistaken, the United States may once more become the scene of nugget-finding.

DREAM-LAND.

THOUGH the years be fled, and the pain is dead,
And the grief is over long,
Yet on Dream-land track doth the soul go back,
And lo! the sound of a song,
That rings from a glade where the trees are green,
Where the wind of sorrow never hath been!

And out of the night come back to sight
The forms and faces of yore,
The old love wakes, and the old joy takes
Colour and light once more;
There sounds a voice we can never hear,
A step that has left us for many a year.

The sunbeams creep over eyes that sleep,
And we wake with a start to know
That in fair dream-land we have clasped a hand
Which held ours—long ago!
And we thrill to a touch that is lingering yet
To a passion of love, and of vain regret.

And for many a day we wend our way
The unseen world around us,
For the soul has snapped the chain that wrapped
The earthly links that bound us,
And the workaday world around us seems
Less real by far than the land of dreams.

MARY GORONS.

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POMONA.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADDIE,' 'TIP CAT,' 'LIL,' &c.

THE PROLOGUE.

THERE was an apple-tree in full bloom the day the child was born, and that was why she was called Pomona. Her father, Owen Ludlow, had retired from the agitation prevailing in the bright, little house that still bore the marks of the newly married plainly about it, for his wedding day was barely a year ago, and had betaken himself to the small room that was called his studio, and had nearly spoilt a pretty sketch on his easel by an unaccountable unsteadiness in his hand, and so had given up the attempt, and had stood looking out at the window, imagining that he was taking artistic stock of the pink and white glories of the tree outside, and of the sunshine dappling the green moss on its trunk, and of the cluster of white narcissus underneath. Really, he was quite unconscious of what he was looking at, all his senses being concentrated in the next room with his young wife; but, all the same, that day was inseparably connected in his mind with apple blossom, and apple blossom with that day, as also the long soft note of a nightingale, which was interrupted by a knock at the door and the entrance of the doctor to announce that he was the father of a little girl. Whenever he heard that long note in years to come, he listened also involuntarily for the knock at the door and the old doctor's voice.

A few days later the blossom was falling softly on the mossy path and the box-edging, when Owen Ludlow went out to pick some of those white narcissus to put in his dead wife's hand. It was very sad. There was the greatest sympathy bestowed on the young widower, whose honeymoon was hardly over, whose wedding presents were still almost intact, time and housemaids'

dusters not having yet wrought their usual work of devastation. In the wardrobe, that still opened stiffly from newness, hung the pretty trousseau dresses, some of them hardly worn; and there were yet unexplored corners in the hearts both of husband and wife, feelings unknown to each other, sympathies untasted, antipathies—who can tell?—untouched on; hundreds of circumstances in which one had not seen the other, and could have no idea how he or she would act. For example, she had never seen him in the exasperating circumstances of spring-cleaning, the newly-married house being all spick and span when they came into it last May, and the general upheaval and convulsion, that comes with the spring-time into all well-regulated households, having been postponed till after Pomona's arrival. It is not easy to find an equivalent situation of trial in which Owen Ludlow might have seen his wife; but undoubtedly during the first few years of married life there must be continual surprises, and new lights thrown on character and conduct, which may be pleasing or the reverse.

Well, sad as it was to lose all the sweet possibilities, it must be taken into account that they escaped all the bitter as well; and it was something to part without a single breath to ruffle the course of the stream of true love, over which the honeymoon shone so brightly to the very end. A sorrow that is quite free from remorse is almost a happiness when the first anguish is over.

But it was not to be expected that Owen Ludlow should feel this that first evening, when the room above was empty with that emptiness only a funeral can leave, and the mournful, little

party of guests had departed, and he sat in the dining-room, that was pervaded with the sickly smell of black gloves and funeral flowers, and tried to re-arrange his life's programme. His wife's work-basket was still on the little table in the window, with the needle stuck into the baby's shirt she had been hemming not a fortnight ago. The basket itself had been a wedding present from some school-girl friend, and each little working implement had some pleasant association to the young wife. Owen felt, even in his own great grief, a little extra, pitiful feeling for all these simple associations snapped so abruptly. Who would remember now if Bessie or Rose had given the small thimble, or how little Dolly made that pincushion with her own hands? He put them all almost tenderly away, as if they, too, could feel their bereavement; and he was quite glad of the trifling occupation to distract him for a moment from the distasteful task of making up his mind as regarded the future.

There was the baby to be thought of—Pomona. He had quite made up his mind that she should be called Pomona, though the old nurse had declared it to be an outlandish name, and 'Why shouldn't she be called after her poor dear Ma?' Not that, of all other names; it would have been sacrilege to him to call any one Katharine Ludlow—above all, such an odd, little, red object as the nurse had exhibited with pride; just as it was an insult to pretend to find a likeness between mother and child, as the servants always did in very audible tones when they thought he was within hearing. And besides, the name, Pomona, would always be suggestive to him not only of the child's birthday—when, as I have said, the apple blossom was in full beauty outside the window—but of all that short year of happiness. The little home was called 'the Orchards,' not on the *lucus a non lucendi* principle, as houses in the suburbs are named 'the Cedars,' 'the Chestnuts,' and so on, regardless of the vegetable growth in the little front gardens. But in this case the house was literally surrounded by orchards, and could only be reached by a path under the gnarled branches of apple-trees; and tall men had to look out for their hats as they entered, and blossom fell like snow on the coffin as it was carried out.

It was the blossom season when they first came home after their short wedding tour. It seemed almost unbelievably sweet and idyllic that first evening, as they sat at tea with a great bowl of cowslips in the middle of the table, and Katharine taking her place for the first time as mistress of the house, with a pretty air of importance. The sweet May twilight crept upon them as they sat lingering over their meal, and suddenly, from a bush close outside, a nightingale's liquid note trembled on the fragrant air. Only a year ago!

But it was not only in the spring-time, but all the year round, that the apple-trees seemed connected with their happiness. To one of the twisted boughs he had fastened the hammock where so many of the hot sultry summer afternoons were spent, with the bees drowsily humming round, and only an occasional twitter breaking the summer silence of the birds. Under another tree, the little afternoon tea-table used to be set; and day after day they noticed how the little green apples grew and rounded and yellowed and blushed, till at last the whole

orchard was full of red and russet and golden fruit, a garden of the Hesperides, at which the school-boys cast envious eyes in passing, eyes which Katharine could never resist, generally responding to them with an apronful of apples, which naturally doubled the number of envious eyes on the following day.

And when they were all gathered and stored away, the orchard was yet lovely with the yellow and brown foliage thinning on the trees, and the fragrance of the dead leaves on the grass, and the soft emerald mosses and gray lichens showing on the crooked trunks as they had not done in summer-time. And at Christmas there was mistletoe on the tree in the corner; and he picked some from the frosty boughs, which made a clear sharp-cut trellis-work against the cold, pale blue sky; and he kissed his wife's sweet face, pretending that there was need of mistletoe privileges to excuse such a very ordinary occurrence. And on New-year's Day came the snow, turning the orchard into fairyland, with every twig and tiny branch outlined in purest white. And now, again, came blossoming-time, only the flowers fell on a coffin carried out. And that brought him back to the empty present, and the necessity for arranging for the future.

'Let me have the poor baby,' his mother had sent word, being too much of an invalid to come to her bereaved son; and her husband had scrupulously delivered the message, though even the deep melancholy of the occasion could not prevent the exchange of a half-comical glance between father and son as he did so.

Mrs Ludlow was a person of whom poor people would say—unconsciously conveying, as they often do, a very real fact—that she enjoyed bad health. Her health was her one interest. I do not know what she would have done if some day she had realised the fact that she was quite as well and strong as the majority of other people, that there was no reason why she should not get up at a reasonable time and dress in a reasonable way, discarding dressing-gowns or tea-gowns—which, by the way, to the uninitiated seem only a glorified form of dressing-gown—and eat a reasonable meal, and go out into the air and sunshine, and be of some use to somebody or something in the world.

But she never did realise the fact; and perhaps, after all, it was not a fact, and she really was too frail and sensitive and delicate to take a share, even the smallest, in God's great, active, workaday world. But the idea of her with a baby was comic even to a broken heart, and to her indulgent husband, who believed implicitly in every ache and pain and fainting and palpitation. A baby that cried! Even at this early age it was capable of a cat-like sound of considerable volume and great persistence, and no doubt would develop into much louder performances as it grew older. A baby who might have fits, or fearful difficulties over teething, or whooping-cough, or other distressing infantile complaints, encroaching on Mrs Ludlow's prerogative of being the one invalid in the house. A child, who, after babyhood was passed, would be romping and fidgeting all over the place, tumbling about, injuring itself or other things of more importance; for, after her own health, old china was Mrs Ludlow's special hobby. All this flashed

through Mr Ludlow's mind as he delivered the message with a little twinkle in one corner of his eyes, that were so full of sincere sympathy with his son's misfortune.

'Thank my mother very much,' Owen had answered; 'but I think I can make another arrangement about the child.'

And his father, with eager acquiescence, said: 'Yes, yes! to be sure; yes, yes! of course,' in a nervous way he had; and fortunately did not inquire what the other arrangement might be, seeing that Owen himself had no idea.

Now, as he sat by himself—how much by himself!—that evening cogitating, the baby seemed to him almost the worst part of his misfortunes. The clergyman of the parish, as he bade him good-bye, had pressed his hand and murmured something about his not being left without a little spark of comfort—that the baby would be an interest and happiness to him; and Owen tried to respond fittingly, and not shock the reverend gentleman by expressing a wish that it were allowable to drown babies like superfluous kittens, and by declaring that if he were to look for comfort and happiness in the future to that little red object encased in flannel, the prospect was a poor one indeed.

He had an overwhelming longing to get away, out of all the associations that had been so sweet, and were now so bitter—to go where he and Katharine had never been together—to live a life that she could not have shared—to bury himself entirely in some work that would occupy heart and mind and eyes and brain, leaving no room for the loving and thinking and watching and listening that seemed all his being, and to have been turned by Death's ruthless hand into keen and constant suffering. The gaping desolate void must be filled somehow, if he was to live—no matter what rubbish was shot into it, it must be filled before he could begin building up the edifice of his life again.

But the baby seemed to prevent this entire cutting himself adrift; he could not—thank Heaven!—take it with him, racketing about in bachelor's quarters at home or abroad; and he remembered fearful stories of children placed out to nurse being neglected and ill-treated; and, for Katharine's sake, he would not wish this to be the case, any more than he would have allowed a small kitten that her gentle hand had fuddled, or a robin that she had rescued from the snow and coaxed back into impertinent bright-eyed life, to suffer, now she was gone.

He could not detect in his feelings any of that parental affection which he understood sprang into existence on the birth of a baby; he sought in vain for any of the foolish admiration that makes young parents so ridiculous; he did not consider it at all a wonderful or even interesting production of nature—certainly the most prejudiced beholder could not call it even decently good-looking. He went up more than once to look at it as it lay asleep, and he tried to feel a kindling of warmth at his heart, the very faintest throb of fatherly love or pride; and the nurse sobbed aloud at the touching sight, and told the other servants, 'Twere enough to break one's heart to see him so wroop up in the child as couldn't tear himself away now!'

But Owen Ludlow turned away each time with

a deeper conviction that it was no use trying to fill the great void Katharine had left with that dreadful little object up-stairs. But he had not got any more forward in arranging his future plans; and it was almost a relief to be distracted from the consideration of them by the sound of wheels in the road outside, wheels that stopped at the white gate, by which a path under the apple-trees led up to the house. It was nine o'clock by this time, and on that unfrequented road the sound of wheels at that hour was unusual; but perhaps it might be the carrier from the county town.

If Owen Ludlow had not been only too willing to be distracted, he might not have noticed the interruption; but as it was, he hailed it with pleasure, were it only that just for a minute it silenced the nightingale outside, which seemed to be using all its arts to tear and harrow the husband's heart with exquisitely sad sweet memories. He got up and looked out into the orchard, where the stars gave a dim light; and he saw a tall woman coming up the path, and a shine of carriage-lamps at the gate behind her. It was a lady; even in the semi-darkness he could see by the way she walked that she was not one of the villagers; but there was nothing familiar to him in the figure, though he quickly ran over in his mind all the friends of himself or his wife who this could possibly be.

'A lady, sir, to see you,' the servant announced a minute later. 'I told her as you was very much occupied, and I didn't think as you'd care to see no one; but she said she would not detain you many minutes.'

'Did she give any name?'

'No: she said!'

But the dimensions of the Orchards were so small that, as the servant stood holding the dining-room door in her hand, any one at the front door must be standing almost immediately behind her; and the visitor at this point undertook her own introduction, and, passing the girl, entered the room, saying, 'I must apologise for intruding at such a time; but I have something of importance to speak about, and this may be my only opportunity.'

She was tall, above the general height of women; and the effect of height was increased by the long straight cloak she wore, and the way she carried her head, which made Owen Ludlow feel as if he were shorter, though in fact he was not.

He bowed rather awkwardly, and drew forward a chair for her; while the servant with some reluctance closed the door, being naturally anxious to find out who this strange and late visitor might be.

'And quite the lady, as one could see with half an eye; and never been here before, and come in a carriage and pair. Didn't we ought to ask the coachman if he wouldn't take something, Mary June, as may have come a long way?'

But on reconnoitring, they found there was some one else—another lady in the carriage, which damped their hospitable intentions; and they also discovered that the carriage that looked so imposing in the dark with the lamps was only a fly from the station hotel at Courtlington, five miles off—'as it ain't no good wasting good beer on a flyman.'

But meanwhile in the little dining-room a

strange proposal was being made to Owen Ludlow. The lady had put up her veil, and showed a face that was almost lovely, only it had such an unhappy, dissatisfied look in the gray eyes and drooping lines of the mouth.

'You will hardly know my name,' she said; 'but I was at school with your wife, and she would have remembered Marjory Grant very well.'

'I remember her speaking of you,' he said.

'I am Lady Lester now, and I have been married eight years.'

Memories were coming back to Owen Ludlow's mind of his wife talking of her pretty school-fellow, who had married directly she left school—he fancied she had said a man a good deal older than herself. He remembered stories of school-girl pieces of fun in which this Marjory Grant had been ringleader, full of wild spirits, and up to any amount of innocent mischief and harmless adventure. But perhaps this was some other girl, for this sad-faced Lady Lester did not seem capable of madcap frolic.

'I have never seen Katharine since we parted at school; but when I heard of—your loss, it brought it all back to me so vividly, that as I was staying one night at Courtlington, I thought I must come, even at the risk of intruding on your sorrow, to tell you how much I loved her, and how sorry I am.'

'Thank you,' was all he could answer as he pressed the hand she stretched out to him, for the tears in her eyes made his grow dim and choked his voice.

'But this is not all,' she went on. 'They told me the baby was living. I have none; and I want you to let me have hers.—Wait a bit!' She stopped his reply. 'Is the baby (a girl, isn't it?)—is she very, very dear to you? Is she a great comfort to you? Because, if she is, I won't say a word more. But if not—for something in Owen Ludlow's face reassured her—'if not, I want you to let me have her. I don't mean merely to bring up for you, but altogether—entirely—to be my own little girl.'

'But'—he began hesitatingly.

'Yes; I know,' she went on eagerly. 'No doubt it is impossible; but just let me put my case fairly before you decide against me. You know, or perhaps you don't know, that my husband, Sir Hugh Lester, was a widower when I married him, with two boys; so your little girl won't be a great heiress if you let me have her. She will only have the little I have of my own. My husband is all that is good and kind; I have not a word to say against him' (But perhaps a little sigh that filled up a pause here might have told a little tale, if Owen Ludlow could have interpreted it)—'and the boys are dear fellows, and as fond of me as if I were their own mother, but—I have none of my own.—Well'—she went on, after another pause, eloquent with the unsatisfied longing and yearning that perhaps only a childless woman could sympathise with, which certainly Owen Ludlow could not appreciate, who would have given all the babies in the world for the one life he had lost—'well, my husband is quite willing I should adopt a child; he is most indulgent to all my whims and fancies; he took endless trouble to get a dog he thought would please me; my horses are the envy of all my

friends; he spends fabulous sums on orchids for me; he is quite glad when I express the faintest wish for any costly luxury that he can get for me. He only stipulates about the child that it shall not be picked up anywhere out of the mire, from among waifs and strays, of unknown parentage, who may inherit bad tendencies of mind and body, disease or vice.—He is very sensible and very good, you see,' she went on. 'It is all open and above-board as far as he is concerned; and it can do no one any wrong, as, of course, the boys will inherit all the property, and my (?) little girl will only have what I can give her. It is no case of palming off an heir or altering the inheritance in any way, as one reads of in books, but just to give me a dear little girl to love, and make me happy, with my husband's full consent and approval.'

She was silent now; but her great soft eyes looked so pleadingly at Owen Ludlow that he still seemed to hear her earnest voice entreating for what was of so little value to him, for what he had only that evening been realising was an embarrassment and a burden. And then before his mind came the memory of a letter from an old artist friend of his, received a week or two back, and not thought of during all this time of agitation and anguish, telling of his speedy departure for the Rocky Mountains, where he was going in search of health and scenery. 'Ah, Ludlow,' he finished up, 'if only you were not married and done for, and could strike your tents and come along with me, what high times we might have!'

Lady Lester's eager eyes detected the signs of wavering in his face. 'You shall never regret that you have trusted her to me,' she said. 'I think Katharine would have liked me to have her baby—above all, if she could have known how sorely I want something all my own to love and care for.'

'You will let me consider the matter,' he said; 'it is too important a thing to decide in a hurry.'

'Of course,' she answered—'of course. But—' if it is to be so, is there any object in delay? I mean, if you do not mind—my husband does not—that she shall bear my name, and be supposed to be my own child; and it would be best, I thought, if you would let me take her away with me to-night. My maid is waiting outside in the carriage; she is used to children, and can quite take care of her till we get home, and can find a regular nurse for her. And besides, I am only staying one night at Courtlington, and am on my way to Weymouth, where my husband will join me later on. He is yachting with the boys. He will be at Southampton to-day, and I will telegraph to him at once what I have done.'

But it would take too long to recapitulate all the arguments Lady Lester put forth in support of her plea, while, all the time, another advocate within himself was urging the relief it would be to know that Katharine's baby was happily and safely provided for, and himself free to go clear away from all associations.

Honestly, when he analysed his feeling for the baby, it was scarcely as deep and warm as what he felt for many of his wife's possessions—the dresses she had worn, the rings he had kissed on

her dainty fingers, the lace that had lain soft and warm round her neck; and he would not pretend to more feeling than he could truthfully detect in the heart that seemed buried in his wife's new-made grave. So, at the end of half an hour, the old nurse, nodding in her chair by the side of the bassinette, was startled by the apparition of a tall lady standing there, looking down at the baby with a look of such delight and pride as the old monthly nurse in all her wide experience had never seen but on the face of newly-made mothers.

'My own little girl!' she said as she drew back the flannel from its head with fingers that seemed trembling to snatch the baby up and satisfy with kisses the hungry look on the lips and in the loving eyes.

'A sweet, pretty lady too!' the nurse imparted to the other servants when she was gone, though she did not think it necessary to impart any share of the sovereign that was slipped into her hand at parting; 'and, as far as I could make out, some kin to the poor dear that's gone, and favoured her a bit in features, if I weren't mistook. Anyhow, she were terrible set on having the baby, and would have took it off there and then; only the master, he wouldn't agree to that nohow, and 'twere plain to see he didn't half like to let it go, being that wrop up in it, natural like. So it was settled as it were to be all ready by the day after to-morrow, when her ladyship's own maid would come over and fetch the precious lamb. Yes, 'twere her ladyship, sure enough! though I can't mind the name as the master called her, and never heard tell as the missis come of such high folk, though she were a born lady, poor dear, as ever were. She asked all sorts of questions about the bottles and milk and how much was to be give at a time. She weren't one of them as thinks they knows better than an old woman as has had to do with babies afore they was born or thought of.'

Not all Lady Lester's blandishments would induce Owen Ludlow to agree to her carrying off the baby then and there. Time must be allowed for Sir Hugh to be communicated with, and a letter received from him fully confirming all that Lady Lester had said of his willingness to adopt the child. And on one other point Owen Ludlow was determined, though Lady Lester demurred, and though, after all, when he came to think of it afterwards, what did it really signify to him what name the child should bear, when he was never likely to hear or see anything more of her? and this point was that the child should be named 'Pomona.' It was unreasonable, he felt, to insist upon this; but it was a slight salve to his conscience, though he was hardly conscious that it required salving, or that it gave him the slightest uneasiness; but it made him feel less weakly acquiescent to make some difficulty, even a childishly unreasonable one.

'It is not a very pretty name,' Lady Lester said; 'and I am afraid Sir Hugh may not like it; but it has the advantage of being uncommon; and if you really wish it so much, of course it shall be so. I will telegraph to Sir Hugh the first thing to-morrow, and you will hear from him the following morning.'

So just for one more day, Owen Ludlow heard the baby's cry from the room up-stairs and the

sound of the rocking-chair on the floor, and saw the old nurse pottering up and down under the apple-tree, with the sunlight through the branches falling on the soft white bundle in her arms, and a stray blossom dropping now and then. Perhaps that day he felt something more nearly approaching the paternal sentiment than he had ever done before, such is the contrariness of human nature; and once he found himself hoping that Sir Hugh's reply might not be favourable, and that he might, after all, have to take the baby Pomona into the calculations of his future life. But the next morning brought a hearty, manly letter from Sir Hugh, fully endorsing all that his wife had said, and thanking Owen Ludlow for agreeing to a plan that would so largely contribute to his wife's happiness.

And soon afterwards Lady Lester arrived with a responsible-looking nurse, and carried off the baby, with profuse expressions of gratitude to Owen Ludlow, and liberal tips to the servants; and when the carriage had driven away, and he turned back up the orchard path, it seemed as if he were returning from another funeral, or rather as if the funeral of two days before had been completed, and the baby buried with her mother; and the house seemed emptier than ever.

He gave a little gasp, as if it caught his breath, when, a few days later, he saw in a paper the announcement among the births, 'On May 30th, at Weymouth, the wife of Sir Hugh Lester of a daughter.'

But he was in the Rockies, and beyond the reach of English newspapers, when six months later, there was an account of the terrible railway accident in Scotland in which Sir Hugh Lester's two sons lost their lives; nor did he see the announcement, the following year of the death of the baronet himself.

SOME VILLAINS OF FICTION, AND THEIR FATES.

WHILE a great deal has been written on the subject of the heroes and heroines of fiction, comparatively little notice has been taken of its Villains—a neglect, no doubt, richly merited. And yet one is tempted to think that many a favourite novel with its villain eliminated would prove dull reading enough. There is little room for the old-fashioned conventional villain in the new school of fiction, which substitutes for plot and thrilling story an elaborate analysis of character. In dealing, too, with the lives of everyday people, the melodramatic scoundrel would be out of place. Hence his absence from the pages of Miss Austen's works, in which the quiet country pursuits of our forefathers, while George III. was king, are so vividly described. It is therefore to the narrative authors of the romantic or realistic schools that we must turn to find the villain without alloy.

One might divide the rogues of fiction into certain classes, such as the hypocritical, the gentlemanly, the blood-thirsty, and so forth. Sir Walter Scott has several types of rogues—the learned rogue, like Rashleigh Osbaldistone; the unscrupu-

lous and scheming lawyer, like Glossin in 'Guy Mannering'; the wild and lawless rogue, like Dirk Hatteraick, the Dutch smuggler captain. In some novels we find the villain claiming no small part of our sympathy, and Scott confessed that his rogue always, in spite of him, turned out his hero. Poetic justice, however, is generally meted out to his evil characters, and many of them come to violent ends. Richard Varney, on his capture, after the murder of the Countess of Leicester—disclaiming to drag on the remainder of his life a degraded outcast, and not wishing that his fate should make a holiday to the vulgar herd—swallowed some strong poison he was wont to carry about his person, and was found dead in his cell—the habitual expression of sneering sarcasm still on his face. His accomplice, the ungainly Anthony Foster, perished miserably in the cell whither he had fled to escape arrest, forgetting the key of the spring-lock by which alone his egress could be effected. Dirk Hatteraick, the accomplice of Glossin in kidnapping Henry Bertram, and the murderer of Meg Merillies, hanged himself in the condemned ward of the jail, which had likewise witnessed the death of Glossin at the same hands. The unprincipled Lord Dalgarno, on his way to fight the duel with Nigel Olifaunt at Camlet Moat, was shot by Colepepper, or one of his ruffians, in Enfield Chase; while the Alsatian Captain himself did not survive the fierce attack of Richard Monipples. One of the most interesting of Scott's characters is Rashleigh Osbaldistone, with his learning and his want of moral principle—the clever man of that country where clever men were scarce. Nevertheless, he is a knave, and, as a reward for his treason, perishes at the hand of Rob Roy, with the hatred of his cousin Francis strong within him, even in the moment of death. Jobson, the rascal attorney—a very favourite type with Scott, as with Dickens—had his name struck off the list of attorneys, and was reduced to poverty and contempt.

For a mind such as Thackeray's the study of evil had a certain fascination, and the character of his rogues being always carefully drawn, we see them as they are actually to be found in life—rather weak than wicked, vain and selfish more often than malignant. Any good which may be found in them he never fails to bring out. Barry Lyndon is a type of the adventurous scoundrel—not without certain redeeming features—dear to the heart of Fielding and Smollett. The son of a man of fashion, Barry was possessed of many accomplishments. He had a quick ear and a fine voice; he stepped a minuet gravely and gracefully, and was unrivalled at a hornpipe and a jig. His reading consisted exclusively of novels. After a round of adventures, in which he exhibits almost every vice save that of cowardice, he passes the latter end of his life in the Fleet Prison. Thackeray had a horror of gambling, and its evil effects form the moral of many of his tales. One example is to be found in the history of Mr Deuceace, the son, more sinned against than sinning, of the Earl of Crabs. His miserable fate is not rendered less pathetic by being described in the vernacular of James Yellowplush—seated, shabby and unkempt, with

a poorly-dressed, ill-used woman by his side, on a bench in the Bois de Boulogne as the Earl and his bride drive past him without recognition. Of Thackeray's other more or less unprincipled characters, Lord Steyne is a striking example. A meaner but equally unprincipled character was Sir Pitt Crawley, who died at the good old age of fourscore. Barnes Newcome is the picture of the hypocritical rogue, outwardly irreproachable, of whom Dickens has given us so many examples. Of his fate the novelist says: 'My impression is that he married again, and it is my fervent hope that his present wife bullies him'—a wish the reader must cordially reciprocate.

No writer has a more plentiful supply of villains of all kinds than Dickens. Many of his characters are meant to exemplify different vices—as, for instance, unscrupulous selfishness in Jonas Chuzzlewit; or hypocrisy in Uriah Heep and Pecksniff; or, again, miserliness and its effects in Ralph Nickleby. Some of his figures are undoubtedly melodramatic, as Sir Mulberry Hawk or Carker; the gentleman rogue is one of the least happy of his portraits. Grotesquely horrible figures, such as Quilp, appealed strongly to his imagination, and have never been more powerfully depicted. Most of his rogues meet with the just reward of their deeds, as became the moral purpose of his books. Jonas Chuzzlewit, after attempting to poison his old father Anthony, and after murdering Montagu Tigg, himself takes poison as he is being carried off to jail. The first word he had been taught to spell was 'gain,' and the second 'money.' Gashford, the Secretary to Lord George Gordon—who imposes on the credulity of his master, and prompts the rioters to burn the Warren, where Geoffrey Haredale lived—also commits suicide. The villain Rudge, the father of Barnaby, came to the gallows. Ralph Nickleby took his own life—a moral to all such as are of a hard and grasping nature—'he had torn a rope from one of the old trunks, and hanged himself on an iron hook immediately below the trap-door in the ceiling to which his son had looked so often in childish terror fourteen years ago.'

The description of Fagin in Newgate awaiting execution is among the most thrilling in the pages of fiction; the face of the old Jew, retaining no human expression but rage and terror, haunts us as that of Quilp or Quasimodo. Hardly less terrible is the scene of Bill Sikes's death there in Jacob's Island, 'where the buildings are the dirtiest; and the vessels on the rivers blackest with dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built, low-roofed houses.' From the parapet of such a house it was that he fell in his effort to escape his pursuers, five-and-thirty feet into Folly Ditch, followed even to death by his faithful dog. The railway engine, employed as an instrument of fate, lends a tragic interest to the death of the smiling villain Carker with his white and glistening teeth. He uttered a shriek as he looked upon the engine, and 'saw the red eyes bleared and dim in the daylight close upon him—was beaten down, caught up, and whirled away upon a jagged mill that spun him round and round, and struck him limb from limb, and licked his stream of life up with its fiery heat, and cast his mutilated fragments in the air.' Rogue Riderhood in 'Our Mutual Friend'

perishes in a struggle with Bradley Headstone, near Plashwater Bridge. Both were found lying under the ooze and scum, behind one of the rotting gates of the lock. Quilp, the almost inhuman dwarf of Tower Hill, drowned himself as he was on the point of being arrested for felony—an appropriate ending to a life of moral and physical squalor.

Of Dickens's less malignant characters, Squeers, with his one eye, and forehead villainously low, adds the theft of a title-deed to his ill treatment of schoolboys, and is transported. Uriah Heep and Steerforth's valet Littimer are consistent hypocrites, till we lose sight of them in prison as No. 27 and No. 28—Uriah, the 'unblest person going, suffering the penalties of the law for fraud, forgery, and conspiracy—a deep plot for a large sum; while the valet expiates the robbing of his young master the night before they were going abroad. That arch-hypocrite Pecksniff lingers on shabby and out-at-elbows with drink, his worst enemy.

The fiction of half a century or so ago produced such a plentiful supply of highwaymen, cracksmen, and other heroes of the Newgate Calendar, that Thackeray exclaimed, 'The public will hear of nothing but rogues.' Fielding had described the adventures of Jonathan Wild, and now Jack Sheppard was made the hero of a tale. Dickens produced 'Oliver Twist,' and Bulwer-Lytton a series of stories in which the harshness of the criminal law and various other social grievances were illustrated in the careers of such as Paul Clifford. Some of his rogues come to very melodramatic ends. Gawtreys, the false coiner in 'Night and Morning,' is a vivid picture of a man well educated and full of animal spirits, suffering for another man's crime, and at war with society. He is shot in attempting to escape from the Paris police—falling from the parapet of the house with a groan or rather howl of rage, despair, and agony, which appalled even the hardest on whose ear it came. Lord Lilburne, in many respects more guilty than Gawtreys, escapes the outward retribution which overtakes crime; the novelist's idea being, that if vice is to be punished it must be from within. 'The Lilburnes of this hollow world are not to be pelted with the soft roses of poetical justice.' The brutal ruffian Houseman—whose only redeeming trait is the love of his daughter—is contrasted with the scholarly Eugene Aram, who yet is led to commit murder; showing once again that intellect and morality may in some instances be divorced. Houseman, in spite of his crimes, died in his bed without violence, having maintained himself by dressing flax. His life, however, was several times attempted by the mob; and when he died, his body was buried secretly at dead of night. Arbaces, the wily Egyptian priest, who crushed all who stood in his path in the 'Last Days of Pompeii,' was himself crushed in that supreme convulsion of nature by the shattering of the tall column that supported the bronze statue of Augustus.

Among Wilkie Collins's rogues one of the most interesting is Count Fosco in 'The Woman in White.' He was compounded of two almost distinct individualities. On one side of his character he is vain, fond of music, and of pet animals—white mice, a cockatoo, and a couple of canaries

—on the other, the calm conspirator with the cold glitter in his unfathomable gray eyes. As a definite moral ending was expected by the public, the novelist tells us how his body was discovered in the Morgue at Paris. In 'Arncliffe,' the villainy of Dr Bashwood is cast in the shade by that of the would-be poisoner, Miss Gwilt, who puts an end to her own life, on the failure of her scheme, in Bashwood's sanatorium.

Charles Reade generally employs a principal and a subsidiary rogue of a more or less conventional type to show off the charms of the heroine and the resources of his virile hero to the best advantage. Thus we have Woodlaw and Wylie in 'Foul Play,' Richard Hardie and Skinner, and many others who suffer the just reward of their deeds. John Meadows, with the cool head and iron will in his search for wealth and respectability, nevertheless incurs a charge of theft; but in illustration of the principle of the book—'It is Never too Late to Mend'—shows promise of repentance and a hope of better things in the new land whither he sails with little Hannah and his old mother of threescore years and ten. The more despicable villain Crawley, left to his own resources, practises at the County Courts in his old neighbourhood, and drinks with all his clients, who are of the lowest imaginable order. Sir Charles Pomander belongs to the 'bold, bad Baronet' type of character; and the persecutor of 'Peg Wollington,' rich, handsome, and witty, with a hard head, a tough stomach, and no heart at all, has many points of resemblance with the Sir Marygrave Pollexfen of 'Sir Charles Grandison' or the Lovelace of 'Clarissa Harlowe.' Dickens's similar character, Sir John Chester, is killed in the duel with his enemy, Geoffrey Hamdendale. Less enviable, perhaps, was the fate of Pomander condemned for eight years to drag the chain of a life from which all pleasure had gone out.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXV.—'HE THAT *will* BE RICH!'

GEORGE SUFFIELD, the elder, arrived in Lancashire early in the evening, and drove home at once to Holdsworth Hall. His son, he found, was away—had been away, Tummas said, since ever 'th' mester' had gone yesterday. He had left no word with Tummas where he had gone ('Nay,' grunted Tummas, 'Mester George doan't trust me wi' nought; he believes sœ much i' th' black fellow!'), so that Mr Suffield had no resource but to wait, with what patience he could muster, for his return, or for the morning.

He slept ill, and rose betimes, while it was yet dark, and went to the works. The air was already filled with the laboured breathing of the engines and the whirr of bobbins and clatter of looms. It did him good to hear these sounds, and it made him proud, more than all the mumble and gossip, the speeches and the 'Hear, hears' of the House of Commons. He said to himself 'Ha, ha,' like the war-horse among the trumpets, and the thunder of the regiments; he shook himself together, and longed to be in

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among the crowds of workers, with the monstrosous music of the machinery in his ears.

'I shouldn't ha' listened to Joan!' he said to himself. 'That I shouldn't!'

The old lodge-keeper stared a moment or two, speechless at sight of him: it was the first working day after the Christmas holidays.

'If here bain't th' owd mester himsen! Aw'm right glad to see tha, mon!' exclaimed the lodge-keeper, as if he were himself the master, giving his hand to Suffield. 'Ec! but it'll set th' folk up to see yo'!'

'Thank you, John—thank you,' said Suffield, heartily shaking the hand of his old retainer. 'I'm just come down on a special matter o' business. My son, I suppose, left no word if he would be here to-day?'

'Mester George? Not he! He left no word wi' me.—But how's tha able to leave th' business o' th' country?—th' making o' Laws and Acts o' Parlyment and sech? How's things, mon? For we're as ignorant here as peas in a pod.'

'Well, John,' said Suffield, 'th' Queen has not axed me yet to be her Prime Minister; nor made yo', John, a Justice o' th' Peace.' And so he walked on, while John closed the gate, laughing to himself. 'Th' owd mester!' he murmured. 'He aye likes his joke. Nae much th' matter wi' a mon as can crack his joke.'

The old 'mester,' spite of having heavy stuff on his mind, could not refrain from giving himself the pleasure of a walk through the workrooms of the several buildings. It was agreeable to him—and it would have been instructive to a stranger—to see how all faces lighted up on beholding him, and how cheerily he was greeted by those whom he addressed, managers, foremen, or operatives: the abounding goodness of his nature touched them all.

'Who's in th' new building?' he asked of a manager at his elbow.

The manager answered that So-and-so was—a trustworthy person whom Suffield himself had left in charge.

'I'll go and have a look at it,' said he.

Arrived in the new building, where the special printing machines were at work, of the drawings for which Daniel Trichinopoly had made stolen copies, Suffield questioned the manager in charge: Where were the drawings kept? In the office, the man believed. Was that rule strictly carried out, that no one but those engaged in the building and sworn to secrecy should be admitted? It was. Had the manager ever seen Daniel Trichinopoly there? Never. Where were the keys kept? In the lodge with the other keys.—Suffield made little account of the last two answers; for he remembered that a year ago, when no one was supposed to be in the building or to be able to get into the building, Ainsworth had declared he had seen Daniel there.

Thence he went to the counting-house. The book-keepers and pen-men in general were not come yet; there were but that clerk who took the turn of early work, and an old woman dusting the desks. Suffield marched into the inner office, and up-stairs into the sanctum that used to be his own. He knew where the plans of the new machines had been wont to be kept. He went to the safe, of which he, as well as his son, carried a key, and opened a drawer: there were

the plans. He took them out and unrolled them on the table; he believed they looked dirtier, and they certainly bore marks of pencil-tracing. How could George have been so careless as allow the black Daniel opportunity to handle and use them?

He put the plans away—in the safe again—and then he sat down and thought. If the black Daniel had been able to play his own rig with these plans, what might he not have done with other things? George was palpably careless. There stood an Account Book left out; and there in a drawer was a key. There might be nothing of consequence in the drawer; nevertheless—Mr Suffield's business experience declared that a key neglected, for whatever reason, meant a weak link in security; and that a drawer left open was a temptation to open drawers. He went to the door and asked the clerk in the outer office, 'Does Trichinopoly come much here?'

'He's mostly up at the Hall with Mr George, and sometimes in the City,' answered the clerk.

In the City office, of course, thought Suffield—helping with the export to India and the Straits. He was about to lock the safe up again, with the resolution to go through everything carefully with George when that young gentleman should appear, when he noticed the cheque-book of the firm lying before him—a volume which was to most cheque-books as a folio is to a duodecimo. He took it out and began to look at it. As he read one counterfoil, and another, and another, he occasionally raised his head with an amazed air, and then resumed his scrutiny with contracted brows.

'I don't understand this, my lad,' he said at length. 'There's more here than I bargained for. But I must wait.'

So he resolutely closed the book, locked it up in the safe, and took his way to the Hall for breakfast. Tummas would gossip with 'th' owd mester,' but for all that, breakfast was soon set upon the table. His solitary meal did not encourage cheerful reflection. Why, he asked himself, was he sitting there alone? Had he been weak in humouring his wife, and giving himself up to the pursuit of parliamentary honour, and had he been precipitate in handing the entire control of his business over to his son? He thought it somewhat hard; but he saw that even at fifty a man must buy his experience like the most reckless youngster.

After breakfast he sat a while, and looked at the paper, and looked at the clock. At length he rose, went into the hall, summoned Tummas to brush his hat and coat, and set off to walk to the station, as aforetime, to take the train into town: perhaps, he thought, his son would go to the City first.

In the City office he found the manager and the clerks in their places, but no George. The manager, however, said that 'Mr George,' he believed, was in Liverpool on business, and would probably be back after lunch; so Suffield went forth into the City to see how the world of Lancashire commerce was moving: he had known nothing of that world, except from the newspapers and the gossip of his son, for a good many months. He went to the Athenæum and read the telegrams of news and of prices; and then he went on 'Change. He exchanged salu-

tations and he listened, and the more he listened the more bewildered he became; he overheard whispers about cotton, which—he was certain—were hushed or changed into another venue as he approached. One old acquaintance was frank with him.

'Well, George,' said he, 'what's the game to-day? It's ages since we've seen you here. Is it "futures" or "spot"? There's not much, you know, in the way of futures. They seem to be covered mostly by this rascal that's trying to "corner;" but, between you and me, George, I believe there's more than a Parsee or two in that corner: there's somebody behind them.'

'There is a corner, then, in cotton?' said Suffield.

'Is a corner?' echoed the acquaintance. 'But I forgot: you're only a Parliament man now. Well, there is a corner; and there isn't a corner: for, it remains to be seen if it can stand the January business. No man, not even Morris Ranger, can keep the market in a corner for ever. Speculation is a blessing, but not as some men speculate. This particular corner, I believe, George, is going to become an open square. There'll be another big arrival this week, and then we'll see.' And so the old acquaintance left him.

Suffield returned to the office, where he found his son busily hearing and speaking through the telephone. He nodded to his father, murmuring aside, 'I heard you had been here, dad,' and went on with his occupation. After a little while George hung up the telephone mouthpiece and sat down.

'And what,' he asked, 'has brought you down here, dad?'

'You haven't got M'Fie's letter, then?' said the elder. 'Where, my lad, is your Daniel Trichinopoly?'

'Where?' echoed George; and the father saw the son turn paler than he had ever known him.

'Let me tell you, my lad, so far as I know,' said Suffield; and recounted to his son the story of the Philosopher from the beginning to the end.

'Gone!—is he?' said George, gnawing his thumb, and evidently putting a constraint upon himself. 'With copies of the plans? He certainly ought to have been here to-day, and he is not! The scoundrel!—Wait a moment,' said he suddenly; 'I'll make an inquiry.'

He turned round to his writing-table and scribbled a note. He blew through a tube, and a clerk appeared. He handed the note sealed. 'Wait for an answer,' said he; 'and make as much haste as you can.'

When the clerk was gone he explained his action to his father. 'You know,' said he—'you remember I told you—that Daniel put that hundred Uncle Harry left him into the bank. He has been speculating with it, I believe, and made something more of it. If he is really gone, he'll have taken that with him.'

'Just so,' said his father. 'And it seems to me, George, my lad, that there must ha' been a deal of speculation going on inside the firm, for him to go against th' rule. When I was looking after the business myself I made it a rule—"No betting on horse-races or gambling in stocks

here!" I'd seen too much harm come o' them, and I had made up my mind that no man that betted or speculated was fit to serve wi' me. I did not think, my lad, o' saying ought like that to you when I put you in charge, because I thought you had a proper, straight, clear business head on you.'

'But, my dear dad,' said George, 'everybody speculates in these days: where's the harm in speculation?'

'The great harm in speculation, my lad,' said his father, with something like sternness, 'is that it makes you unfit for proper business. When I was a youngster I betted a sovereign on a horse; that sovereign became five; but what became of those five I never could tell: it was "lightly come, lightly go." And I said to myself, "We'll ha' no more o' this!" But harm or no harm, the thing for you is that it must be either business or speculation: the man isn't born yet that can do both properly. If he tries to do it, he comes a cropper with either the one or the other.—Hast thou been speculating?' he asked plainly.

'Well—yes, father,' answered George, much disquieted by the elder's direct question and uncompromising tone; 'I have.'

'Humph!' exclaimed his father; 'I'm disappointed in tha, lad.—Cotton, I suppose?'

'Yes, father; cotton.'

'Much?'

'Well—that depends upon what you might think much.'

'We'll go into that presently. I keep hearing about a corner in cotton: dost tha know ought o' that?'

'Yes; I know something of it.'

At that critical point the clerk returned and handed George a note.

'It is from the bank manager,' said he, when he had opened it. "'Mr Trichinopoly himself withdrew his account on December 22d." That's more than a week ago! It's the day he went for his holiday!'

'Drew the money and went off to London at once, I suppose,' said his father. 'Now, we'd better see that he hasn't drawn anything of ours.'

EILEAN DHU AND ITS FREQUENTERS.

As the advance of our so-called civilisation drives many of our rarer and more interesting 'uncivilised' friends farther and farther from ordinary ken, we seek to keep their images before us as they have recently appeared. So we drop down by boat towards the quaint and perverse island that is an epitome of a kingdom. A counterpart of a lion couchant in appearance, too, so it may be taken to represent the Scottish lion. It has at least a certain Scottish persistence in its character, and declines to be readily moulded under modern conditions. The Black-backed Gull is calling hoarsely as we approach, and circles around overhead with its many comrades; for this has long been a favourite haunt in the breeding season, and they know but too well, from increasing experience, that a boat bears only ene-

mies of their race. The nests are scattered about amongst the rocks and heath with the crudest of efforts after construction, and very embryonic attempts at concealment. The general colour of the eggs, and the very simplicity of the grass 'wisp' in a slight hollow, are indeed their greatest security. And this holds good with all its fellows about, whether Lesser Black-backed or Herring Gull. The piping Oyster-catcher, with its restless excitability and constant vociferations, dashes hither and thither, from shore to heathery knoll and back again, racing energetically along the beach after it drops upon it, and living in a mingled fool's paradise of having misled the intruder from its nest, and a purgatory of fear lest it should not have done so. If it only kept quiet, it would do better, as the eggs among the gravel of the beach are generally safe enough from an ordinary eye. What a row to be sure, as if all the world were after you! Your manners have not that repose that mark the proper aristocrat. You are only a wild-duck, startled out of your equanimity and your nest. There goes another with equal trepidation. They lie close, and conceal themselves and their nests dexterously, but beyond that they haven't an idea. In place of slipping through the heather and rising some distance off, they lose their heads, make all the row they can in their terror and surprise, and practically give up the game.

The rarer ducks we do not come upon in their accustomed haunts. Yet in these shallow holes under the fallen rocks the red-breasted Merganser, or Sawbill Duck, and even the Orange-bosomed Goosander, used to deposit their eggs, and trust to escaping the eyes of the enemy. But a greater and more ruthless enemy than man has too often found them out, and lived in too close proximity; for the Gray or Hooded Crow is too partial to eggs, and finds this mode of living so easy and agreeable, that it long made its nest in that aged elder-tree up amongst that debris of fallen rocks. Since our last raid upon it, as an enemy of rarity and beauty, it has shifted its nursery, but cannot be very far away. In its near vicinity were the nests of the brilliant Sheldrake, far under the larger stones, so as to be practically in burrows; yet they have not escaped the ravages of these gray rascals, and for once we do not startle a single Sheldrake to-day. Have these two ducks practically decided that it is of no use attempting to rear successors under the trying conditions, and left us thus so much the poorer? It looks very like it. Ha! here is one returning prodigal, we remark, as the Raven skulks along close to the top of the hill, and crosses the water in deadly fear and with indecent haste. It will not leave us long, however; and although it has not returned to the barrow-load of sticks on the rocky ledge, where it so long pre-empted the location, it has, like its gray congener, chosen a corner close by, but better hidden. The bold cragsman that invaded the sacred precincts behind that rocky ledge, when last it was so occupied, will never again disturb

your repose, and this year's progeny at any rate are practically safe to follow in your 'black but comely' footsteps. For a beautiful bird you are, although your ways are as dark as your sable plumes. The shepherd and the keeper are alike your deadly enemies. You have indeed, Mr Raven, no friend in feathers or in broadcloth, and to one and all appear as a type of the 'gentleman in black.'

But beautiful as you are in your glossy blues and blacks, how can you expect full consideration for your claims when you choose such very distinguished company? Just 'round the corner' on the higher part of the cliff, dwells, as it long has dwelt, the bold and beautiful Peregrine Falcon. I am grieved to think how many of the daring birds I have seen drop, never again to wing the empyrean from that rocky hold; yet, in despite of heavy losses and constant danger, there is a fascination in this bird-haunted island that enables the gay wooer of either sex soon to secure a new mate and continue the occupation. Like an old-time robber Highland chief in his eyrie, he or she, with such a point of vantage, will never fail of a mate; and is the world not made for the bold? How they flash out from the front of the cliff; and how we sympathise with the bold birds that have 'columbaria' in the cliff caves around a limited range, and seabirds at hand for a change, and duck for Sundays—with-out the green peas—and an occasional grouse for high-days and holidays. No wonder their wild 'keep' is always tenanted, despite periodic executions; for is not the female falcon the bolder and bigger and stronger of the two, and why should she hesitate to replace the slaughtered bride, at the prompt call of the bereaved widower, although in this the nesting season her risks are greater, and the demands of the young perforce draw her ever within the sphere of danger? With what pride she must look down over her domain, as she views her mate sweep back from the further shore across the intervening sea, his wings cleaving the air with a swift snap, and screeching gull or hoarse-voiced raven taking care to give it abundant sea-room.

The Kestrel, that used to nest on the other cliff, near the inquisitive rowan-tree, peering far over the ledge to watch the rare picnic parties that bivouacked beneath, has given up nesting apparently in this once happy isle, and has probably 'moved West.' Like the Yankee settler on the frontier, the place has got too civilised. Even the gay sea-swallows, that keep such good time in their advent, and are so wonderfully loyal to the place of their first choice, and in all probability the place of their birth, are beginning to thin off—or be thinned off! Is there no haven of rest to be left for those creatures that look askance at civilisation? Cannot we do something for our more bohemian brethren who love not the leash, the tether, or the hencoop? Do they not give us much in return for any little protection we can give them? What delight to view their displays of confident speed and power! What an insight into older conditions, that may yet one day be renewed conditions, when the cunning and the weak must give way to the bold and the strong, and the race again be to the swift. If we could but eliminate the hand of man from this natural gathering of rare creatures, what an

interesting study the island would provide us. In a ring-fence of greater security than Waterton's, with green to the very summit all the year, we have only to remove a few sheep or cattle to see the islet spring up into a forest of varied seedlings. Would the falcons increase then till they drove off their scared prey? Would the ducks increase and find shelter until the falcon dared not interfere? Would an internecine war take the place of the war with man, or would all settle down into a sort of recognised system of balance, in which too many of the 'stock' of the falcon would not be 'killed down,' and too many comrades would not be permitted to join in the foray? An over-accumulation of kinglets would not be likely, and each pair would keep its own rocky domain.

But the duck would revel in the deep undergrowth and heath; the gulls would hunt for the hidden nests and devour the eggs; the Grey Crow would consider that all these things were made by Heaven for its use! The Sheldrake, too, would return to the natural burrows; and the Sawbill utilise every suitable hollow. We should not have removed, perhaps we should have hardly lessened, the severity of the struggle for existence; but yet it would be less violent and artificial. Are we to be able to preserve the inhabitants of these spots where the rarer creatures gather; or will another ten years see as great a diminution of, and indeed, in some cases, disappearance of them, as the last decade has done? Will the otter still be able to green the turf near his lair; or would he decline to accept life under easy-going conditions, and seek some sterner scene of labour, should any protection be vouchsafed? There is so much that such an isle, under a kindly but observant eye, could tell us about; so much that we particularly wish to know about, that it seems a pity these little rendezvous for birds 'not generally known' should not be protected, in the interests of lovers of nature and of human nature!

ELSIE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

WE were sorry when the vicar died, as he did in the following May, rather suddenly. I had reckoned on his joining our hands at midsummer, having a liking for his quiet impressiveness, so different from the sleepy automatism we had been accustomed to at Norton Priors. His reading of a burial would make all eyes wet; but, like April rain, there was a touch of sun in it, and the mourners went away easier at heart from the comfort he had given them. He had a way of joining happy couples which made the homeliest faces beautiful, for the sense that heaven itself had blessed them, and that there was no 'for worse' about it. And when the christenings came, he would turn every heart towards the little ones by his tenderness of way and the love for them beaming from his eyes.

Elsie was reminding me of these things, and telling how she came to admire and to work for him, as we walked in the lane the night of the funeral day. It was late, for she had been at a bedside at Nemoton till the 'bus had set out to meet the last up-train. I had been to the

funeral, and had seen Henry St John there, but was afraid to tell her so, and she avoided asking, though her thoughts must have turned to him many times, as she walked to and fro beside me talking gently of his father.

The moon rose big over Arbury Wood, yellowing to brighter gold as it mounted higher on its way; and I could see by its light the soft velvet of Elsie's eyes, and that something deep down in them which I could never fathom. I lost it as we turned for the last time and neared the mill; but as we stood beneath the privet arch leading to the garden, I saw it again, as she looked across to the moon dreamily.

'And yet there was a time,' said she, without turning her head, 'when I disliked the vicar almost to hatred. I thought him hard, and capable even of cruelty to any one who might stand in the way of any cherished wish or plan. He was'—

She shrank suddenly into the shadow of the arch, pulling me with her, and staring with wide eyes across at the stile of the croft. I looked too, and saw a tall dark figure approach it from the other side and lean on the top rail. And in the sheen of the moon I saw that it was Henry St John. Elsie trembled, and I could hear the quick thud, thud of her heart. A great ache grew to mine, and I was ready to groan when I looked across at the pale beauty of Henry's face as he gazed up at the house, thinking of Elsie. She was in my arms, and there was the man she loved.—Ah! the pain of it! For a moment my sight seemed to go; then a hot rage sent the blood round me, and I could have raised her up and hurled her across to him; but that, too, went off, and gave way to a mad sense of possession, which tightened my hold on her as she leaned heavily upon me. But she knew nothing of it, for, as I peered close at the pale oval of her face, I saw that her eyes were shut, and that her parted lips had lost their redness. I glanced back at the stile; but Henry was gone; then I laughed, and kissed Elsie's forehead passionately. Her lids quivered, and her eyes opened, staring absently up into mine, till memory came, and then she looked out again, trying gently to force herself from me.

'Let me go—how dare you!' she cried with sudden anger.

I loosed my hold, and stood still, the words ringing in my head strangely.

'Forgive me, George—I was hasty. I don't think I am quite well. Shall we say good-night?'

I said the word, and no more, and watched her glide away. But she turned again and ran back, and held her lips up for the kiss she had denied me. Could any man stand it? I caught her up and asked God to bless her always. And bless her He did in his own good way, though it was hard to see at the time that He had the handling of it.

For from that night Elsie was never the same to me. As our marriage day neared she appeared to lose all heart in things, all desire to say or do; and seemed no better than a parched lily that hangs its head in hopelessness. Her fresh comeliness left her; her face thinned down; and sometimes her eyes had in them a look like a spent deer when it falls and awaits the hounds at its

heels. I could bear it no longer, and saying nothing to any one, set out for London to where Henry St John had gone the day after the funeral. It was Saturday night when I arrived; but I traced him on the following morning to a big church in the suburbs, where I saw him in his vestments, assisting in the service. I sat till it was over, and then sought him at the Clergy House, as they called it, adjoining the church.

As simply as I could, I told him how things were—that he must marry Elsie, and not I. He listened quietly, his face a shade paler, and his blue eyes softening and hardening by turns. When I had done, he got on his feet, and paced up and down in a troubled way. I sat still, feeling very rough and coarse in such a fine room and beside such a man. He sat down again, and now I saw that his eyes had hardened and remained so. In a slow, deliberate way, he began to explain how he was placed; that out of love of his father, and a strong predilection for the work of his Church, he had resolved to devote himself to it, and to make no other ties. He had doubted the sincerity of Elsie's refusal, but had accepted it, from pride partly that he should be refused, and out of fear that he might for ever estrange himself from his parent by persisting in his suit. He had now reason to suspect that his father had seen Elsie, and prevailed upon her, by forcible arguments, to refuse him. I might have made this clear to him, but held my tongue, and let him go on, which he did eloquently, and with much good sense from his point of view.

But I thought of Elsie, and struck in impatiently. 'Sir,' said I, 'you can no more love mankind without first loving some one about you, than you can make a wheel without a hub. God made you two for each other, as He made the laws which show that every man can work better under the chastening influence of a good woman and of the home she hallows, than without such aid. But whether celibacy be right or not for one in your calling doesn't affect the duty before you. You have made Elsie love you, and you will mar, if not ruin her own life unless you take her to you and give her the loving support of yours. Man! man!—can you hesitate? Why, she's worth a thousand of you!'

'So she is, Crannock,' said he quietly and without offence at my outburst; 'and you don't know how your words try my fealty to the mission I have taken up.—Leave me; let me think it over; but don't hope. I may not lightly forswear principles such as mine. Go; and in a few days you or she shall hear from me, according as my decision shapes.'

And so I left him, and made my way to Norton Priors, which I reached after three days' absence. It surprised me to find the shop shut and nothing going on; but Dobson, across at the mill, seeing me staring about, walked over and made it clear. Jem and two of his children were down with typhoid fever; and Mrs Onslow had just sent for the doctor to see to Elsie, who had been sitting up with the little ones all night and had gone home feeling queer herself.

It was true enough; and in twenty-four hours Elsie was tossing about in her bed, delirious. I hung about the house, unable to do a thing, as

day followed day and she got lower and lower in the grip of the fever. It went to my heart to see her wasted face and her great eyes flaming so from their sockets, while her poor mad talk about Henry St John and the love she bore him nearly sent me mad too. But she got so weak at last that she could do no more than whisper, and that but seldom; and one night her mother and the doctor and I were all in the room together, expecting her to go every minute.

I had sent a telegram to Henry, telling him the news, and leaving it to himself to come or not as he liked. It was now past midnight, and the last 'bus had glided over the tan an hour ago, as I had seen from the open window. But while the minutes went on, and we sat saying nothing, a sound was borne in to my ears which set my pulse at the double. It was the faintest of sounds, hardly discernible above the hushed voice of the weir; but it drew nearer and nearer, till we could all hear the horse as it galloped its hardest towards us. It was muffled a minute as it came through Arbury Wood; but again the hoofs rang out, and in another three minutes were echoing like thunder in the quiet of the village. I looked from the window, and saw the horse on its haunches as the rider pulled up and leaped from the saddle. He saw my face at the casement, and I remember his breathless cry as he looked wildly up:

'Is she alive?—Elsie!—I've come to see her. Let me in, for God's sake!—She must not die!'

His voice rang into the room with odd effect on us all. Elsie heard it, and made a slight movement, murmuring his name. Then she breathed a faint little sigh; and the doctor bent his head anxiously, as if he feared her heart had stopped. But no—it was beating steadily; and he looked up with a light in his eyes, saying in a whisper that Elsie was saved.

I met Henry on the stairs, and told him what he had done. His head sank on my shoulder, and he wept like any girl. And I couldn't blame him, for my own eyes were wet, and my heart ready to split with its gladness. In such moments we do strange things, and what did I do then but kiss Henry on the temple, feeling drawn to him irresistibly. He had saved Elsie; and she loved him, and had every right to love him, comely as he was, and so tender-hearted.

I carried on the mill for a year or two after that, and was always glad to hear news of their happiness away in Hampshire, where they had settled. But I sold the old place, to Higgins at last, and the carpentering to a brother of Dobson's; for poor Jem was in the churchyard along with his young ones—and then I went Winchester way to say good-bye. It was then I had my last sight of Elsie as she sat in the Rectory garden, making some tiny clothes, with soft hope in her eyes and gladness. And because she was happy, so was I; and they all thought, as they should, that I was not much the worse for my loss. So I came out to Melbourne, and let time and hard work soften it down to one of those might-have-beens which we solitaires muse of when the pipe is alight and old faces shape in the curl of the smoke.

Sweet Elsie! She has gone her way long syne, as tender things will; but she remembered me

at the last, and sent me a braid of her hair, with a sisterly word or two and a blessing, to which Henry added, 'God's will be done!' And so it all came back at the sound of the fiddle; and when I asked the lady what she'd been playing, she said it was Schubert's 'Adieu de Béranger.'

THE 'REDEMPTIONERS.'

'THE cruelty of our laws against debtors, without distinction of honest or dishonest, is the shame of our nation. I am persuaded the honestest man in England, when by necessity he is compelled to break, will early fly out of the kingdom rather than submit. To stay here—this is the consequence: as soon as he breaks, he is proscribed as a criminal, and has thirty to sixty days to surrender both himself and all that he has to his creditors. If he fails to do it, he has nothing before him but the gallows, without benefit of clergy. If he surrenders, he is not sure but he shall be thrown into jail for life by the Commissioners only on pretence that they doubt his oath. What must the man do? If he carries away his effects, he is a knave, and cheats his creditors. If he stays here, he is starved in a jail, and must end his days by a lingering death.'

Thus wrote Daniel Defoe. In his time, debtors were frequently compelled, in seeking means to extricate themselves from their embarrassments, to consent to anything, if they thereby could avoid the horrors of the debtors' prison. In many cases they took advantage of a custom that, in one form or another, had the sanction of antiquity, and being generally able-bodied men, they placed themselves in the hands of some merchant or agent, who, having effected an arrangement with the creditors, took possession of the unfortunate debtors, and hurrying them to the nearest seaport, shipped them abroad, generally to Virginia or Maryland, as so much merchandise. Sometimes the dealer accompanied his cargo, in order, if possible, to obtain a better price at the end of the voyage.

Arrived at their destination, the captives—to give them their real name—were sold to any planter whose offer would recoup the agent for the sum he had expended in purchase and transit and also allow him a handsome profit. By the terms of this sale the captive was bound to serve his new master for several years, his liberty being nominally secured at the end of that period; and from the hope of redemption and deliverance thus held out to him, the term 'Redemptioner' came to be applied to these unfortunates. But any hopes that the Redemptioner might cherish of his ultimate liberation soon proved fallacious, and he found himself plunged into fresh embarrassments long before his period of servitude had expired. Charges were made upon him for clothing, for tobacco, even for the necessaries of life—charges which he had no means of meeting, however good his inclination; and too late he found that he had, in fact, become a slave, without money, without rights, and without hope. Such friends as he had were in England, and probably had forgotten him altogether; perhaps, if even they remembered him, they were without the means of assisting him.

And the chance of money reaching the individual for whom it was intended was in those days very small. Pacific railways and 'ocean greyhounds' were unknown in the 'good old times,' and communication was slow and insecure.

Some of these Redemptioners were of course more fortunate than others, and had friends and connections more powerful and more kindly disposed, and such often ultimately obtained their freedom. But these were the exception, and not the rule, and, generally speaking, the unhappy victim laboured on from year to year, his 'redemption' receding farther and farther into the distance, till at last death put an end to his sufferings.

The dealers and merchants who carried on this shameful traffic combined the functions of the modern debt collector and the emigration agent, and traded chiefly from Belfast and Londonderry to Maryland and Virginia, though there also was a brisk trade done from Holland and Germany to the above-named colonies. These dealers were usually known as 'White Guinea Men.' They had often heavy losses, arising from the crowded state of the vessels in which the captives were conveyed; but the gains were very large, and the traffic consequently continued to flourish. On one occasion, in 1793, the yellow fever broke out in Baltimore, and no domestic servants or 'helps' could be obtained, owing to the very natural and prevalent dread of the disease. But a 'White Guinea Man' arriving from Germany, and hearing of the 'plague,' and also that no nurses were to be had in the city, conceived the idea of doing a good stroke of business, and at the same time getting rid of his cargo of Redemptioners and other deluded and trepanned emigrants. Sailing up to the city, he made known that he had 'at a good price, a few healthy servants, generally between seventeen and twenty-one years of age. Their time will be disposed of by applying on board this brig.' No doubt he reaped an excellent harvest, but one might be pardoned for hoping that he himself did not escape without a touch of 'Yellow Jack.'

The Redemptioners proper were, of course, not the only unfortunates who wore out hope and life upon the plantations of Virginia and Maryland. There were also the victims of the nefarious 'kidnappers,' men who amassed money through the credulity of intending emigrants, especially of those of the poorer class, to whom the country to which they were bound was veritably 'an unknown land.'

We have not quite rid ourselves of this species of kidnappers in these days, if we may judge by occasional revelations in police courts with regard to some emigration agents; and it will be readily understood that if such deceptions and frauds are possible now, they could be practised much more readily then.

These kidnappers had their regularly-appointed agents and offices, and a contemporary writer refers to these as follows: 'That house which they there are entering is an office where servants for the plantations bind themselves to be miserable as long as they live, without a special Providence prevents it. These fine fellows, who look like footmen upon a holiday, crept into cast suits of their masters', that want quality with deportment answerable to their apparel, are

kidnappers who walk the 'Change and other parts of the town in order to seduce people who want services, and young folks crost in love, and under an unsuccessful mind to go beyond the seas, getting so much a head of masters of ships and merchants who go over for every wretch they trepan into this misery.'

Others, too, there were among these 'white slaves' sharing their hard fate and fare, their desperate and hopeless condition, men who had been in their time in a good social position in England, but who, by some strange and unexpected reverse of fortune, an unsuccessful conspiracy, a lost battle, had been placed at the mercy of the ruling powers. Nor these alone; many others, upon whom sentence had been passed, found themselves doomed to the life-long misery of the plantations; and the gallant soldier, the desperate adventurer, the deluded emigrant, the hardened criminal, all met a common fate.

There was also a regular trade in ordinary household servants, whose condition was superior to that of the Redemptioner, in that it was to some extent regulated by special enactments. Conditional servitude, indeed, under indentures or covenants, had long existed in Virginia. Men were transported there at an expense of eight pounds or so, and were sometimes sold for forty, or fifty, or even sixty pounds. The supplying of 'white servants' became a regular business; and a class of dealers arose in England, nicknamed 'Spirits,' who sought to persuade young people to embark for America as for a land of plenty. In fact, they were sold in England, to be resold in Virginia.

In the colonies, the average price, about the year 1672, for white servants bound for five years was ten pounds or so; but for negroes, twenty to twenty-five pounds. According to the Virginia State Laws, these servants, after their term had expired, could not legally leave their employment without their masters' certificate. If, however, they did so, any one harbouring them or giving them shelter was fined thirty pounds' weight of tobacco for every day and night they were so harboured.

Any pursuit after runaway servants was made at the public expense. If the master would not pay the charges, the local authorities sold or hired out the servant, when captured, to recoup themselves.

Another regulation was that no minister should marry any servants unless he had a certificate from both masters that they fully consented. If he disregarded this prohibition, and performed the ceremony, he was liable to a penalty of ten thousand pounds' weight of tobacco.

Time went by, and at last, though very gradually, public opinion in America took a healthier and a higher tone. The condition of the Redemptioner and his fellow-sufferers began to be inquired into, and in some respects ameliorated. It was enacted in Maryland, in 1817, that there should be in future an official in every port to register the apprenticeship of servants, or the engagement of Redemptioners and other emigrants. Unless drawn up and secured by this official, no agreement was considered binding. Minors were not allowed to be sold, excepting by their parents or next of kin, an exception that seems odd, to say the least of it. Certainly,

the 'incorrigible' lads and lasses of those days must have been much more readily dealt with than they are at present. There is, in fact, a *cause célèbre* upon record in the year 1743, in which one James Annesley claimed the earldom of Anglesey from his uncle, who, he alleged, had caused him to be kidnapped and sold at thirteen years of age. He gained the case and the estates, but did not press for the title, a barren honour, which the uncle continued to hold until he died.

The new regulations were in the main beneficial, though they were, of course, often evaded in various ways, chiefly by bribing the Government official. Failing this, they were now and again openly broken through.

As with the later trade in negroes, the profits were too large for the traffic to be lightly relinquished, and it was not till the beginning of the present century that it eventually died out through the spread of free emigration.

Black slavery has always had its defenders, and no doubt white servitude was not less fortunate. Yet it seems amazing that such a state of things could ever have been permitted in a civilised country, and that custom and law, both in England and America, could ever have promoted and sanctioned the institution of the Redemptioners.

CURIOUS SHOWERS.

In August last year the inhabitants of Bjelina, in Bosnia, were treated to a rather unusual meteorological phenomenon in the shape of a shower of fish which accompanied a severe thunder-storm from the north-west. The strangest part of the occurrence was that the fish were alive and resembled whittings, and that they were caught in the gutters by the children, and brought in by wondering peasants from the fields, meadows, and high-roads. Possibly, had there been scarcity in the neighbourhood, this curious shower would have been hailed as a direct intervention of Providence on behalf of the inhabitants; but, as there seems to have been no distress, there is no knowing what they thought of it, though it goes without saying that they attributed it to any cause but a natural one. As a matter of fact, the visitation, though comparatively rare, is explicable on perfectly natural grounds. The fish were undoubtedly taken up into the air by a water-spout, carried along by atmospheric currents, and dropped, as it happened, over the village of Bjelina. They had not been held 'in suspension,' so to speak, for long, because the fish were alive when they fell to the ground.

But mere distance from a large expanse of water does not count, for these fish-showers are known to have occurred many hundreds of miles away from the nearest coast. In South America, some years ago, a tract of country forty-three miles square was found thick with fish; and—to omit a host of other such instances abroad—in England on at least one occasion some pasture-land a considerable distance from the sea was found strewn with bushels of small fishes. We know ourselves of a shower of fish-bones which

fell only last year in the heart of Wales. Such showers are frequent enough at sea, and every sailor can tell of their occurrence. Mariners can also tell of showers of dust, of small animals, or of plants falling upon their vessels thousands of miles out on the ocean. These are explained on much the same principle as the fish-showers on land, with the substitution of a sandspout for a waterspout.

Mud-showers and frog-showers, of which we hear rather frequently, are caused in the same way. M. Peltier has put a frog-shower on record as having happened within his own experience. He speaks of seeing the frogs fall on the roofs of the houses, and rebound from thence on to the pavement below. A mud-shower occurred along the Union Pacific Railway at Onaga on the 4th of April 1892. The rain, we are assured, commenced early in the day, and soon the south and east sides of all the houses were covered with yellow clay. A Union Pacific train which ran through the storm had its windows covered; and the headlight was so completely plastered that the light was shut in, and the train ran in darkness into Rossville, where the mud had to be scraped off. As far east as Topeka the windows showed that the edge of the mud-storm had extended this far. It is said to have been even more severe fifty miles north-west.

Blood rain and black rain are only varieties of this phenomenon. Of the latter, we hear nothing worth speaking of nowadays; but an almost historic shower of this sort fell at Montreal in the earlier part of this century, and enveloped the then youthful city in a black pall, which must have been worse than a prime London fog, seeing that it gave the inhabitants the idea that the last day had come, or was at least on the point of coming. 'Blood' rain is caused by the presence of infinitely little plants, animalcules, or minerals in the globules. In one instance of a shower that fell at Bristol and in the Bristol Channel, the analytical examination showed that the red colour was due to ivy-berry seeds. In medieval times, blood rain was a prodigy; in the East it was connected with the belief that man was produced from blood that fell from heaven.

It was a portent as remarkable as the 'bloody host,' which, while it flourished, probably caused the death of more Jews in this country than any other individual superstition directed against that people. It is described as 'an appearance of blood flowing from bread when bitten;' but it manifested itself in other articles of food besides bread, and sometimes seemed to drop from the air. It will be remembered by historical readers that while Alexander was besieging Tyre, this prodigy and the other one of 'blood rain' occurred in one day, much to the consternation of the soldiers.

More curious than blood rain in regard to the mere colour was the red, violet, and grass-green shower which fell in the south of France many years ago, and made a patchwork of the big lake, whereon its manifestation was the more noticeable. This shower, again, was caused by untold myriads of differently-coloured animalcules.

Spider-showers are another curiosity worthy of mention in this connection. The spiders are gossamers; and all those who have read White's

Natural History of Selborne will call to mind his description of the showers he observed. One of these, he tells us, continued for nearly a whole day, and the gossamers descended from a surprising height; for when one gentleman ascended a hill near at hand, some three hundred feet high, he found that the spiders were dropping from a region in the atmosphere that was still beyond the reach of his gaze. Dr Martin Lister named this aerial spider 'the bird,' from the facility with which it can traverse the air; and upon one occasion, when he observed a shower of them at York, he ascended to the top of the Minster, and found that even at that altitude he was still below their level—that they were descending from some region above that standpoint. Darwin, another observer of spider-showers, describes one which he saw in 1832, when on board the *Beagle*, at the mouth of the La Plata River, when the vessel was some sixty miles from land; and he seems to have been the first to notice that each parachute of gossamer carried a spider *aëronaut*, for he not only observed them arrive on board the ship, but he also saw them reproduce a new parachute, and on this frail bark launch forth again 'on the bosom of the palpitating air.'

These gossamer showers are great mysteries, and once seen, cannot very readily be forgotten; for the air on these occasions becomes literally crowded with the tiny parachutes mentioned, which are composed of a few threads of almost invisible gossamer, with a small but lively spider attached. This may be regarded as the most beautiful thing in strange showers.

The most marvellous, perhaps, is manifested in the way of hail-showers—that is, if we are to take for truth all we hear of this head. There is no reason in the world to doubt the assertion that hailstones, like rain, have been known to fall from a perfectly cloudless sky. But those of little faith may very well doubt the stories that have been told about the size of the stones themselves. Bluish hailstones weighing one hundred pounds each are said, by Count de Mezeray, to have fallen in Italy in the year 1510. Hailstones 'as big as a man's fist' are almost as common as potatoes. A storm that occurred in 1809 is said to have broken over two hundred thousand panes of glass in London alone; and in Hertfordshire, another storm is reported to have caused the death of several people. Blocks of ice weighing four and a half pounds fell at Cazoria, in Spain, on June 5, 1829; and in the south of France, in October 1844, other blocks fell which turned the scale at eleven pounds.

THE CHINESE BARBER.

THE services of the *tito-yen*, or Barber, are in constant request in China, and a much more extended and complicated process is gone through than is the case at our English hair-dresser's, whose operations are generally limited to hair-cutting and clean-shaving. Having settled his customer comfortably in his chair, the Chinese barber commences by scraping, not only the cheeks and chin of his victim, but also the whole of his head, with the exception of one spot

on the top of his cranium, from which sprouts the inevitable queue; this is called by the Chinese *pient-tsi*, and by us commonly pigtail, a name much resented by the Chinaman as a vulgar and insulting designation of the 'sacred lock.' Having succeeded in shaving carefully round the pigtail, leaving the head in a bright and shining condition, resembling a well-polished billiard ball, the barber begins to perform upon his customer in a manner which can only be adequately described as 'punching his head.' This is done by clenching his fist and dealing to the long-suffering patient several sharp taps or punches with the tips of his knuckles, varied by a process of kneading or pounding, the barber digging his knuckles into the ill-fated headpiece of his customer in a most merciless fashion, suggesting that the operator is some philanthropic but fanatical phrenologist who is seeking to improve the character of his subject by altering the undulations of his skull and changing the relative positions of his 'bumps.'

The reason for these eccentric actions on the part of the Celestial barber is that his customer finds—or imagines that he finds—his brain cleared and his mind relieved; worry, care, depression, and dullness dispersed, and a feeling of lightness, brightness, and vivacity induced. As he is probably just recovering from the depressing and enervating effects of an opium stupor, with its strange and dreamful delirium, this result is not undesirable if business has to be transacted, in which, by the way, the Chinaman usually displays quite as much shrewdness and ability as our own merchant or tradesman.

After the punching and pounding process is concluded, the barber at once proceeds to unfasten and unplait the long tail of hair, which reaches to the ankles of the wearer, and having combed, brushed, and begreased it—much after the fashion of the long-tressed maiden of to-day—he, with slow and assiduous carefulness, replaits it, and ties it with a piece of black braid which hangs in two short tails at the end.

By this time one would think that sheer exhaustion would prevent the pitiless and persecuting barber from committing further atrocities upon the person of his mild and lamb-like subject; but no; renewed activity possesses the ruthless, unrelenting hair-dresser, and with frantic energy he seizes the hands of his victim, pulls his arms behind, and commences to twist and turn them until every joint cracks, and one would think that his shoulders must be dislocated. The muscles of the arms are next the objects of attack, and the kneading and pounding process is again gone through, then the fingers are bent backwards, the finger-bones crack again, and all the tortures of the rack appear to be endured.

Thus the operations of the tonsorial artist are concluded, he is duly remunerated, and the Chinaman walks lightly out of the shop, feeling

himself refreshed and invigorated; the Englishman staring with undisguised astonishment at the discovery that life still lingers in the body of his Celestial brother.

THE RETURN OF TANĒ.

[These lines are based on the customs and superstitions of the Maoris, or aboriginal race of New Zealand. They placed great faith in their native priests, who professed to divine the future, and at times to communicate with the dead. The last verse refers to the Maori custom of leaving their dead upon some mountain which was so sacred as to render any intrusion fatal. Mt. Tarawera, the scene of the dreadful eruption of 1886, was one of those holy mountains of burial, the Maoris having carried their dead there for fifteen generations.]

At the set of the sun from the pa* of Maroa

Strode TanĒ the chief.

On the red-wrathful brow of him, TanĒ the Toa,†

Like a wind-shaken leaf

Shook the huia‡ feather.

'Ye have offered me shame. Like the puia's§ fountain,

My soul surges o'er.

The pa of Maroa, the lake and the mountain

Shall know me no more

Till the earth meets the heavens!'

Loud murmured the people: 'Be eyes to our blindness,

Tuhotu the priest!

Shall TanĒ the loved one revisit in kindness,

When his anger has ceased,

The land of his fathers?'

Tuhotu the aged, who speaks the dark meaning

Of shade-dwelling dead,

Looking over his staff as he totters in leaning,

Saith, bowing the head,

'He shall, and he shall not!'

Many a moon on the pa of Maroa

Has flitted away;

And the multitude gathers, for TanĒ the Toa

Comes hither to-day,

And the breach is healed over.

But how cometh TanĒ? Slow rowers are rowing.

O'er brown neck and breast

The red blood of mourning on sharp shell is flowing:

The dark word is guessed

Of the Seer Tuhotu.

He comes to Maroa. The tempest shall whiten

His bones on the hill—

The Mountain of Dread where the forked fires lighten

Profaners to kill—

But his soul is in Reinga.||

JESSIE MACKAY.

* Pa, a fortified Maori village.

† Toa, great chief.

‡ Huia, a New Zealand pigeon, whose feathers were worn by chiefs only.

§ Puia, New Zealand geyser.

|| Reinga, the Maori heaven.

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THREE FAMOUS ITALIAN BRIGANDS.

A SHORT time ago the news went abroad in Rome that in the district of Viterbo the brigand Ansuini had been captured. Surprised by a patrol of carabinieri, after a lively exchange of shots, Ansuini, dangerously wounded, had fallen into the hands of justice. Unfortunately, this news was not true. But outside of Rome many people may have asked: 'What! do brigands still exist in Italy? Are strangers right, then, when even nowadays they insert the classic episode of brigandage in the programme of a projected trip to Italy?' This romantic institution has really disappeared from Italian soil, with the exception that there still exists, and at a short distance from Rome, a species of brigandage; and perhaps it will not be unacceptable to some of your readers to hear a few particulars of the history of the three remaining Italian brigands.

Ansuini, Tiburzi, and Fioravanti are the names of the brigands actually in the exercise of their calling. The last remains of a famous race, their names enjoy in Latium and on the confines of Tuscany a certain renown and an undeniable popularity. A few years back, they had a numerous band of associates. Death and the galley have by degrees reduced their number. Domenico Tiburzi, the most formidable of the three, was a cowherd at Cellere. In 1872, at twenty-five years of age, he had his first differences with the law—a highway robbery, an extortion, and a murder. Taken and condemned to penal servitude for life, in January 1874 he escaped from the salt mines of Corneto Tarquina. From then until now he has remained at large, eluding all efforts to capture him. The forest was and is now his refuge, his kingdom; there, between Civita Vecchia and Grosseto, in the wide solitudes of the *macchia*, he has lived for twenty years, defying the spies and the rewards offered by the public authorities. To any one familiar with the nature of the *macchia* this is easily understood. The word *macchia* (scrub or bush)

is here applied to regions that are really so inaccessible as to be unexplored and utterly inexplorable, abounding in glens, ravines, and treacherous precipices, the ground covered by a dense scrubby growth, surrounded by extensive deserts, where the wild horses gallop in freedom, and the malaria reigns supreme. The brigand who knows every corner of the *macchia* lives as securely as in an unknown island surrounded by the ocean. How many times has he seen from afar the glitter of the bayonets! How many times have the carabinieri passed, grazing the hedge where he was lying curled up! How many times, disguised and unrecognisable, has he descended into the village, and even into Rome itself, perhaps to enjoy a little variety and buy some powder and balls!

Tiburzi, strong in his refuge and in his terrible fame, which he takes good care every now and then to renew, lives—permit the expression—as a man of honour. He does not rob; he does not steal; he does not harm any one. He levies taxes after his own fashion. The wealthy of the neighbouring districts pay him every month a fixed contribution: money, wine, bread, weapons, and tobacco. In recompense he guarantees the safety both of their lives and of their property: in short, he acts as a kind of public guardian for them in the *macchia*. The relations between the brigand and the people are of a most friendly description. The poor when destitute of food come to Tiburzi; he also gives them coin, with which he is always well provided. Do not imagine that such amicable relations exist only with the poor and uneducated country-people. It is the rich landowners who pay most willingly the tax which brings them an entire security for their rural property. But woe to the spy! Sooner or later, be it from afar or near, the terrible hand of the brigand strikes him; and an atrocious vengeance rouses the authorities, and convinces the unbelievers of the existence of the legendary brigand. In this way Tiburzi lives. Seventeen different warrants hang over him; but, excepting the first crimes, the others are all for

acts of vengeance against supposed or dreaded spies.

In these eighteen years of hiding from justice, Tiburzi had several companions; but, less skilful or less fortunate than he, they have all perished. The last were Domenico Biagini and Luciano Fioravanti. In 1889, on the 6th of August, the three together were surprised by the carabinieri; a sharp fight ensued: Biagini fell dead. The other two succeeded in escaping into the unknown parts of the *macchia*, where they disappeared like spectres. They disappeared, but vowing vengeance. They believed the spy was a certain Raphael Gabrielli, land-steward to the Marquis Guglielmo, although the carabinieri have since declared it was not true. A year after, in June 1890, Gabrielli was overlooking the working of fifty reapers on the Guglielmo estate at Pozzatelli, about three miles from the Montalbo Orbetello. At eight o'clock in the morning the reapers stopped for a few minutes to take rest and food. Two armed men suddenly issued forth from the side of the morass which bordered on the estate. One of them advanced to Gabrielli, and said to him: 'Get up and come with us.' The latter refused. The speaker seized him, and dragged him a few steps to where his companion stood ready with the pointed gun. Before that entire company of fifty persons, powerless and terrified, was the horrible deed perpetrated. 'Remember the 6th of August,' cried the avenger, as he fired two shots into the unfortunate man's brain. Tiburzi and Fioravanti reloaded their weapons, and crying, 'In this way spies are treated,' disappeared again into the morass.

Ansuini, the chief of another band of brigands, was born at Norcia, and is about forty-seven years of age. He worked first as a mason, and then as a chairmaker. He served in the 28th infantry regiment; and at the assizes of Spoleto, in 1875, he was condemned to ten years' imprisonment for theft. He underwent his term at Lecco and at Pianosa. Returning to his native district in 1885, he was, the following year, again before the assizes of Spoleto, charged with murder and highway robbery. He was condemned to death, the capital sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life, and he was transported to the penal settlement of Monte Filippa. On the night of the 9th or 10th of April 1890 he escaped in company with three other felons. At first they scoured the adjacent country, depredating, robbing, and committing numerous highway aggressions. Then, having lost in various conflicts two of his comrades, he succeeded—along with Giovanni Menichetti—in gaining his native territory, a district somewhere between Viterbo and Norcia. These two men became the terror of the country.

Ansuini is a man of medium stature, of a slight build, with chestnut hair and mild blue eyes. He can both read and write. When in prison, he was apathetic, but always exemplary in his conduct. He is not a ferocious man, such as brigands are popularly pictured; but he is instead as cunning as a fox. The escape from the settlement was due to his astuteness; the turnkeys say it was a real masterpiece of cunning. His was the head that planned; Menichetti's, the arm that executed. Menichetti, whom report paints as having been a man of a violent and

sanguinary disposition, was killed in June 1891, in the morass of San Magno, during an encounter in which also a brave brigadier of carabinieri lost his life. From that time Ansuini has lived alone. He also, like Tiburzi, organised a system of taxation, only that in his case the tax is voluntary; in other words, Ansuini, being a native of the place, always finds some one ready to supply him with food; and in case of danger, to give him a secure hiding-place. He, too, is implacable against spies.

Ansuini and Menichetti one time had plotted against a priest named Onesti of Viterbo. The plot failed, because Onesti, warned in time, was able to save himself. The bandits imagined that a certain Pasquale Signorelli had betrayed them. Shortly after, Signorelli disappeared, and his poor wife received a letter, signed by Ansuini, demanding two thousand francs for the ransom of her husband. The woman obeyed; but no one came to claim the desired sum, and Signorelli did not reappear. Three months after, on the margin of the morass, his unburied body was found. Ansuini had left a written statement to the effect that, having punished the traitor as he merited, he had no need of his money!

Besides these three principal brigands, in the last few years there have been others of minor importance, but fortunately they have been destroyed. The greatest contingent is always furnished by the escapes from prison; and it is easy to understand the reason why. But it is difficult to understand why these escapes are repeated so often, and above all, why prisoners are kept in the prisons of their own districts, instead of sending them to fulfil their sentences in others far distant, where it would be more difficult to escape; and even if they escaped, it would be impossible to evade pursuit. A short time since, five men succeeded in escaping almost miraculously from the works of the fort of Monte Mario. They all, except one, fell into the hands of justice, miserable, ragged, and dying with hunger, precisely because they were natives of other districts, and could not obtain any assistance from the people of the neighbourhood.

Heavy rewards are offered for the capture of the three principal brigands: ten thousand francs for whoever will deliver up Tiburzi; four thousand for Fioravanti; seven thousand for Ansuini. However, owing to the nature of the place and the peculiar system of brigandage practised up to the present time, all the efforts of the authorities have been in vain.

Many strange tales are told in connection with the adventures of these outlawed men. One day, it is narrated, a gentleman, one of the so-called tax-payers to Tiburzi, met him in the country. After the usual greetings, Tiburzi said to him: 'Oh! by the way, do you know that Spadini [the well-known Roman gunsmith] has a magnificent English repeating rifle: be kind enough to buy it for me.' The gentleman instantly promised to do so, but never thought more of the rifle or of Tiburzi, until, some considerable time after, he again encountered the latter. The thought of his forgotten promise suddenly flashed across his mind. In some trepidation, he was beginning to excuse his shortcoming, when the brigand affably anticipated him. 'Don't trouble yourself; I have already got

the gun,' he said, pointing to the weapon on his shoulder.

Another time, a company of hunters halted in a retired part of Viterbo. Whilst the supper was being prepared, a handsome man of distinguished mien came forward, and greeting the landlord, seated himself at the common table: he ate, drank, and took part in the general conversation, relating himself many spirited stories of the chase. He accompanied the hunters for a considerable distance on their way, and finally politely took leave of them. 'Who is that fine fellow?' one of the party asked the landlord. 'That is the famous Tiburzi the brigand!' he replied.

Thousands of anecdotes of this nature could be told. Contrary to the belief held by the majority of English people, the authorities, and especially the carabinieri, spare neither trouble nor risks to catch the offenders; but perhaps the proper men and the right means are not always adopted. Once, a dozen carabinieri were sent into a certain part of the country, all provided with new clothes and hats precisely similar, which ingenious disguise of course betrayed them a hundred yards off. Half an hour after their arrival, everybody in the country knew that the strangers were police in disguise. Another time, a well-known officer sent to take one of these brigands was furnished with the magnificent sum of four pounds to spend in lavish liberality!

Notwithstanding these facts, it is satisfactory to note that the conditions of public security are in a much better state than they were some years ago.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER I.

But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They make enow themselves to vex them.

BURNS.

'I DON'T really see,' Dr Merridew said, scratching his head thoughtfully—'I don't really see how it is to be done this year, Sage. To be sure, there's been a lot of illness, and every one says the doctors ought to be making their fortunes; but, in my experience, it's always the poor people who are ill and require my services, while the rich go to a specialist. And then lodgings are so very expensive at this time of year, and the boys eat such quantities, bless them! at the seaside.—It is a remarkable thing,' went on the doctor, 'that just in the one point in which I could supply my family gratis—that is, medical advice—they never avail themselves of the opportunity; nor do they ever require drugs, which I could get at reasonable prices. I wouldn't mind betting, now, that bakers' children don't consume a quarter the amount of bread mine do; and butchers' families, on the same principle, are vegetarians. Such is the perversity of human nature! I think this year that, instead of going away from London, I will make up a few bottles of tonic, and they can have Tidman's Sea Salt.

Sage, who was used to her father's tirades when

holiday-time drew near, only sighed sympathetically, and went on 'larning a pair of serge knickerbockers that would be quite good enough to wear on the beach. There was so much of that sort of thing to be thought of before the annual exodus from London.' If she had not been such a contented, happy, little soul, she might have wondered sometimes if the enjoyment was worth the bother. Even Dr Merridew himself did not fully appreciate how much was demanded at these times of Sage's wise, young head and busy, little hands. He thought, after the manner of men-folk, that when he had provided the sinews of war, which, joking apart, was not by any means an easy matter, there was nothing more to be done except just to pack up their traps and be off; and he did not recognise what a difficult operation that was with four happy, healthy creatures between six and twelve, who seemed to have a special talent for wearing out knees of stockings, seats of knickerbockers, and elbows of jackets.

It was not so very long ago that Sage herself had been one of these irresponsible beings, and sometimes, I am afraid, she had thought mother unnecessarily fussy, and too much absorbed in the mending up of sea-side clothing and the packing of boxes. Sage had small arrangements of her own then that seemed to her of infinitely greater importance than sand-shoes and jerseys. Her colour-box had to be reviewed, which in moments of reckless generosity she would sometimes lend to the boys to beguile a wet afternoon or tedious recovery from a cold—a generosity which she bitterly rued when the box was returned to her in a chaotic condition. Amidst all the manifold preparations, mother always found time to remember that colour-box, and toward the girl, for somewhat unwilling help over the mending-basket, with a hardly-spared coin from her purse, and with half an hour to run off to the big artist's colour-shop, which at that time contained everything that Sage thought worth living for at that period.

Sage often tried to persuade mother to save the money expended on the serge frock and neat, little sailor hat, which were always provided for Sage herself, and let her spend it on those brushes or sketch-book or paints, that were so much better worth having; and perhaps if Sage had been Mrs Merridew's own little daughter, she might have been persuaded to let the school frock or anything do; but fond of her as she was—and no mother could have been fonder—there was still that lurking feeling that people might think she let her step-daughter go shabbier than her own, which prevented her yielding to the girl's wishes.

Among all the stock characters of fiction, I think the bad step-mother is the one least often found in real life; and certainly Sage's experience was not exceptional, and it was only by extra fondness and preference shown to her that any difference was to be seen. Perhaps it was that kindness which it has been so truly said we do not show to those we really love. There is no feeling of kindness to those we love very much; when the love is less, the need of kindness comes in: a mother is never *kind* to her child, a step-mother is.

And so Mrs Merridew was very kind to Sage—

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so kind, that the motherless girl never felt for a moment the want of a mother; she never remembered or wished for anything better than the kindness that was so near akin to a mother's love. But when Sage was only fifteen, Mrs. Merridew died, and then the time of kindness and tender consideration came to an end, and Sage herself stepped into the mother's place, and had to think and care for others, and put herself and her poor little paint-box quite out of sight. She had had dreams before that of an artistic life, having certainly a facility with pencil and brush that might have been called considerable talent in more appreciative circumstances. But father was too busy, and too much disposed to depreciate himself and all his belongings in a half-joking way; and mother, dear and kind as she was, and considerate, as we have said, in regard to filling the paint-box, knew nothing at all of such things, and was inclined to look as admiringly on Kitty's rudimentary ideas of a pig, a square object with a ringlet at one end and a nob at the other; or on Will's never-ending trains with much smeared smoke, applied with the end of the finger, as on Sage's more ambitious performances.

But when mother died, darning and cutting bread and butter seemed somehow to fill the place of drawing, and small household cares to blot out day-dreams.

If Sage had been ten years older, she would have been overwhelmed with the responsibility of her position; but at fifteen there is a blessed elasticity and power of recovery that every year lessens; and though she might shed a few hot tears over account-books that would not add up right, or lie awake for a few minutes, hot and indignant, over some piece of impertinence from the servants, or imagine dreadful possibilities when the boys were late in coming home from school, the intensity of such feelings did not last long and rankle, as it would have done in later years; the tears could be dried, and the account-books laid aside and forgotten; the indignation was slept away, and did not seem half so bad next morning; and nothing ever really happened to the boys.

Then, too, father was a very reassuring court of final appeal, though she sometimes wished he would take things more seriously.

'Won't come right, eh?' he would say; 'nor do my accounts ever. I never could make two and two come to four. Why should they? I daresay they don't in the planet Mars.—How much have you got left? That's the most important thing to find out. It's a mercy I have not to send in bills with all the items, or I should not have a patient left when they discovered the weakness of my addition.—One-and-fourpence-halfpenny wrong? Phew!—a long whistle!—that's serious. I think putting it down as 'sundries' is demoralising; suppose we put it down as lost, in rather large letters. There is a virtuous feeling when one has confessed one's misdoings, and they are writ large.'

Then, again, about Mary Jane's misdemeanours; he was more amused than offended at her declaring as she weren't a 'eathen slave to clean two pair of master's boots in a day, as were that wore out as no gent didn't ought to wear them; and the last place as she was at the master wore

patent leathers and new constant—he *were* a gentleman. 'They *are* old,' he said, holding up one foot reflectively. 'Mary Jane is quite right. But they are desperately comfortable. I am not sure that I ever had a pair of patent leathers; only don't tell Mary Jane, or I might sink still lower in her estimation.'

Then, as regards anxiety over the boys, he used to laugh at Sage's grave little face, and tell her that when she had been married twice and had known what real trouble was, she would not be so inclined to forestall it by imagining what might never come to pass.

'You were the only one I was ever really anxious about, little wisdom. I had a fearful attack of indigestion when you were cutting your teeth. Nothing affects the digestion as badly as anxiety, and I developed distinct symptoms of heart disease when you had the measles, from pure agitation. It is mostly people who have no cause for anxiety who are the most anxious. The most easy-going, happy-go-lucky people are those who live on a volcano that may overwhelm them at any moment. If you come to think of it, what a silly thing anxiety is! There is no end to it, if you once begin. Only think of all the perils that surround us every time we go out, leave alone those we keep at home—infection from any one you rub shoulders with in the street, from every cab or 'bus or railway carriage—a falling chimney-pot, a runaway horse, a mad dog, even a bit of orange peel on the pavement, besides all the murderers and lunatics at large. Dear heart! one might live in a room of horrors all the time if one had the mind, without paying the extra sixpence at Madame Tussaud's.'

But at the time this story begins, Sage had had five years of housekeeping, and had attained the advanced age of twenty, and regarded herself as a very experienced person, and was so regarded also by the boys. Dr Merridew from the very first had deferred entirely to Sage, and had insisted on the boys doing the same; whatever she decided on was to be done, though sometimes his eyes would twinkle a little as he elaborately carried out a programme that was manifestly not the wisest. But this system had a very beneficial effect both as regards Sage and the boys, making her less positive and dictatorial, and them less disposed to set up their will against hers.

During these five years Sage had grown used to Dr Merridew's declaring every year the impossibility of affording a summer-holiday change, which nevertheless came to pass as regularly as the boys' holidays began; so this year she was not surprised to find, at the end of a tirade on the subject, that he had heard of a fishing village on the Dorsetshire coast which a friend of his had visited while on a walking tour, and that he had already written to ask if lodgings were to be had there.

CHAPTER II.

So, by Atlantic breezes fanned,
You roam the limits of the land,
And I in London's world abide,
Poor flotsam on the human tide.

W. WATSON.

'It's ripping!' Dennis announced authoritatively from the box as the overlaid fly laboured up

the hill and came in sight of Scar, just a cluster of thatched cottages, with yellow-washed walls, and overhanging eaves, and little wooden porches, and deep-set lattice windows, standing irregularly on either side of a steep, little village street, running down to a cleft in the cliffs, whence a steep path leads to the beach below. There were red-sailed fishing-boats drawn up on the beach; and, beyond, a wide stretch of beautiful blue dancing sea.

Dennis had had dark misgivings that Scar would prove to be one of those stuck-up fashionable places where people dressed up and walked up and down to a band; but these fears were dissipated by the first sight of the rough, little street, and the group of fishermen at the top of the path to the beach, spreading out a net to dry on the wall, while two boys were bringing up a basket heaped with beautiful shining blue and green and silver mackerel.

That first sight of Scar reassured Sage, too, of her doubts of its being worth the trouble, which this year had seemed greater than ever, the boxes being more decrepit, the family clothes less calculated for hard sea-side wear, the servants more tiresome and untrustworthy, and Dr Merri-dew himself not very well, but making light of his ailments, as he always did, and calling his headache the result of over-eating, and his weariness laziness.

'If I could only stop with you!' Sage had said regretfully that last evening. 'I shan't enjoy it a bit while you are slaving away in London; and I know you don't really think you can get away to come down even for a Sunday. I do think people might not be ill on Sundays always, or Christmas Day, or just when you most want a holiday!'

'It would be a bad job,' said Dr Merri-dew wearily, 'if people were never ill when I feel inclined for a holiday!—a bad job for our bread and butter, I mean, whatever it might be for the public at large. But when my ship comes in, and we are not obliged to think of such vulgar things as bread and butter, but have turtle soup and champagne without even ringing the bell, then you and I, Sage, will go off together for a long holiday. Where shall we go? Somewhere sunny and bright and quiet.'

'Italy,' said Sage, with great eyes fixed on this wonderful, impossible future.

'Too far,' said Dr Merri-dew. 'What do you say to Hampstead?—There,' he added, 'that is just how your mother looked when I said something provoking, and pulled up our day-dreams short.'

It was only when Dr Merri-dew was tired or out of sorts that he talked to Sage of her mother and the short romance of his life, which twenty years of hard practical work, and a happy but very unromantic second marriage, had by no means blotted from his heart and tender memory.

'She was younger than you are now, Sage, and I was little more than a boy. When I see the wise and prudent young people of the present day who can't afford to marry, and who put what they call their love—save the mark!—to cool on a shelf while they are waiting for means to provide a fitting establishment for the poor delicate thing, I sometimes wonder if it can be the same sort of feeling that carried me and Olive

right through and over all obstacles straight into Elysium. Not that I advocate imprudent marriages; don't so misunderstand me, Sage; I should be the last to advocate such, who see so much of the misery that usually ensues; but I am bound to confess that my case was an exception; and neither Olive nor I ever regretted what we had done for a moment, though it cost us all our friends, and her all that women as a rule care for—position and fashion and a society life. But it was very short, little Sage—only a year. But if life went on for a hundred years, all pain and grief and work and weariness, which, thank Heaven! it's not or anything like it, I would gladly live it out for the sake of that one year.'

And then, when Sage was worked up to romantic enthusiasm, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, he would say something painfully matter of fact—propose tripe for supper, or declare he had a flea hopping about him, and perform all sorts of grotesque wriggings and gymnastics, which made her laugh in spite of herself. But she was very loth to leave him this year; and she went away convinced that she should not enjoy herself a bit, and—the weather being hot and sultry, and the train crowded, and the children fidgety—she actually arrived at Shingle, the nearest station to Scar, with a headache, an almost unheard-of complaint, happily, in that noisy household at Dalston, and with such a white little face, that a gentleman offered to help her to carry some of the multitudinous parcels that had been added one by one to supplement the luggage, as various forgotten and in-lispensible articles turned up at the last moment.

'We'll carry it, Sage. Do let us take it—it will be so jolly useful on the beach.—Look here—Nigel hasn't anything to carry except his boat and the cricket things; he'll manage it.'

And so he did for the first ten minutes; but after that it was: 'Here, Sage, just lay hold of this for a minute while I get my knife out.'

And of course, when Shingle was reached, the whole party forgot everything but the fact of arrival, and pelted out of the train, leaving Sage to struggle with the various impedimenta.

'Oh, thank you,' Sage said to the gentleman who offered his help; 'don't trouble. The boys will carry the things.—Here, Dennis, Nigel, Will—come back directly!'

And the gentleman raised his hat and passed on with a smile at the unruly crew under the command of such a small, white, and yet determined little captain. He was a middle-aged man, with a kind, attentive face, that seemed to notice and be interested in everything, and with that particular cut, or want of cut, in his gray hair that betrays the artist; and when the fly passed him on the road between Shingle and Scar, the flyman touched his hat to him, and told Dennis that it was a painting gentleman, 'as lived up to Scar 'lil Farm and made pitchers.'

That first sight of Scar that removed Dennis's misgivings as to its being a fashionable place, also took away Sage's headache, and any doubts of its being worth the trouble, and the feeling of its being quite impossible to really enjoy anything without father.

'Don't worry your little head about me,' he

had said. 'Go away and enjoy yourself; and come back burnt as red as a lobster, if you want to be a comfort to your afflicted parent.'

She had shaken her head dolefully, feeling that loyalty demanded constant anxiety and harrowing thought; but that first sight of Scar, or perhaps it was that first breath of sea-air blowing up from that great stretch of sun-bright sea, with the refreshing smell of seaweed from the rocks left bare by the low tide, that swept away headache and anxiety; and she felt quite ashamed when she went to bed at night to remember how little she had thought of father all the evening. 'But I think he would rather I was happy.'

Scar is almost entirely inhabited by fishermen and lace-makers, many houses combining the industries, as might be known by a lobster pot at the door and a lace pillow with its bobbins in the window. Down one side of the village street ran a brisk little stream, bridged here and there by big slabs of slate; and a day or two of rain swelled it to quite a little torrent, which went rushing and tumbling down its stony bed, sweeping away the refuse of fish and cabbage stalks, which had a tendency to accumulate there in dry weather, until some public-spirited person turned to with a broom to clear the channel.

The lodgings engaged for the Merridews were about half-way down the street, and belonged to a widow, Mrs Rockett, the proprietor of the 'Black Dog,' the one little public-house of the place, opposite which modest hostelry the house was situated. The delight of the children knew no bounds when they found they were to have a regular fisherman's cottage all to themselves, with a kitchen with blue walls and a flagged floor, into which the door opened straight from the street; and with an open fireplace with a hook on which to hang the kettle; and a patchwork curtain to keep the smoke from blowing out into the room; and a black wooden settle; and a dresser, with plates and dishes of varying pattern and design displayed on it.

Behind this there was a little washhouse, out of which a very steep staircase led into the two bedrooms, whose principal furniture was two large four-post bedsteads without curtains. Washing was evidently intended to be done entirely down-stairs in the washhouse, as there was no provision made for it in the bedrooms; but Mrs Rockett prided herself on having provided elegant toilet arrangements for the young lady by having placed a very small looking-glass in the deep window of the front bedroom, with a crochet anti-macassar tastefully festooned over it.

'Mrs Rockett she know what the quality like, she do!' the admiring neighbours declared.

Mrs Rockett was a tall, stout woman, requiring a very long tape to fasten her apron where her waist was supposed to be, and with an unexpectedly soft and high voice, and a tendency to shed tears. In spite, however, of her mild manner and sentimental way of talking, she had managed to make her way as 'a widder woman left with six little steps sudden like, through her poor, dear, 'usban' missing his way on the cliff after Shingle Fair, having maybe took a drop, though temperate in his 'abits most times.'

She had kept the 'Black Dog' respectable, though it bore a bad name in old days, and Scar men were reckoned quarrelsome in their cups.

She kept a couple of cows now, and owned some of the rough cliff pasturage, and made a good deal by selling out milk—which was a luxury unknown at Scar in old times—and sending butter and cream to the Shingle market in the season. She owned, too, as I have said, the cottage opposite; and as it was empty through the death of old Joe Gash, and as his son 'as were mate on a merchantman trading with the Injies, and weren't like to be home afore Michaelmas,' Mrs Rockett placed it at the disposal of the Merridew family, supplementing old Joe's furniture with additions from her own stores, and buying one or two things from a sale at Shingle; altogether producing what to her and the neighbours appeared a very elegant effect, though she modestly apologised to Sage on her arrival for the roughness of everything, 'as ain't what you're used to, Missy, and knows myself what gentlefolks 'abits is, through having lived general, before I married my poor dear 'usban', at Mr Thompkins the draper up to Coriton; and a good master he were, though hot-tempered; and a wife as never knew what a day's 'ealth was.'

Mrs Rockett was so very discursive in her conversation, that it is difficult to record any of her utterances without being led away from the subject in hand; and that first evening, the boys thought she was never going to leave them to the enjoyment of the plentiful meal spread out on old Joe's little round table, that tipped if you rested your elbows on the edge, and led to plentiful up-settings of tea, till the peculiarity was recognised and humoured. Another table was required to accommodate the party; so another, standing considerably higher, was pulled up alongside, and both covered with the same cloth, and covered with plates of various sizes and patterns and black-handled knives and steel forks and tea-things, and a mighty tin teapot, and such a dish of lobsters as no one had ever seen, even in the big fishmonger's in the City; and a great crusty loaf; and a roll of butter that made Sage's housekeeping hair stand on end at the notion of the boys helping themselves from such an unlimited supply.

'It is just perfect here,' she wrote to Dr Merridew that evening to announce their safe arrival; 'and butter is only tenpence a pound.'

(To be continued.)

NATURE'S SANITARY AGENTS.

It is Keats who speaks of the river performing its

Priest-like task

Of pure ablution round earth's human shores.

The authors of 'The Moon'—Nasmyth and Carpenter—claim that luminary also as a scavenger for the earth. Were it not for its aid, they point out, the estuaries of our rivers would become stagnant centres of corruption. Nature's scavengers, indeed, are many, and their work interesting. Not only are physical agents, such as the foregoing and others, enlisted in the work, but organic beings, plants and animals, likewise take their share in the work of preserving the purity and health of the world. The three

agents, wind, water, and fire, are constantly at work purifying the world we live in. A hurricane, bringing destruction in its train, may yet bestow the blessing of an atmosphere purified from disease germs. Wind lifts the stagnating effluvia from the swamp, and by attenuation and oxidation deprives it of its destructive powers; the ozone-laden breeze from the ocean brings health on its wings. It is the wind, again, which gives to the ocean a part of that motion which helps to preserve its own purity and make it a purifying agency. Without motion, water is powerless; the stagnant pool is a centre of corruption. The greater motion of the ocean is due to the influence of the moon, and thus the Queen of Night becomes a cleanser of the earth as well as a lamp to lighten it in the absence of the sun.

And as the purifying effect of the tides can be traced to the moon, so that of rains and rivers may be traced to the sun. It is the sun which gives the energy to the falling raindrop and the flowing stream. By its influence, water—in the form of invisible vapour—is drawn up everywhere from land and ocean. Thus elevated, it is in a position to do work, like the raised weight of the pile-driver or a wound-up watch—it is said to have potential energy. It falls down to the earth, and collecting from the higher parts, flows down to the lowest—the ocean—in obedience to that mysterious law by which every particle in the universe attracts every other particle. Thus the dust is washed out of the atmosphere, and the refuse swept up from the surface of the earth. And the water thus poured down from the clouds to wash the earth is water in its purest form. When the chemist wishes to obtain pure water for scientific purposes, he distils it. The sun and the cold upper regions of the atmosphere form together a great apparatus for distilling the water to be used in washing the earth. Water thus set in circulation by the sun, kept in motion by wind, gravity, and lunar attraction, is our great purifier: water has become the symbol of purification.

And there is no more effective sanitary agent than fire. The ancient who made his napkin of asbestos had but to throw it into the fire when soiled, and it could not be made cleaner. And could we but build our houses of incombustible materials, the spring cleaning might be efficiently accomplished by incendiarism. London, indeed, was purified from a plague by a general conflagration. And almost the one thing which that nearly indestructible disease germ, the bacillus, cannot stand is heat.

But if heat is a great purifier, cold is no less a preserver from decay. Amid the eternal snows of the Arctic regions, the unburied carcase may lie fresh and uncorrupt for months; the flesh of the mammoth, buried in the frozen soil of Siberia, has resisted decay for untold centuries. And here, perhaps, we have one of 'nature's hints to inventors;' for meat is now largely preserved by freezing.

Electricity is also a sanitary agent. When Professor Tyndall was experimenting with atmospheric dust in his classical researches on the origin of the lowest forms of life, he found that

an electric discharge passed through a dusty atmosphere purified it, by causing the minute particles to settle. And long before these researches, it was commonly said, and believed, that a thunder-storm purified the air. Thus a scientific foundation is found for the popular belief, and the lightning flash takes its place as an accredited sanitary agent.

It was, moreover, established by the above experiments that the germs of decay, of mould, and of fermentation, are in the atmospheric dust, and that if these are kept out by a filter of cotton-wool, an organic infusion may be kept intact. Such a filter, then, to sift out the germs becomes an important agent in preserving from decay. And the above discovery, that decay depends on pre-existing germs, opens out wide fields of research in preventive methods in general science and surgery which cannot be touched upon here.

When we come to organic life, we find that almost every great division of the animal kingdom allots to some of its members the task of purification. The jackal follows the lion, and clears away the offal left by the lordly and disdainful appetite of the king of beasts ere the relics of his meal can become offensive. A taste for 'high' game is not confined to man: the wolf will disinter the buried corpse. And the partiality of rats for sewers is well known. The lofty-soaring vulture spies from afar the carcase in the desert, and ere there is time for decay, it is devoured. The carrion-crow gets its name from its carcase-eating propensities.

Fish, again, are voracious feeders, and not fastidious. In the river, the eel devours the rotting carcase; the dace seems to live by choice where the sewer enters the stream, doubtless for the sake of the diet. Among the mollusca, the carrion-eating stromb and the whelk prey on the dead bodies of fish. The garden slug is not averse to a semi-decayed leaf, and may even be seen at times to feed on a dead earthworm.

Among insects, flies and beetles may be specially mentioned. The fly lays its eggs in meat, and the young devour the rotten mass; others feed on dung. Beetles lay their eggs on the dunghill, or laboriously roll up balls of dung in which to place them; in both cases the young feed on the dung.

As an example of sanitary precautions taken for their own sake, may be mentioned the case of the bees, which cover up with wax an offensive body which cannot be removed from the hive. The great sub-kingdom to which insects belong—the Annulosa—supplies other scavengers. The earthworm feeds on decaying leaves; many crabs feed on carrion.

Thus it appears that the function of a considerable portion of the animal kingdom is, like a party of scavengers, to scour the streets and lanes of the organic world in search of the refuse and offal of the great living community; and to find, moreover, their pleasure and their reward in the work.

The great function of plants in this part of the economy of nature is to absorb the poison, in the shape of carbonic acid gas, breathed forth by animal life. Decomposing this within their tissues, they return to the atmosphere the oxygen so necessary to animal life. Decaying animal

and vegetable matter in the soil is likewise removed by them.

Thus, while one aspect of nature is that of universal change and decay, the other is that of universal restoration and purification. Wind, water, fire, electricity, and organic nature, combine to sweep, cleanse, and make pure and sweet the house we live in. But while nature thus provides for the continual purifying of his abode, the task of keeping himself clean is left to man. Hence the necessity of the frequent reiteration of that time-honoured proverb, 'Cleanliness is next to godliness,' which, perhaps, ought rather to be written, 'Cleanliness is a part of godliness.' And yet, if nature does not compel cleanliness by forcibly washing her refractory children, as she does the house they live in, she both warns and invites. It is written in plain letters which all may read that cleanliness is health and life, and that dirt is disease and death; while the flowing river and the sparkling sea both invite us to enjoy 'the purest exercise of health.' And this natural law shines forth in letters of fire as one of the fundamental truths in the spiritual world.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXV.—'HE THAT *will* BE RICH!'
(continued).

BUT there were reasons why George did not wish cheque-books and accounts and such-like trifles to be gone into then; he therefore proposed to his father that the serious business of lunch should be entertained first, since nothing of any consequence could be done before the luncheon hour must strike. His father looked at his watch, considered that he was hungry, and not at all aware that the fate of his house might be involved in his decision, he said: 'Very well. Let it be lunch first.'

George knew his father's good-nature and his affection for himself, and he set himself to interest and amuse him with other matters than those upon which they had trenched. His father had told him that he wished to get back to town that night, so that his mother might not be unduly anxious; and he was resolved that his father should go without seeing any books. He kept him as long as he could over lunch, and entertained him as richly as the elder would permit, and when he could keep him no longer, he made a bold proposal.

'You'll only tire yourself out, dad, before your journey, if you go into these things. Why not let me go through everything by myself? One person can do a thing like that better than two.'

'The second can check the first, my lad,' said his father.

'But the first can check himself,' said George, 'by going over it a second time.'

'Well, well, my lad,' said Suffield. 'Be it as thou wilt. But check thyself carefully, and let me know th' result by to-night's post. And these speculations o' thine—let me ha' a statement o' them as soon as th' conveniently can this week.'

Mr Suffield was not so foolish as to be deceived by his son's concern for his comfort: he saw there was something the young man would rather keep from him at present, and being a soft-hearted father, he was sorry for his son, and said to himself: 'I won't be hard on th' lad. He's my only son, and if he has made a mistake he shall have the chance of putting it right before he explains.' He had intended to return to London by the 'dining' train, but finding he could catch a train immediately, he went straight-way to the station, while George returned to the office.

George set to work with energy to go through his accounts and to examine his private cheque-book—the only one to which, he thought, Daniel could have access—and tick off every cheque by the banker's passbook. He wrote to his father that night that he could not discover that Daniel had stolen anything but the plans.

Still George was uneasy, and he went about with his brows wrapped in anxiety; for he knew that his speculations in cotton, though only of a kind which he himself would call 'daring,' would probably be characterised by his father as 'reckless,' unless they were justified by their event; and their event was not yet; moreover, Gorgonio—with whom he had been the day before—was in low spirits, for prices were hanging at a very uninspiring level. But the first thing that seriously disturbed and shook him was the discovery that Tanderjee—to whom he had sent round an inquiry concerning Daniel—was 'gone away on business': his partner and compatriot could not say where! Where was the Parsee gone?—and why? He could not help thinking that his absence and Daniel's disappearance were more than a coincidence. The second disturbing thing was a piece of news that shook him like the blast of doom: it came from Gorgonio, and Gorgonio had thought it of sufficient importance to send it by a special messenger.—The steamer *Rohilla* had arrived in dock from Bombay with half that consignment of cotton on which Mr Suffield had last given Tanderjee a substantial advance; and Gorgonio and this messenger of his had gone and examined the cotton together—bale after bale—and Gorgonio regretted much to say that the cotton was rubbish!—and would not fetch two-pence a pound!—Would Mr Suffield come and see it?

'Have you seen the cotton?' asked George of the messenger.

'Yes, sir,' answered the clerk.

'And you agree with Mr Gorgonio?'

'Quite, sir.'

'And of course you have been in the habit of sampling cotton?'

'For years, sir.'

'Then,' said George, 'I don't see why I should waste precious time at present in going to the Liverpool docks to look at it. Mr Gorgonio can look after it: perhaps it will prove not to be all so bad when it is fully examined.—Has Mr Gorgonio,' he asked suddenly, 'seen anything of Mr Tanderjee lately?'

'I don't know, sir,' answered the clerk.

'You don't know, then, that he has gone away nobody knows where?'

'Has he indeed, sir? That looks bad.'

'Why does that look bad?' demanded George.

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'Because this is the cotton just arrived that you favoured him with an advance for, sir; and I heard Mr Gorgonio say to-day that Mr Tanderjee would make a good thing out of it.'

'Then,' said George, 'your master suspects that, Tanderjee may have gone away?'

'Very likely he does, sir.'

The native activity and pugnacity of George's character were becoming thoroughly roused. To suspect was to be resolved. He blew through the tube by his writing-table, and a clerk appeared from the outer office. 'Are the December cheques here or at Holdsworth?'

'Here, I think, sir,' said the clerk.

He went to one of a set of drawers behind George and produced a bundle of used cheques, which he handed to George. George undid the bundle, and found that cheque for £7500 which he had given to Tanderjee—it was endorsed 'for Jamsetjee and Mookerjee, Tanderjee.' Then he took from a drawer near him his bank pass-book, and compared the date of the cheque with the date when it had been paid: the latter date was but one day later than the former. Then he turned to his clerk, who was waiting his orders. 'Take this cheque,' said he, 'round to the bank and ask the cashier to be so good as to let me know how it was paid.'

While the clerk was gone on this errand, he wrote a letter to Gorgonio, saying that he was convinced Tanderjee had wilfully committed a fraud upon him, and was evidently gone off with the proceeds; but that he was determined to find him wherever he was; and that the cotton had better be sold for what it would fetch: if it was so bad, it would not count in the market, and therefore might serve them by inducing a rise of prices; but omitting all mention of Daniel's absence and offence. The letter finished, he gave it to Gorgonio's messenger and sent him off.

His own clerk returned from the bank with the cashier's answer to his demand: The cheque for £7500 had been paid to Mr Tanderjee in fourteen Bank of England notes for £500, and £500 in gold. That was doubly suspicious. Why had he taken so large a sum in gold?—and why had he not taken the usual means of transmitting part of the amount to Bombay?—unless he had from the first intended to levant. The next thing to do was to discover whether these fourteen notes for £500 each had been changed, and—if possible—to trace them, and so—by good luck, perhaps!—come at the whereabouts of the fraudulent Tanderjee. George looked at his watch: it was too late to ask the help of the bank that day.

But he turned to and went through his papers, and set his work all in order, as if in preparation for a long absence. Then he went home in a consuming fever of impatience and resentment, with plenty of time for reflection before him. Daniel, Tanderjee, and Gorgonio!—could it be that they had all been in league to deceive and defraud him? But no! He could not believe it of Gorgonio!—his fortune was too much bound up with his own. But Daniel certainly had been hand in glove with Tanderjee, and it was probable they had gone off together. But how had Daniel managed to get at the plans to copy them? He went down to the counting-house when he had reached home and made what examination

he could. He saw—as his father had seen—clear evidence of tracing over the plans; but nothing more could he discover.

Next day he was astir betimes. Leaving orders for certain portmanteaus to be packed and to be brought into town to meet a certain train, he entered the works while the early morning bell still rang. He went round carefully and saw that all occupations were making orderly progress, and then he took the chief manager aside and said a few words to him.

'I am going to leave you in absolute charge at present, Mr Johnson. I daresay my father will come down to-morrow or the next day. That black scoundrel Trichinopoly and Tanderjee, the Parsee merchant, have played the fool with me and bolted; and I am going to find them, if I have to follow them to the other side of the world!'

'Hadrn't you better leave that to the police, Mr George?' said Mr Johnson.

'I can't leave it all to the police: besides, the police are too slow. This is between ourselves.—Good-bye, Johnson.'

When he had eaten a scrap of breakfast, he hurried into town and went directly to a telegraph office, where he wrote a message to Isabel, his affianced wife, requesting her to be at home as much as possible that day, because he *must* see her, though he could not say when. Thence he went to the bank, related his suspicion of Tanderjee, and begged them to make what inquiries they could concerning the cashing of the notes, and telegraph to him at his father's house in Rutland Gate, where he expected to be about three o'clock. He drew a hundred pounds in notes and gold, and then—after a flying visit to the office—he went to the railway station. In a minute or two he was embarked on his journey in a white heat of rage and resentment—rage and resentment against himself, as well as against others—which was scarcely to be distinguished from an intense calm.

(To be continued.)

OLD SERVIAN CUSTOMS.

A YEAR OF SUPERSTITIONS.

By GRANT MAXWELL.

WITH the smoke of the steamboats and whistle of the locomotives, many of the ancient practices and superstitions of the Slavonic races are passing away. The Servians are probably amongst the least superstitious of the peoples of South-eastern Europe; but in their villages farthest removed from the influences of Western life one may yet find much that is new to us; new because so very old. Elsewhere, I have described their chief household fêtes of Christmas, and 'Slava,' the fête-day of the family patron saint; and I now propose to follow through 'a year of superstitions' as practised in rural districts where neither the 'steam demon,' nor even the less modern 'school-house,' is yet an innovation on the 'ancient ways.'

New-year's Day is called by the Serbs the 'Little Christmas;' and the head of the roasted pig or sheep, which was the chief dish of the Christmas feast, is eaten on New-year's Day. A particular kind of cake is made for this day,

called in the cities and towns, 'St Basil's Cake'; but in the villages it is called 'the cake for the she-bear.' The evening is spent by the young people in various modes of divination, especially in forecasting their marriage future. Later on, I will describe several of these usages, which may be taken as typical of them all.

St George's Day, April 24th, is the favourite time for 'charming.' Old and young are alike addicted in some mode or other to this practice; and even the few individuals who are strong-minded, or sceptical enough not to actively employ 'charms' themselves, take great pains to prevent other persons obtaining occult influences over their persons or possessions on this day. On the eve of St George, the men make small crosses with branches of special trees, and the next day throw these crosses on all fields and vineyards as a protection against hail-storms. The maidens on the same evening gather field-flowers, some of which are dried and pulverised into snuff, as a cure for colds. Other flowers are steeped all night with branches of certain trees in water caught from the foam of a water-mill, preparatory for use in bathing next morning. Yet other flowers are formed into bouquets and used to divine which of their lovers are most sincere. Each maiden makes as many bouquets as she claims admirers, giving to each bouquet the name of an admirer. At midnight, she places these bouquets in the garden, or on the roof of her residence. Before sunrise, she hurries to see on which bouquet most dew glistens; for that bouquet will bear the name of her truest swain. Early on St George's morning all young people bathe: the young men in running water, as a safeguard against leprosy. The young women bathe in their own gardens, amidst bushes of roses, and of another shrub whose Servian name means 'lovely breath.' The girls who wish a 'white face' place their field-flowers mixture of the previous evening all night under a white rose-tree; while those who prefer rosy cheeks place theirs under a red rose for the night; and in the morning throw the mixture thus 'charmed' into their morning baths.

Maidens desiring to 'charm' otherwise lukewarm beaux select St George's Eve as the most propitious for their purpose. Making a bouquet of certain flowers, before placing it on the roof of their home, they adjure the bouquet thus: 'Oh flowers, my dear brothers, make — mad after me!'

Those who would ascertain, by the 'charm of the supper-table,' their destined husbands, put aside the first and the last crumbs of bread, bind these together with a piece of wood, and lay the whole under their pillows. The future spouse will appear in their midnight dreams; and as he may be away across the seas, the piece of wood is included in the 'charm' to serve him for a boat!

There are some less innocent 'charms' invoked on this wonderful St George's Eve. The dairy-women believe that on this night it is possible to cause, for the ensuing twelve months, the just product of their neighbour's flocks to flow into their own milk-pans; thereby not only doubling their own supply, but by the same act disabling a competitor. To effect this, the women must go before dawn, and entirely uncovered, to milk

the herds and flocks of the neighbour they hope to defraud. The farmers greatly dread this 'un-Christian charm,' and as a guard against it, smear their fences with animal manure.

In Servian towns, lamb is the usual roast for Easter Sunday; but in the country, most of the peasants do not taste lamb's meat until St George's Day.

In some Servian districts, every master of a household drives a lamb to church on this day, the lambs lying closely around the edifice while the men attend the service. A wax taper is lighted and fastened to the forehead of each lamb. At the conclusion of the service the officiating priest comes into the midst of the flock and recites a prayer for the prosperity of the pastoral pursuits of his parishioners. The lambs are then led home, killed, and roasted, their skins going as a perquisite to the priest.

The Serbs are addicted to sleep in the afternoons; but on St George's Day the most inveterate post-matutinal sleepers will manage to keep awake until nightfall, lest otherwise they should suffer from headaches all the year!

The Saturday preceding Pentecost is the chief day for remembering the dead. On this day the churchyards are filled with congregations. The priest hurries through the death registers. Mothers who have lost young children will not taste any fruit until they have distributed some amongst any children or poor people they may now meet; believing, if they do otherwise, that their own children in the other world will get no fruit there, and complain against the selfish parent who has forgotten them.

Pentecost is yet kept as a festival fully three days, although the authorities, and of late years even the Church officials, are endeavouring to lessen the period. Up to a few years ago, groups of fifteen to twenty young women in their best garments and covered with flowers, one carrying a white and red flag, another armed with a sword, passed from house to house dancing and singing mythological ballads. They were called 'The Queens' (Kraljize). But this custom can now seldom be seen, even in the most secluded hamlets.

From Easter Day to the following Sunday is the season called 'Zavetina.' Every Servian village, as a community, selects one of the days of this week to keep a peculiar festivity, going in procession with crosses and holy pictures through their cornfields and meadows, and resting before certain trees to hear prayers. These trees, growing in different portions of the village lands, are through a series of years visited on the same day in the same way. While the priests intone the prayers, all kneel, a posture the Servian peasant does not assume even in church more than twice or thrice in a year. After prayers, the parish priest and the mayor of the community renew with knives the cross which has been cut in the bark of each tree thus annually for many years. The procession moves from tree to tree, occasionally shouting loudly, 'Oh Lord, have mercy on us!' Sick persons, and especially sick children, are frequently laid on the ground, that the cross-bearers may pass over them; the peasant-women believing that such act, if it does not cure, will certainly improve the condition of the patients. Having made the round of the village lands, the

procession leaves the sacred pictures and crosses in the parish church. The household chiefs then dine together, under the presidency of the parish priest: the 'Kollivo' (baked and boiled and honeyed wheat) is served, and the Slava-cakes cut and broken in the orthodox 'Slava' methods, as this day is considered the village 'Slava.'

It is usual for Servian peasants, whenever they dine together, to forecast the future by the shoulder-bone of the roasted sheep or pig. The flat part of the bone is held to predict peace or war: if clear and white, peace; if rather dark, war. Near the upper end of the bone are some small holes, which are respectively called 'cradles' and 'graves'; and these, in various ways, are held to foreshow joy to some households and grief to others.

On the 15th of June, in some districts, all dresses and clothes are spread abroad, 'that the sun may see them.' On the eve of this day, the people generally gather a small red flower, steep it all night in holy-water, and use the water next morning as an eyewash 'to strengthen the sight.'

'St John's Day' (June 24th) is a grand anniversary for the Servian peasants; so august, that they say the sun arrests himself this day three times, out of fear and respect for the great saint. St John is peculiarly the patron of the shepherds, who, on Midsummer Eve, carry burning objects, made from the twigs and bark of a certain tree, thrice around their cattle-sheds and sheepfolds; then build large bonfires, and spend most of the night singing, springing now and again across the fires, and throwing aloft lighted branches.

The women make wreaths of a yellow field-flower called the flower of St John, and hang them on their houses. Even in Belgrade, the metropolis, can be seen on this day these wreaths adorning the fronts of many residences. In each wreath is intermixed a head of garlic, to be afterwards used in many methods of 'charming' away throat-swellings and other troublesome ailments. The maidens at this time peer in various ways into the future; such as throwing the white of freshly-laid eggs, or melted lead or wax, into shallow dishes of water, and by old, traditional rules, interpreting the forms the eggs, lead, or wax assume.

St Peter's Day (29th of June) is also a shepherds' festival. On the eve of this day, peculiar small cheeses are made, one for every member of the family, one for the parish priest, and two for the horns of the oldest sheep or cow.

St Elias's Day (July 21st) is held in great veneration, the peasants considering that lightning and thunder are under the control of this saint. They also say that St Elias and Mary Magdalene are brother and sister; and that Elias every day, for months previously, addresses Mary thus: 'Tell me, my sister, when my day comes, that I may also rejoice.' Mary always answers him: 'There are yet very many days to come and go before thy day arrives!' She deceives Elias thus until his day has passed over; because, if he knew his real day, he would keep it with such rejoicing that his lightnings and thunderings would smash the firmament and destroy the world!

From the 1st to the 15th of August the village women, and most of the men, strictly fast for 'the honour of the Madonna,' whose day is kept on the 15th with great solemnity, large crowds

congregating in and around the cloisters and churches.

Every church and cloister has a fixed, annual day—usually the day of the saint to whom the building is dedicated—on which is held what they call the Sabor, or 'the gathering.' Hundreds, in some places thousands, gather from far and near, many coming very long distances, on the evening before this festival, and sleep in fields and gardens near the church or monastery. After matins, dancing, singing, speaking, and cannon-firing continue until nightfall. Much business is transacted; flocks and herds change owners, new enterprises are inaugurated, and particularly new acquaintances formed to frequently issue in marriages. The 'Sabor' is also considered a good political school. Public affairs are freely discussed, and aspiring politicians utilise these 'gatherings' to the utmost.

Frequently, near young and joyous dancing groups, may be seen a smaller silent group of men with dimmed eyes and women weeping bitterly, because they have heard for the first time that since their last yearly meeting some valued relative or cherished friend has passed away.

Autumnal evenings are dear in the memory of every village matron. On these beautiful evenings, women of all ages, but still with the younger in the majority, meet at what they style 'Sela,' or 'sittings,' where they work together, knitting or spinning, with much singing and merriment. On these occasions the ancient crones entrust to new generations the household traditions relative to human life, and even more to the unseen life. Stories about fairies, witches, ghosts, vampires, miracles, find eager listeners; a weird or blood-curdling tale being quickly followed by some sweet sylvan song. These 'sittings' are held as long as the weather permits. When the cold winds and frosts terminate these open-air circles, the women of each household look eagerly forward to their chief winter festival, when the Baduyak logs shall blaze and scintillate on the Christmas hearth.

The Saturday prior to the 'Metrovdan' (October 26th, old style) is another of the 'Souls-days.' The churchyards are again filled with reverent villagers, the priests read the death registers and intone prayers for the dead, as on other days set apart for these solemn commemorations.

On St Barbara's Day (4th of December) a unique usage is observed. On the eve of this anniversary, a small portion of every species of grain is boiled all night in a pot over a wood-fire. Early in the morning the surface of the boiled grain is critically examined. Should the surface be uneven, it is thought a good omen; but if the surface be even, with occasional fissures, evil is prognosticated. After this investigation, a youth of the family is despatched with the pot and its contents to the river, spring, or well whence water is obtained for domestic use. He greets the water, throws into it three spoonfuls of the corn, and cries aloud: 'Oh God, give us honey and wax from flowers, dew from the heavens, grain and fruit from the earth; and of Thy mercy grant us health and joy!'

On his return home, the children and 'helpers' of the family sit down around the pot and partake of the remaining corn. This custom is called 'varize.'

The life of the Servian peasant may be crowded with superstitions, and often clouded with shadowy fears; but on the whole it is a joyous one, and much less irksome and wearisome than the existence of our Anglo-Saxon poor, so often uncertain of their to-morrow's bread.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN his lecture before the Royal Geographical Society, Dr Nansen, in referring to the necessity of keeping his crew employed and amused during their long sojourn in the Polar regions, described a great many ingenious devices by which that want could be met. Many of these depended upon the electric current, and as the current cannot be obtained practically without a dynamo and steam-engine to drive it, the question of extra-fuel provision comes under consideration. Dr Nansen met the difficulty by proposing that there should be a windmill on deck, which should furnish energy to accumulators, and when wind failed, the men could operate a 'walk-mill,' which, while storing electricity, would serve a further useful purpose in giving exercise to the crew.

Messrs Blake and Franklin, of the Kansas University, have lately examined a number of Indians belonging to various tribes, with a view to find out whether colour-blindness was as prevalent among savage races as it is among more civilised peoples. The Indians examined consisted of nearly three hundred males, and about half as many females, both full and half bloods, belonging to the Pawnee, Cheyenne, and Pottawatomie tribes. The test used was Holmgren's with Berlin wool. Only three cases of colour-blindness were detected; but it was suspected, from the hesitation shown in the choice of the coloured skeins by some of the half-breeds, that in their case the sense of colour may be limited.

The progress made in alloying aluminium with other substances has (says a contemporary) brought this metal rapidly to the foreground. There seems little doubt that its future rôle will be both important and significant. It is only quite lately that the alloy of aluminium with antimony has been known. We owe this to the work of Roche, who obtained it by melting the latter metal in a Perrot's oven, stirring the melted metal with an aluminium rod. In this way the temperature being gradually increased, it was found that an alloy was formed consisting of 18.37 per cent. of aluminium and 81.63 of antimony. Unfortunately, the properties of this product showed at once that for industrial purposes it was practically of no value; so that further research was required to investigate whether, by combining it with still a third metal, more satisfactory qualities could be produced. The results seem to have been rewarded with great success.

There seems a likelihood that 'villainous salt-petre' will speedily become a thing of the past, and it is possible that many now living may see gunpowder exhibited as a curiosity in our museums. The explosive which will probably take its place in warfare is known as Cordite,

which is a compound of nitroglycerine, gun-cotton, and mineral jelly. Experiments lately carried out at the Government proof-butts at Woolwich show that in many respects cordite is superior to gunpowder. In one case, a six-inch quick-firing gun loaded with fourteen pounds of cordite was found to give a higher velocity with hardly any increase of pressure on the gun than when it was loaded with double that weight of black gunpowder. A more important point is that the new explosive causes no erosion in the gun-tube. Cordite has the appearance of long pieces of thin black or gray cord, and it is being manufactured at the Government Powder-mills at Waltham Abbey. It is not yet known whether it will keep so well as gunpowder.

Soapstone, or Steatite, which is manufactured by the Chinese into miniature pagodas and other ornaments, is found in the neighbourhood of Wen-chow, and our consul there has recently given an interesting account of the mines and the people by whom they are worked. The hills containing the mineral are owned by twenty or thirty families, who lead a hard life, living in straw huts on the hill-sides. The steatite is principally valued according to its colour, after which size and shape come next in importance. Purple, mottled-red, black, blue, and gray are all valued; but the greatest store is set upon the steatite which is perfectly white. The industry finds employment for about two thousand persons, including both miners and carvers, and a great impetus has been given to it since Wen-chow was opened up to foreign trade. Steatite is much used in the manufacture of gas-burners, for although a soft stone, it will withstand heat to a wonderful extent.

In a paper read before the Franklin Institute (Philadelphia) on the Causes of Fires, the author, Mr C. J. Hexamer, devoted some attention to the dangers arising from employing inferior petroleum for lamps, and he remarked that in order to be safe it should have a flash-test of at least one hundred and thirty degrees. By non-technical listeners this caution would not have been readily understood unless the lecturer had given directions for testing the oil by flash. As the information may be valued by others, we reproduce it. The oil can be readily tested by pouring it upon some sand in a vessel which will stand heat. A thermometer is placed in the oil, and heat is applied to the outer receptacle. At the same time an ignited taper, with the smallest possible flame, is held above the oil, but is not allowed to touch it. The temperature of the oil is accurately observed, and if the vapour from it flashes before the mercury rises to one hundred and thirty degrees, it is unfit for household use.

The 'Pioneer Mail' of India lately recorded a case which seems to indicate that there is some foundation for the common belief that if a cobra be killed and its remains are left in a bungalow, snakes of the same species will be attracted to the place. The story goes that about a year ago the occupant of a bungalow at Dinapore killed a large cobra, which was duly stuffed and set up as a trophy. Since this event no fewer than eight large cobras have been killed there, one of them being found sitting up, with hood extended, looking at the house, and the others making towards

the premises. It is a curious fact that no cobras have been seen in other parts of the station.

At the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth some experiments have for the last two or three years been in progress, the object of which has been to determine whether or not the dark coloration on the upper side of flat fishes is due to the action of light. In order to settle this question, several plaice, turbot, &c., were put into tanks covered at the top, but with light reflected from below by means of mirrors. Under this treatment it was found that the white under-sides of the fish gradually became spotted, and that these spots amalgamated until the entire under-skin became dark. Photographic records have been made of these gradual changes, and the pictures are full of interest.

The 'Chemical Trades Journal' gives an interesting account of the various industrial uses of the comparatively new substance known as Silicate of Soda, or Water-glass. It is largely used in the manufacture of cheap soaps, and can be usefully employed in cleansing all kinds of articles when the action of caustic soda is too energetic, and when ordinary washing soda is not strong enough. As a case in point, the greasy cotton waste used by Continental railway companies is recovered by its aid a dozen times; while formerly, when caustic soda was employed, it could only be renewed two or three times. Silicate is also a substitute for caustic soda in the bleaching of jute and hemp waste for paper-making, and is used for waterproofing paper. It is a fixing agent for alumina and other mordants in cotton; it will render textile fabrics incombustible; it enters largely into the manufacture of artificial stones, of enamels, and paints; it is employed for rendering timber fireproof, and walls waterproof, and has many other applications in various arts and manufactures.

Lieutenant H. R. Sayce recently crossed the English Channel in a boat only eight and a half feet long, with a beam of thirty-two inches, and with a total weight of only thirty-five pounds. The little vessel was covered with canvas, which fitted tightly round the body of its adventurous occupant, but left his arms at liberty to work his paddles, his progress being further helped by a couple of small sails. The boat is apparently on the Berthon principle—that is to say, it is inflated with air, is collapsible when not in actual use, and is regarded as being unsinkable. The boat in question made its journey from Dover to Boulogne in fourteen hours.

All machinery in which cog-wheels are employed must necessarily be rather noisy, and great ingenuity has been expended in reducing the noise as much as possible. A new departure has been made by an Austrian firm by the introduction of toothed wheels made of pressed raw hides, which are designed to work in conjunction with wheels of cast-iron, steel, or other metals. The new wheels are said to be strong enough for the purpose, to require no lubricating, and to reduce vibration materially.

At the Conference recently convened by the Museums' Association at the Zoological Society's rooms, London, several papers of interest were read and discussed. Among these was one by Mr R. Newstead of Chester, 'On the Use of Boracic Acid as a Preservative for Bird-skins.'

With great confidence he commended this agent to taxidermists, and said that during the past three years he had preserved no fewer than three hundred skins with it, and had found that it was efficacious even on such large skins as those of swans and geese. He also spoke of its value as a fish-preserver.

The recent terrible collision of two war-ships, by which so many valuable lives were lost, has naturally called attention to appliances by which life may be saved under similar circumstances. Mr Adey, of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, has invented what he calls a 'Combined Ship's Buoy.' This apparatus consists of a hollow copper shell constructed with water-tight compartments, which is practically unsinkable. It is designed to be carried on a steamer's bridge, and is connected by a scout wire-cable to a revolving drum beneath the ship's deck. In case of the vessel foundering, the buoy would immediately become detached from its supports, and would when it touched the water automatically discharge rockets and blue-lights, while at the same time it would sound a bell and throw out cork-supported life-lines. Even if all these measures failed to save life the buoy would indicate the exact position of the wreck, and would therefore make salvage operations possible. The inventor will supply all particulars if he be addressed at 12 Clare Street, Bristol.

The art of refrigeration and carriage of dead-meat has now arrived at such perfection that the best brands of New Zealand mutton can hardly be distinguished even by experts from the finest Southdown. It is therefore not uncommon for the foreign meat to be sold as British, to the great profit of the trader and to the prejudice of the buyer. A Committee of the House of Lords was recently appointed to consider the question whether it would not be to the interest of honest traders and their customers that foreign meat should be marked, and it was quickly found that the chief obstacle to the proposal was an effective method of making the mark without spoiling the meat. The problem seems to have been solved by branding the meat by means of a platinum wire brought to a white-heat by electricity.

According to Professor Uffelmann of Rostock, cholera bacilli can be easily conveyed from place to place by the postman. After infecting an ordinary letter with the bacilli, he put it into a postbag, and found, after twenty-four hours, that the organisms were still living. On post-cards they remained in an active state twenty hours after infection; but they died rapidly on coins. Flies also he found were most effective carriers of cholera bacilli, an infected insect causing a piece of beef upon which it alighted to swarm with living organisms. The lesson to be learned from these experiments is that of scrupulous cleanliness. At the same time it stands to reason that unless there was some natural antidote to this wholesale dissemination of deadly organisms, human life on this earth must have long ago ceased to be.

It has been suggested that, instead of taking so much pains to stamp out cholera by quarantine restrictions, the evil should be dealt with at its point of origin. This is believed to cover a region of about eight thousand square miles at the mouth of the river Ganges, and to

be caused by the amount of animal and vegetable putrid matter which is allowed to collect in the water there. The sacred Ganges has for years untold been used as a cemetery, and the custom would possibly be difficult to eradicate; but the natives might be compelled to cremate their dead before consigning the remains to the river. It is doubtful, however, whether a disease which has travelled so far from its country of origin can be thus eradicated. The idea savours somewhat of the still prevalent notion that the best remedy against risk from dog-bite is to kill the animal which caused the injury.

Japan, says the 'Revue Géographique,' is especially rich in mineral springs of a therapeutic value, and the people are fully alive to the benefits of taking advantage of these natural remedies for various ailments. These mineral waters may be divided into four classes—sulphur, saline, alkaline, and ferruginous. In many cases the Japanese employ the water in the form of a douche, and will place themselves under cascades for the purpose. One spring which is highly valued emerges from the ground perfectly clear and limpid, almost tasteless; yet it is strongly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen, and soon becomes clouded and deposits sulphur. These waters are beneficial in cases of muscular and chronic rheumatism, and for certain skin diseases. Hot springs also abound in Japan, as might be expected in a country in which volcanic energy is so constantly active.

One of the most interesting relics of Old London is St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, which, because it does not happen to lie in one of the main arteries of the big city, is not so well known, even to Londoners, as it should be. It is the only remaining portion of the important Priory of St John, which dates from the fourteenth century. The old gateway has a literary interest attached to it, for in the room above the archway Dr Johnson worked for Cave the printer for a small weekly stipend; and the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which to this day bears a picture of the archway on its cover, was first printed here. The archway had latterly become much defaced and weather-worn, but it has recently been restored as a memorial to the late Duke of Clarence, who was first Sub-prior of the Order of St John. The Order as now revived embraces the St John Ambulance Association, and is busy in other good works.

A demonstration was lately given of a new electro-cyanide process for separating gold from difficult ores—that is, ores associated with sulphur, iron oxide, antimony, &c. Hitherto, the presence of these undesirable substances has caused the mercury used for amalgamation to become dirty, or sluggish, and incapable of seizing the particles of gold brought into contact with it. In the present process, an apparatus is employed by which all difficulties seem to be surmounted by combined chemical and electrical action. It is the invention of Mr J. B. Hannay, who has devoted many years to its elaboration. By this appliance the precious metal is extracted from the ore without any preliminary treatment other than crushing. The chemicals employed are used over and over again, and the gold and silver are obtained from the amalgam at once in the

metallic state. Any workable quantity of ore may, it is said, be treated in one vessel and at one operation, and the gold obtained from it the same day. The demonstration was given by the Universal Gold Extraction Syndicate of 73 Basinghall Street, London.

Any one who has watched the operation of coaling a vessel—say a Channel steamer—with its files of men, each black as the burden which he carries, must have been struck with the waste of labour and the unnecessary dirt that the work seems to entail. In an age when so many much more difficult processes are carried out by machinery, the method seems ridiculous and clumsy. Mr M. J. Paul has invented a system of coaling by which time is saved, dirt is prevented, and a great economy of labour secured. The coal is conveyed from vessel to vessel on the dredger principle, the conveyer of the material consisting of an endless steel chain, to which is attached a number of bucket-shaped steel plates. This conveyer can be altered so as to suit the height of the ship which is being coaled, and it dips into a barge of special design by which the coal is brought within constant reach of the travelling buckets. A demonstration of the working of this new system was recently given at Rotherhithe before an assembly which included representatives of the Admiralty and of several steamship companies. On this occasion, one hundred and twenty tons of coal were embarked in seventy-five minutes, the ordinary rate of bunkering coal by manual labour being about eighty tons per day.

The results of scientific observations made during the Antarctic expedition which recently returned to Dundee are said to be of an important character, but there is much as yet to be done in collating and arranging the notes made. We are informed by the 'Dundee Advertiser,' which has published singularly comprehensive articles concerning the expedition, that Dr Donald, who acted as surgeon on board the 'Active,' had collected a large number of birds, mosses, and eggs indigenous to the Antarctic regions. Seven distinct varieties of penguins were observed, and specimens of four of these have been brought home. The other birds are very interesting to the naturalist, and are said to include at least one entirely new species. Skeletons of the different classes of seals have been preserved, and will probably be sent to the principal museums.

A CHAT ABOUT WHALES.

STEAM and the screw-propeller have lessened the whaler's dangers; but 'the fish' are apparently more shy than in the good old days, and certainly more scarce. Whales were frequently killed before they had reached maturity, and this indiscriminate destruction of old and young left unstocked grounds. Hence some of our whalers have again attempted to woo fickle fortune in the lone Southern Ocean. This is not a new departure, for many years ago Messrs Enderby established a whaling colony at the Auckland Islands, about one hundred and eighty miles south of New Zealand. Her Majesty's ship 'Havannah,' with a dozen other vessels, took live-stock and

supplies thither from England and elsewhere; and several schooners from Australia put in an appearance with various kinds of goods for sale to the workmen congregated at this out-of-the-way place. Everything was taken into consideration save the weather, which proved most inclement; and the venture failed utterly. In December 1842, Ross saw many huge whales near Darwin Islet, six hundred miles from the Falklands. They were so tame that the ship almost touched them before they would move.

Excessive estimates of a whale's bulk are met with occasionally; one measuring a hundred and fifty feet in length probably belonged to prehistoric times. Milton's words are apposite in this connection:

There leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep,
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims.

Captain David Gray of Peterhead, a mighty hunter of whales, seems to favour the more moderate view, that the average size of a full-grown Greenland whale does not exceed sixty feet. Whales, if unmolested, attain to a ripe old age; and may, for aught that is known to the contrary, become crabbed centenarians. In 1890 the crew of an American whaler, the 'Beluga,' are said to have killed a large whale in Behring Sea, in which was discovered a harpoon bearing the name of another whaleship, the 'Moctezuma,' of sixty years previously; thus proving that the whale had carried the iron with it during the threescore years. Captain David Gray once killed a very large female whale having a harpoon embedded in her blubber, which had been in position for thirty years, as evidenced by the date it bore.

A detailed description of these curious cetaceans would occupy more space than is at our disposal; but a few eventful experiences with scattered members of the family at various times will not be without interest. Sindbad the Sailor is responsible for a whale-story which, if not true, has at least the merit of being well told. Reclining motionless upon the sea-surface, this denizen of the deep was mistaken for an islet. Its grass-covered back resembled a verdant meadow, and the hardy toilers landed thereon to stretch their weary limbs after the manner of pious Æneas and his followers. Suddenly the slumbering cetacean sank beneath their feet, and great was the amazement thereat.

More reliable instances of whales confounded with rocks are not far to seek. Admiral Sir F. Beaufort ran his smart frigate into the River Plate in 1807 with studding-sails set below and aloft. An uncharted rock was reported right ahead; but sure of his position, no alteration was made in the course steered. Barnacles, breakers, and long weeds, were soon plainly observable; yet, when the ship's sails flapped with a loud noise, this supposititious rock disappeared. It was but a whale having his post-prandial forty winks. Weddell in his voyage towards the South Pole in 1822 mistook the swollen carcase of a dead whale for a half-tide rock.

It is said that the crew of an American schooner, the 'C. H. White,' had an exciting adventure not

long since on the Oregon coast. All hands save cook and captain were away in small boats halibut-fishing, when a large school of whales passed their ocean home. One of these unwelcome visitors collided with and broke the cable that held the schooner to her anchor. Becoming entangled therewith, he towed the helpless vessel in divers directions for six hours. Eventually, he succeeded in effecting his escape, and dived deeply out of sight. Something similar happened still more recently to a whale of an inquiring turn of mind. A Brazilian submarine telegraph cable was found to work badly about seventy miles from the land; and upon being hauled to the surface for repairs, the dead body of a large whale was discovered caught by the cable, which was twisted into most complicated knots.

The immense jawbones of a whale have not only served to stop a clink after decay, but also to form the gateway of a rustic garden when in good condition. The Emperor William of Germany has ordained that the bones of whales killed during his whaling expedition last summer shall be made into furniture for his boat-house at Potsdam. A German lady is to paint a description of the incidents of the chase upon the shoulder-bones of the slaughtered cetaceans, so that they may ornament the interior of the boat-house together with the numerous photographs taken during the expedition.

In January 1856 the sailing-ship 'Fusilier' was in 25 degrees north, 48 degrees west, about ten o'clock one morning, when her commander, Captain Carmichael, was surprised by a rumbling noise like that of an earthquake. The ship trembled throughout her whole length, causing the alarmed watch below to seek safety on deck without delay. This shock was repeated no fewer than a dozen times, at intervals of two minutes' duration. Soon two enormous whales appeared from beneath the ship, swam lazily about, blew several times, then went back to their retreat, and repeated the performance. It is probable that they found unalloyed satisfaction in rubbing themselves on the shells which adhered in clusters to the iron bottom of the 'Fusilier.'

In February 1875, the sailing-vessel 'Albertine,' Captain Owen, struck something considerably harder than water one foggy night while travelling five knots an hour in 42 degrees south, 75 degrees east. The officer in charge of the watch, somewhat scared, observed a line of foam on the port bow, and was about to alter her course, imagining that she had touched on an unknown shoal. Thereupon, a whale thrashed the water with his flail-like tail, snorted loudly, and sped swiftly to windward. He had doubtless been sleeping peacefully until aroused with scant ceremony by the vessel's advancing stem, and then stood not on the order of his going.

The iron barque 'Elissa,' in 1887, while crossing the South Indian Ocean, ran right into a whale. She escaped injury; but the whale fared badly, as it was afterwards seen floundering about astern in a dazed condition. An infuriated cetacean attacked the whaleship 'Essex' with fell intent, smashing in her bows, and causing her to founder. The crew took to their boats; but only a few enfeebled survivors reached the nearest land, after an awful experience of many leaden-footed hours. Strange to relate, another 'Essex' was seri-

ously damaged by a vicious whale near Zanzibar in 1887.

The steamship 'Petersburg,' of the Russian volunteer fleet, had a unique experience near Minicoy, in the South Indian Ocean. A sharp shock was felt by all on board, and she stopped, as though gripped in a vice. The sea was found to be coloured with the lifeblood of two huge whales, which lay floating in their last agony. One was cut through by the steamer's sharp stem, and the other killed by repeated blows of the screw-propeller.

The German steamship 'Waesland,' bound from Antwerp to New York, ran into and killed a sleeping whale. A smaller steamer, the 'Kelloc,' collided with a whale near Seaham Harbour, and wounded it badly. The celebrated yacht 'Genesta' narrowly avoided collision with a dead cetacean during the Jubilee race round our islands. In 1889 a Shields steamship, the 'James Turpie,' nearly cut a whale in two one starlight night. The schooner 'O. M. Marrett' was almost wrecked by passing whales in the North Atlantic. Many of the school struck her repeatedly with such violence that her whole hull shook, and articles in the officers' rooms were thrown to the floor.

In 1890 a small sailing-vessel, the 'Ocean Spray,' bound from Galveston to England, struck a sleeping whale, and received damage. On the morning of the 17th July, a whale fifty feet long made his appearance close alongside the steamship 'Port Adelaide,' Captain C. M. Hepworth, R.N.R., in 42 degrees south, 75 degrees east. He followed the vessel for four days, never more than seventy yards away, and generally close astern, much to the edification of numerous passengers. He threw up the sponge in 41 degrees south, 97 degrees east, after travelling nine hundred and eighty statute miles, certainly without resting, and apparently fasting. In November the ship 'Earnock,' Captain Parson, was under sail in 29 degrees south, 21 degrees west, when a large whale lashed the sea into foam with his tail, so near the ship that the chief officer, who happened to be below forward, came quickly on deck to see what had happened. He actually felt the impact of the water against her bows.

In June 1891, while Her Majesty's ship 'Immortalité' was steaming from Arosa Bay to Gibraltar at the rate of twelve knots an hour, she stopped short, as though a submerged danger had been located. It was presently found that she had cut deeply into a whale, and it became necessary to go astern in order to get rid of the encumbrance. Four months later, the Anchor line steamship 'Ethiopia' collided with a whale when about eight hundred miles from New York. One hour before noon, Captain Wilson and Second-officer Fife were on the bridge, and noticed this whale rise to the surface only a few feet ahead of the swiftly-moving steamship directly in her path. The 'Ethiopia,' steaming sixteen knots an hour, crushed into the cetacean, and the suddenness of the shock almost caused a panic among her passengers. She seemed to cut him completely in two, and a crimson wake was left as far as the eye could distinguish astern. In December the barque 'Rokeby Hall,' near Valparaiso, 33 degrees south, 73 degrees west, was gliding gaily along towards her port before a fair

wind, with smooth water beneath and a bright sun overhead. A whale about sixty feet long, moving in a direction at right angles to the barque's track, struck her just amidships. The 'Rokeby Hall' escaped unhurt, although the blow was dealt directly on the water-line with an awful momentum; but the whale was last seen apparently lifeless, and the water in the vicinity was red with blood. This collision may have been purely accidental, and perchance due to the unfortunate whale's defective vision.

In June 1892 the Cunard liner 'Aurania,' Captain H. Walker, passed so close to a large whale in 48 degrees north, 31 degrees west, that her stem only cleared it by a very short distance. In September the White Star liner 'Germanic,' Captain Cameron, when in 47 degrees north, 46 degrees west, cut a whale down as it lay in a deep sleep upon the sea-surface.

Man has been the relentless foe of these harmless but marketable creatures from very early days. The fearless Biscayan put forth against them in nutshell navies; larger vessels followed them still farther into the icy fastnesses adjacent to the North Pole; and steam-whalers have penetrated where not many years since Arctic discovery-ships found it difficult to reach. Propagation of the whale species was ruthlessly deemed unworthy of consideration by competing whalers, and unless the whale's shyness had increased, causing him to retreat into less accessible waters, it is not improbable that he would have become as extinct as the dodo. A close-time for whales might have some effect in counteracting the fierce greed for gold regardless of the future.

A SUMMER NIGHT IN MANIKA.

LIKE one of that all tender Sisterhood,
Who seem as angels in the fainting sight
Of wounded warriors, who have bravely stood
The charge of foemen, in the day-gone fight;
So with her star-lit cross, refreshing Night
In mantle gray steals forth, as if she would
Exhausted Nature recreate, with dreams
Of cloudy skies, cool winds, and running streams;
While spreads attendant Moon her silver light
Soft o'er the weary camp, that still and white
Now sleeps, secure, behind a guard of trees,
Kept ever wakeful by the whispering breeze,
Lest aught should find them in unwatchful mood,
Pass through their lines, and break the solitude.

CHARLES MURRAY.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE ORANGE RIVER.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

It is a striking fact that although the Orange River has been known to the Cape Colonists for a longer period than almost any other river in South Africa, at the present time almost as little information can be gathered about it as in the early years of this century. There are, naturally, some reasons to be adduced for this strange neglect; but, considering the wonderful advances of discovery in all parts of South Africa in recent years, the impulse of the diamond-mining industry lying almost adjacent to the great stream, and the undoubted metalliferous wealth of the mountains along its course, the continued isolation of the Orange River is remarkable.

Here is a principal South African river, rising in the rugged peaks of the Quathlamba, Basutoland, flowing for twelve hundred miles before it reaches the South Atlantic, and receiving upon its passage the waters of the Vaal, the Caledon, the Nosop, Great Fish, Sea-cow, and other systems. And yet—except to cross it by railway or pontoon on his feverish rush to Kimberley, Johannesburg, or the far interior—no colonist or traveller now ever sets eyes on, or troubles his mind about this the most important stream of the Cape. At this day all that we know about this great system—the ancient Gariep of the Hottentots, the Vigita Magna of Old World cartographers, the Groote (great) Rivier of the frontier Boers—is to be gleaned from some scant pages in the Travels of Campbell (1813), Thompson (1824), Alexander (1836), and Moffat the missionary, whose interesting Travels were published in the forties. Thompson and Moffat are the only two travellers who have made their way for any considerable distance along the river-banks below the Great Falls. A few years back, Mr Farini, in his book 'Through the Kalahari Desert,' added considerably to our knowledge of these wonderful yet little-known Falls themselves. Le Vaillant, the French naturalist, in his journeys (*circa* 1784)

asserts that he crossed the Orange about that period for the purpose of hunting giraffes in Namaqualand; but an old Boer lady, who survived far into the present century, always stoutly affirmed that the 'klein Franchsman' never did pass the river; and the accounts of this volatile and amusing traveller have in other respects always to be taken with a considerable pinch of salt.

Throughout the last century, the Dutch, moving from their base round about Cape Town, slowly, as is their wont, and slowly, too, for the reason that they had to conquer savage animals, parched deserts, difficult mountain ranges, and occasionally hostile tribes, spread themselves over the present Cape Colony, and settled sparsely in remote districts. The more restless and adventurous among them, the elephant-hunters, unconsciously pioneered the way. And at last, somewhere between 1760 and 1770, one or two of these rude hunters of the wilderness, penetrating with incredible toil beyond their fellows, came suddenly upon a mighty river flowing rapidly over a broad bed towards the ocean. This 'Groote Rivier,' as they incontinently dubbed it, seemed to the wanderers to lie in a terrestrial paradise. Dense groves of giraffe-acacia, the thorny mimosa, willows, and the bastard ebony, adorned the banks; game was plentiful, and upon every hand water-fowl, guinea-fowl, and francolins were to be seen in inconceivable plenty. Upon the northern banks wandered, free and unconcerned, a stupendous quadruped utterly new to the wanderers—the tall giraffe, a creature then unknown to modern Europe—concerning which the amazed hunters took down-country with them the most marvellous accounts. Fired by this news, Colonel Gordon, an energetic Scotch officer in the service of the Batavian Government at the Cape, hurried to the north; and in 1770 himself at length setting eyes upon the Great River, named it the Orange, in honour of the hereditary Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic.

One can well imagine the keen pleasure and excitement with which these early Dutch hunters

—big, hardy men, clad in the skins of game, and armed with the immensely long flint-lock guns ('roers,' they called them) of those days—after struggling for weeks and months through a country riverless and almost waterless for the most part, first hailed the vision of this noble stream. And with what delight they must have noticed the troops of elephants, rhinoceroses, giraffes, and other great game wandering as they had wandered for ages amid the thickets, the schools of hippopotami—sea-cows, the Boers mis-call them—wallowing in the flood, the wealth of water and of grasses for their overwrought oxen and horses, and the prodigal display of flowers and flowering shrubs springing everywhere about them!

The Orange River drains an area of four hundred thousand square miles, some portions of it highly mountainous, as in its earlier course; others, as the deserts of the Kalahari to the north, and Great Bushmanland to the south, flat, or only slightly undulating. It is of course best known in the region near the junction of the Vaal River, where the busy diamond-seekers have for miles exploited its bed and banks. Perhaps it may be seen at its fairest in the neighbourhood of Aliwal North, in the more settled regions of Cape Colony, far though that village is from the river-mouth. In time of drought, the river in many places is shallow, and shows an inconsiderable volume of water; this may be especially noticed as one crosses the railway bridge on one's way to Kimberley. And although here and there, even in the dry season, fine deep reaches are to be met with, it must be confessed that as a whole the river is not, nor ever can be, a navigable one. In time of flood, when its volume is enhanced by the storm-waters of the Quathlamba, Stormbergen, Nieuwveld, and Roggeveld ranges, and the immense floods of the Vaal, Caledon, and other systems, the river rushes downwards to the sea in one mighty, roaring, yellow torrent, sometimes half a mile in width, and, crashing with inconceivable fury over the great falls of Angrabies, seeks an outlet towards ocean. And yet, strange to say, with all this effort, all this fury, its mouth will be found to be hopelessly barred by a miserable sandbank, which effectually forbids all attempts to clear an exit, except for a few days at a time, when the angry torrent raves its way through the sand and issues sheer out to sea.

From this sandbank upwards there is a stretch of water some thirty miles in extent, which is navigable for small boats. Between the Great Falls and this point run for an immense distance the so-called Gariepine Walls, enormous masses of rugged and almost inaccessible mountains, which frown above the river-course, and in many places completely hem it in, so that no man shall find his way down to the water. All around lies an inhospitable and waterless desert, so that the traveller braving the dangers of this region,

although he knows that water in plenty lies near at hand, is in danger of dying of thirst from sheer inability to make a way to the stream beneath him. This wild and precipitous region of the Gariepine Walls is practically as unexplored and unknown as it was at the beginning of the century, or indeed a thousand years ago. Except the little mission station of Pella on the southern bank, and the village of Upington, in the new district of Gordonia—part of British Bechuanaland—a little above the Great Falls, upon the northern bank, there are absolutely no settlements or villages upon the lower course of the Orange. The district of Gordonia has much improved of late years; and, thanks to an excellent system of irrigation, a fine cattle 'veldt,' and an energetic little community, shows symptoms of considerable advance. The only other inhabitants of the lower Orange are a few Korannas—a branch of the Hottentot family—Hottentots, and Bushmen, who wander hither and thither and pick up a precarious subsistence.

The larger game has now mostly disappeared from the Orange River. A few hippopotami are still found here and there below the falls; a few koodoos and hartebeests yet linger; small antelopes are plentiful; leopards and baboons abound in the mountains. Everywhere, save for the smaller mammals, reptiles, and an abundance of feathered life, is silence and desert solitude. And yet it is difficult to say why this should be so. It has been proved that much of the mountain region about the lower Orange is highly metalliferous. Iron ores, hematite, copper, crocidolite, an asbestiform mineral of considerable commercial value, argentiferous lead, and even gold, have all been found here. Copper is particularly abundant. Only thirty or forty miles south, the well-known Cape copper mines have for years turned out prodigious quantities of high-grade ore. Very beautiful garnets—red and green—agates, quartz crystals, bloodstone, amethysts, jaspers, and chalcedony, are found in the Orange or along its course. Pseudocrocidolite, a very handsome fibrous quartz, largely used for jewellery, is often abundant. Diamonds have been found at least as far down the river as Prieska, probably much below. And it seems highly probable that the beautiful gravels of the Orange must contain quantities of diamonds washed from the diamondiferous portions of the Vaal, if indeed the Orange be not itself a diamond-bearing river.

Why the Cape Colonists have not better explored their greatest river no one quite knows; probably a sparse population and the attractions of Kimberley and Johannesburg may account for the isolation and neglect of this singularly interesting region. The country is difficult of access, and toilsome in its exploration, but not insurmountably so. British folk have never yet been deterred by such obstacles. And if a small and well-equipped expedition, including in its numbers good native guides and an experienced

mining engineer, were to essay the exploitation of the lower Orange, it is pretty certain that its labours would be rewarded by some very remarkable mineral discoveries.

POMONA.*

By the Author of 'Liddle,' 'Tip Cat,' 'Lil,' &c.

CHAPTER III.

O well for the fisherman's boy
That he shouts with his sister at play;
O well for the sailor lad
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

TENNYSON.

I CANNOT help wishing, as I begin this chapter, that it were the adventures of Nigel, Dennis, and Will that I had to chronicle, and of Kitty, too, for she had her adventures as well as the boys, and went shrimping, pot-hauling, trawling, cliff-climbing, bathing, swimming, mushroom-gathering, and all the rest of it, with the best of them. She learned to pull an oar with her little brown hands; she could help to haul in a net or furl a sail; she was the pride and pet of all the fishermen. I have seen a sketch of her sitting on the end of a boat pulled up on the beach, with the peaked, red fisherman's cap she wore perched on her rough, curly, brown hair; and her short serge petticoat showing her little, bare, brown feet and ankles dangling; while below sat a group of the men mending their nets and baiting their lobster pots, and, no doubt, telling long yarns to amuse little Miss, with as much of the rough language as they could smother or swallow left out on her account. She would go lobster-catching with Lot Leach, rowing round from one large cork to another of the twenty set out dancing on the green water; and draw up the round net attached to each, with sometimes a shining lobster in his black coat of mail a captive therein.

There was a sort of fascination to Kitty in old Lot's company, and, as long as she was with him, Sage felt no anxiety as to her safety, which was not the case at first, when the children were out with some of the other men. On one occasion they were out with Ben Caster in his boat, and the wind changed so that the trawler could not get in till midnight, and Sage watched and watched on the beach, straining her eyes through the darkness, and feeling almost a hatred of the sea, that came up so gently to her feet, and then ran back, drawing the little pebbles with a coaxing deprecating sound, as if it were only a harmless, playful creature, incapable of swallowing up great ships and drowning strong men.

She was anxious, too, when the four had gone out under Cottam the coastguardman to see a smugglers' cave half-way down the cliff, which was to be reached by a somewhat break-neck scrambling path.

'Never you fear, Missy; I'll look arter 'em right enough. 'Taint nothing to be onaisy over, as long as folks keeps steady and minds what they're after.'

But Sage came across Mrs Rockett directly they were gone, who, without the least intending to frighten her, gave her such a succession of blood-curdling accounts of accidents 'on them

'orrid cliffs as lef me a widder, and my poor little ones orphings, and him with the silver watch his father give him in his pocket, and stopped at twenty minutes to eleven, as must have been the very time as he walked right over the edge; though it might have been ten minutes or so earlier, as it always were a watch as gained, and does now, as you can see it hung up over my shelf with a dint in its case where it got a knock when he fell; and Tom, my eldest boy, should 'a had it in memory like of his poor father; only his master give him one with his name and a inscription on it, after that fire at the works as I've told you of, ain't I?'

'I suppose Mr Cottam is very careful, isn't he?' Sage asked.

Mrs Rockett shook her head dubiously. 'He's the first of his family, then; for of all the keerness, feather-brained lot, them Cottams is the worst. I mind once giving Jim Cottam a pair of boots of mine to take into Shingle to get mended; and one of the neighbours came in half an hour after and says, says he: "Look what I've pick up on the road, Mrs Rockett," says he. And there was my boots where my lord had dropped 'em; and that was how I come to let Lot try his hand at cobbling; and he don't do it badly, though he takes his time over it.'

But the reader will accuse me of being given to digression as much as Mrs Rockett herself, for I was saying how much I wished that I was the chronicler of the younger Merriidews' adventures at Scar, which were many in number. But 'that,' as a great author of the present day would say, 'is another story;' and our business in hand is with Sage, who, though she was not at all above joining in some of the children's adventures, was frequently left to her own devices, and might have found it dull if she had been, like many other girls, entirely dependent for enjoyment on other people's society.

So when Sage got over her nervousness about possible mishaps befalling Kitty or the boys on the sea or shore or cliffs--and when a visit to Shingle had supplied the defects in her paint-box, which she had not had time to think of before she came away, she did not find the long August days go by at all too slowly. And she had made a friend, besides, of all the kindly Scar folk who might be reckoned as friends from the day of their arrival; and if company and talk had been what Sage wanted to make her happy, she need not have gone many paces from her own door to get plenty of it, even if Mrs Rockett, standing with arms akimbo at the door of the 'Black Dog,' had not prevented her crossing the threshold with her flow of conversation in a high-pitched voice across the street. From every doorway down the street some friendly voice called to her; she had half-a-dozen instructors in the art of lace-making.

But it was to none of these I referred when I said that Sage had made a friend for whose sake she cut Mrs Rockett's digressions short, and turned a deaf ear to the voices that hailed her from the cottage doors, and to the rattle of the bobbins, and pulled her skirt out of the fattest baby hand that sought to detain her, and hardly vouchsafed a glance at the most engaging starfish or persuasive sidelong crab, and passed, with a nod and smile, the group by the wall, and

hurried on to where a large white umbrella might be seen under the cliff some way along the beach, looking like one of those big mushroom-rooms that the children brought in from the meadows.

It was none other than 'the painter gentleman as lived up to Scar Cliff Farm and made pitch-ters,' who was Sage's friend, and who had offered his help at Shingle Station on their first arrival, when she was overwhelmed with her multifarious packages; and she made his acquaintance that very night of which mention has been made, when she was in a panic about the children who were out trawling. It was the first week of their stay at Scar, and Sage was still as anxious over the children as a hen whose ducklings have just taken to the water; and no one could persuade her that a sudden change of wind was a thing of constant occurrence, and that you are reckoning without your host if you settle the exact time at which a sailing-boat shall arrive.

As she stood on the beach, gazing out into the darkness, she began already to compose the letter by which she should make known to her father the terrible catastrophe, and worded the telegram, with that curious anxiety that creeps in even at moments of the most heart-broken anguish and grief, to keep the communication within the six-penny limit. She was leaning against one of the boats, when she heard a step coming down the shingle; and a voice, certainly not Mrs Rockett's or that of any inhabitant of Scar, said: 'I am afraid you are anxious about your brothers and the boat not coming in; but there is really no cause for uneasiness, and I could have told you when they started this morning that they might be late in coming home, as the wind was veering even then. I have been out myself all night, tacking and jacking to get in; but there's not a bit of danger; the men know every inch of the coast, and the sea is like a duckpond; and they'll take every care of the children, never fear.'

I do not suppose that Mr Ludlow knew any more about the matter than the Scar men, who had done their best to reassure her. Indeed, I expect, he knew a good deal less; but somehow there was something comforting in his voice; and it did not give the impression that he was trying to humour her and make the best of a bad business, as it did with the other men, who, she fancied—and perhaps truly—would have said the same to her if they had known that the 'Petrel' was in grievous peril. 'There! don'tee trouble, Missy; there ain't nothing to be skeered on—bless your little heart!'

Nor did he try to persuade her to go home, and urge the uselessness of straining her eyes through the darkness, as Mrs Rockett did. 'Twon't do 'em no good, poor dears. You're not taking bit nor sup since dinner;' or, 'A watched pot never boils;' they'll not come any the sooner for your looking.'

He took it for granted she would stop on the beach till the boat came in—an event which he treated not only as a certainty but a very speedy certainty; but he proposed that she should wrap herself in a warm plaid he had with him, as even on a night early in August the air is chill, and watching and waiting are not warming occupations.

'If you don't mind me having a pipe,' he said, 'and you wrap yourself in that plaid and sit down under that boat, we shall be the first to see the "Petrel" come in.'

I do not know whether it was the warmth of the plaid or the tobacco smoke that brought back in a consolatory way to her mind father's one pipe, the last thing at night, which he allowed himself as a little bit of comfort after the day's work was done; or it might have been the confidence her companion evidently felt that there was no danger to be apprehended; but Sage found herself talking quite cheerfully, and making plans for to-morrow, when no doleful sixpenny telegrams would have to be despatched, or heart-rending letters indited; and she was quite startled when a shout from the beach above announced that the 'Petrel' had been descried by eyes more used to penetrate the darkness; and she found that her thoughts had actually wandered far away from the subject which, before Mr Ludlow joined her, had seemed to absorb every sense and feeling. But she forgot all about her companion directly the boat's keel grated on the stones; for the next minute she had hold of all the four children at once, all safe and sound, all clinging hold of her, and chattering at once, and tumbling over one another, and interrupting one another in their anxiety to tell her of their adventures; and all too hungry and excited to remember what her feelings must have been, waiting for them on the dark beach.

She thought no more of her new friend till she had fed and warmed and listened to the children and got them all safe in bed, and then the plaid lying on the floor recalled him to her mind. It bore unmistakable marks of having been dragged up from the beach; and as she shook the sand and pebbles out of it and folded it up, she felt how ill-mannered and ungrateful she must have seemed not even to have said 'Good-night.'

CHAPTER IV.

Not chance of birth or place has made us friends,
Being oftentimes of different tongues and nations,
But the endeavour for the self-same ends,
With the same hopes and fears and aspirations.
LONGFELLOW.

After this very informal introduction, the acquaintance between Sage and Owen Ludlow ripened rapidly, till it reached what, I think, might almost be dignified by the name of friendship. But friendship has such different meanings to different minds, being to many people a very poor, cold-blooded, formal, convenient sort of concern, with no obligations, and few advantages, demanding no sacrifices, capable of being dropped at any moment without a pang of regret, or resumed when convenient without any perceptible feeling of pleasure. And to others it means something infinitely rich and pure and unselfish and noble, lasting till death and beyond it, patient, sympathetic, and enduring. And again some mix it up and confound it with love, and these would smile incredulously at the idea of friendship between a girl and a man, even a man with gray hair like Owen Ludlow and with fifty years behind him, with perhaps enough romance in them to last the threescore years and ten; and these will recognise the meeting on the beach as

the beginning of the love passages which occur in most stories in fiction or real life, as they will no doubt in this.

I almost wish, indeed, that it were so, for I think the course of true love might have run, very smoothly and sunnily at little Scar, and Sage have been spared some very tempestuous passages in her young life; and Ludlow might have found a pleasant, mild, autumnal happiness in a young wife.

How beautiful some of the autumn days are, with the sun shining on the many-tinted foliage, and the frosty dew in the meadows, and the calm fall of the leaves from the branches on the golden heaps on the ground! and I think Ludlow's love for Sage might have been as sweet and peaceful and fair. But to one who has known the beauty of spring with its pure, sweet, budding loveliness, with the tender green and the soft young flowers, and the love-songs of the birds, autumn's beauty never seems perfect.

And do not you know, reader, the difference between the scent of the autumn violets you pick from among the dead leaves, while a bright-eyed robin eyes you silently from the branch above; and those in the spring, that peep out under the bare hedges with such a small flower that you can hardly believe all the fragrance comes from that little scrap of blue, telling you of winter being over, and spring and hope and love and the singing of birds come?

Well, anyhow, I do not think Owen Ludlow ever could have loved any one again as he did Katharine in the spring-time of his life; and I do not think anything short of that would have been worthy to offer to Sage; so it was very fortunate that such a thing never entered the head of either of them. But when, in after-times, they went back to the beginning of their friendship, they always dated it from that night, when, I suppose, the sympathy which is the soul of friendship flashed from one heart to the other.

The next morning, while the Merridews were at breakfast—rather a late breakfast, from having been up so late the night before—Mr Ludlow came to the door with easel and all the paraphernalia for sketching over his shoulder, and looked in at the little party gathered round the two uneven tables with such a friendly eye, that Sage forgot the elaborate apologies she had prepared for her rudeness of the night before.

'Well,' he said, 'you don't look any the worse for your adventures. But I don't expect you will be off trawling again to-day, so I want you all to come up and have tea with me.—I want to show you my sketches about here,' he said to Sage, who had told him last night of her ineffectual attempts in the same direction, not realising that he was 'the painter gentleman as lived up to Scar Cliff Farm and made pitchsters,' of whom Mrs Rockett had told her a good deal.

The boys looked a little aghast at this sudden return to civilised life, and at having a jolly fine afternoon and evening spoilt while they sat up in their Sunday suits and ate thin bread and butter—or, anyhow, turned down their trousers, which at Scar were chronically tucked up to the knee—and put on clean collars; and Dennis gave a kick of much meaning under the table, nearly

succeeding in upsetting that somewhat rickety article.

Owen Ludlow rightly interpreted this demonstration, not having lost his sympathy with boys, as some men do almost before they have left school themselves.

'You had better come in all your oldest clothes,' he said, 'for they're clearing out a barn up there, and there are a heap of rats, if you like to have a hand in their destruction.'

Are there any boys in the world who do not like a rat-hunt, or fancy they should, if they had the chance?

Dennis, Nigel, and Will would have rather died than confess that their exploits in this direction had been confined to the pursuit of a mouse in the back kitchen at home; and Dennis inquired knowingly if they had any good dogs up at the farm, and proposed to borrow Mrs Rockett's dog Joe, which was as sharp as a needle, 'and well bred too,' Dennis hazarded, not knowing, as Mr Ludlow may have done, its mongrel pedigree.

'So we really met before last night,' Mr Ludlow said. 'I thought your voice was familiar to me. I have such a memory for voices, even more than for faces, and I was trying last night to fit your voice to some face I knew, and felt quite puzzled.'

'And I did not know till I had got home that you were Mr Ludlow; and Mrs Rockett said it must have been you. I don't think if I had known who it was, I should have told you about my miserable little sketches. You must have laughed at me.'

'No; that I didn't. I don't think one artist ever laughs at another; and it is so pleasant to meet any one who understands; and I came this morning on purpose to ask if you would like to come and sketch that jolly, old Scar Point. I've painted the old fellow at all times and seasons—in sunshine and shadow, storm and calm, winter and summer; and there's always something fresh to be got out of him. And, do you know? every one sees something different in him. I got quite a revelation from just a glimpse at a pencil sketch a young lady was making one day on half a sheet of note-paper. I worked for a fortnight from that idea, though I fancy she tore up the attempt in despair before she went back to Shingle; and she was voluble in her apologies for her failure, when I asked to look at it. There's such a lot of vanity mixed up in that self-depreciation!—I came here five years ago with my knapsack on my back just for a night, and I have stopped here off and on ever since. My friends harangue me on the folly of my conduct; and sometimes I return to the haunts of men and try to forget him. But the first windy night, when the wind comes with a burst and a rattle against my windows, though I may be in the most congenial company in the world, I begin to think of the spray leaping up against his rugged face, and the moonlight through the hurrying clouds playing hide-and-seek on his rough sides and noble old head. And the sunshine serves me the same trick, and allures me away from the most literary and artistic company; and I am sick for the sight of the red and gray and slate and orange that the sun brings out on him, and the green seaweed on the rocks at his feet in the silver sea,

and his cap of golden gorse, against the blue sky.—Come along, little girl, and see what you can make of him.

'Mayn't I watch how you do it?'

'No; that ends in nothing. It's like the conjurers, don't you know? who always begin their entertainment by pretending to show their audience how to do a trick. It is so simple; you have only to do as he does—just to twist up a cone of paper and shake it, and the paper flowers come dropping out, pink, blue, and green all over the place. I don't mean to say that there's any magic or even sleight-of-hand in my performances; but it's like watching conjuring to watch any one else painting, only in this case the conjurer can't instead of won't show you how he does it.'

Owen Ludlow, from living so much alone, had fallen into a way of soliloquising; and in the early days of his friendship with Sage their conversations were very one-sided; and he went wandering on a great deal more to himself than to her, going sometimes so far away from the little, grave-faced maiden at his side, that her eyes would grow round and large with bewilderment; and he would come back with a start to amused consciousness of the incongruity between his talk and its auditor.

And sometimes he would make her talk and describe all the events of her life—they were not very many, to be sure—and tell him of Dr Merriew and the hero that the shabby, hard-worked, little doctor appeared in the eyes of his young daughter; and of the life taken up with trifles, as most lives are, and full of small homely details, which, described by a loving tongue, made up a picture like a Dutch interior, which is full of charm to an appreciative eye, and yet nothing more than you can see any day in any cottage kitchen in Holland.

'You are not a bit like Kitty or the boys,' he said once, when she had been describing some episode of home-life, and he had been watching the small, delicate face lighting up with expression into a beauty which it did not really possess of itself. Kitty and the boys were all of one type, round-faced, with soft apple-colouring on their cheeks; and brown, wide-apart eyes under straight brows, that easily fell into a frown; and heavy hair without any wave or curl, shading in Kitty's case to red at the tips.

Sage's eyes were gray, with dark rings in them, and dark curled lashes; and her hair waved and curled wherever it could escape from its plaits; and her little pointed chin gave quite a different character to her face.

'I am like my mother,' she answered.

'And the others like your father, I suppose?'

'No; Nigel is a little like father, but not much. It is more in his manner than his face. No; they are like mother.'

'I don't quite understand, then,' he said, 'why you are not more alike.'

She laughed at his mystification. 'Oh,' she said, 'that is because my mother and mother are different people.' And then she told him of 'my mother,' and of her early death, and of the baby girl left to the struggling, young doctor.

'He says I was his only comfort. He doesn't often talk of those days; but when he does, he says that he doesn't think he could ever have got

over his grief when my mother went if it had not been for me. I was a horrid, fretty, little thing; but he always had me in his room at night, and sometimes he would walk up and down with me all night.—Fancy that, when he was working hard all day! He says I was a sort of counter-irritant. It's nice to have done him good, even though it was only like a mustard plaster or a blister. He had all his meals with a foot on the rocker of my cradle; and even now he says sometimes he feels after it with his foot at dinner unconsciously; and he got so used to making up medicine with me under his arm, that he only uses one hand now for things that he could do better with two.'

How different people are! Owen Ludlow thought as he listened, certainly what is one man's meat is another man's poison. 'How old are you, Sage?'

'Twenty, last May.'

'Then it was in May your mother died?'

'Yes; and they had only been married a little over a year, in the April of the year before. Father says it was such a beautiful year—there never has been one like it since. They were so poor, they could not afford to go into the country for any time; but they would go out for a day just a little way out of London; and he says there never have been such beautiful summer days as these were that year—even in Dalston it was lovely.'

'Yes,' Owen Ludlow said; 'it was my beautiful year too, little Sage. There never has been, never can be such another! How strange that two lives should have run so parallel as your father's and mine, for we must have been married the same month, and had the same length of perfect happiness allowed us.'

It was the first time he had spoken of his marriage, though he had told her many stories of his life at home and abroad before and since that time; and she listened with that sympathetic silence that is more conducive to further confidences than any expressions of interest or pity. He told her more about Katharine than he had ever told any one, bringing out one tender memory after another, over which those twenty years seemed hardly to have scattered any of time's dust, or to have faded the colours or blurred the delicate outlines.

'And you had not even a poor, little, fretting baby to be a comfort to you!' she said pitifully.

'Yes,' he said; 'even in that point your father's life and mine ran side by side; there was a little baby girl; but I'—

He stopped, with a sudden realisation of how he had cast away what might have been, what Dr Merriew had indeed found, his greatest comfort. That baby, whom he had found so uninteresting, and such an oppressive burden, would now have been a grown-up girl like this one, who sat listening with such tenderly sympathetic eyes. She might have been just such another gentle, sweet, little girl, with perhaps the likeness to her mother, the very idea of which he had scouted as applied to the baby. She might have had the same unassuming enthusiasm for art as Sage, making her as congenial and sympathetic a companion. She might have had the same loving admiration for him that Sage had for her father.

'But you lost her,' Sage softly ended the unfinished sentence.

'Yes, I lost her,' he answered, with his voice full of a deep regret, which brought sudden tears into Sage's eyes, thinking of a little grave.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

THERE are two police forces in Ireland—the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and the Royal Irish Constabulary. The former is confined altogether to Dublin and the surrounding townships, and is not unlike the city police of some of the large English towns. It has no connection with the 'R. I. C.,' as the Royal Irish Constabulary is popularly called; and the latter may be nearly altogether regarded as a rural force, the vast majority of its members being stationed in the small towns and villages—nay, even in many places where there are few or no houses at all. This police force has now been in existence for nearly seventy years; but of course great changes have taken place in it since its first establishment. It may be said to have been put on a permanent basis in the year 1837, when the existing police forces of the four provinces—till then separate and distinct—were united under one head and central control. Since then, that force has been the chief engine for maintaining the civil government of Ireland; and its duties have increased every year as new laws have been made for the better government of that country; and it now performs many duties which at its first establishment were carried out by the bailiffs, coastguards, excise officers, or by the revenue police. For instance, the R. I. C. is now employed in taking the census every tenth year—in collecting the agricultural statistics annually—in issuing and collecting voting-papers for the poor-law guardians. The inspection of weights and measures and food and drugs is now performed by members of the Force in country districts. The distribution of money, &c., for the relief of the poverty-stricken quarters in Ireland was mainly undertaken by them also. Nay, one of the last occupations which the Constabulary were set to do by the late Government was the task of distributing well-bred 'roosters' amongst the poor farmers in the backward parts of the country; and the police were enjoined not to bestow their 'charges' among the destined receivers till the latter annihilated the native cockerel.

The R. I. C. numbers at present nearly thirteen thousand strong; in peaceful times, this number is reduced to about twelve thousand. The Force is semi-military and semi-police, being equipped and drilled to a great extent in military fashion; while its duties are nearly altogether of a civil nature nowadays—though in emergencies, bodies of police may be called upon to act like portions of a regiment of soldiers. The police are armed with the Snider rifle and bayonet, and with ball-cartridge and buckshot for grave emergencies: whilst their more usual, but very often as effective weapon is the baton or truncheon. Their uniform is somewhat similar to that of the rifle regiments—dark tunic and trousers, belt and helmet or forage cap. The rank and file are all, with rare exceptions, natives of Ireland—though it is not necessary that they should be so—and are chiefly recruited from the farming class. The

majority of the officers, too, are Irishmen; but there is a fair sprinkling of Englishmen amongst them. A candidate for the R. I. C. must be of respectable parents and character—between nineteen and twenty-five years of age—not less than five feet nine inches in height, with corresponding chest measurement. He must not only be unmarried when entering the Force, but must wait for seven years before he can be allowed to marry. He must be able to read and write fairly well, and have some knowledge of arithmetic. On passing the literary and physical examination in his native county, he is put on the list of eligible candidates; and when his time comes, he is called up for training to the R. I. C. Depot in the Phoenix Park, near Dublin. Here he is drilled like a soldier, and schooled in police duties for about six months, at the termination of which he is sent out to some county to do his duty as a fully-fledged policeman. No man is allowed to serve in a county where he has any relatives or connections.

The arrangements of the Irish police differ from those of the English county police forces. Each English county has a special force of its own, unconnected with those of other counties. Ireland outside Dublin is kept in order by only one police force, and its officers and men are being constantly transferred from one county to another as the public service requires. The chief of the R. I. C. is called the Inspector-general, and there are immediately under him one Deputy and two Assistant-inspectors general, all of whom reside permanently in Dublin, where their headquarters are at the Castle. Next comes the Depot Force, at the head of which is the Commandant, and under him are an Adjutant, Barrack-master, Schoolmaster, and Surgeon. There is also a Riding-master for the instruction of the mounted portion of the Force. All these belong to the 'Staff.' There is also a Bandmaster and an excellent band, which was second to none in Ireland some years ago. At the Depot there are about two hundred and fifty men permanently stationed, forming the 'Reserve,' and about forty of these are mounted. Besides this force, there are generally about two hundred recruits there up for training. Then there are thirty-six County Inspectors, each of whom has charge of a county, or of half of the largest counties, and resides in the most central, and generally the chief town of his county. He is responsible to the Inspector-general for the discipline and efficiency of the force under his control, and to the Government for the state of his county. The county is divided according to its size into a number of portions called districts, each of which is under the charge of a District Inspector, residing in the most convenient station of his district, for the state of which he is accountable to the County Inspector, and having under his command about fifty men, scattered through the district in small parties. Each district is again subdivided into subdistricts, over each of which is stationed a Head-constable or Sergeant, in charge of from four to six or more men, according to the size and state of his 'bailiwick.' These small parties live in 'barracks,' centrally situated—generally in obscure villages, sometimes on bleak moors or mountains or such-like remote places. Each party has to look after the peace of its subdistrict, which contains all that

portion of country comprised within a circle having a circumference of about twenty to thirty miles, of which the barracks may be regarded as the centre. Besides these barracks, there are in disaffected parts of the country 'huts' inhabited by police for the special protection of persons who have for some reason rendered themselves obnoxious to their neighbours, and on whose persons or property outrages are likely to be committed. It is the duty of such police-parties to possess a good local knowledge of all the persons and places in their neighbourhood, so as to be ready to act on that knowledge at any time; they must also be acquainted with their duties as set forth in Acts of Parliament, and in rules and regulations issued from time to time from headquarters for their guidance.

The Head-constable or sergeant in charge of a party is responsible for the drill, discipline, and general efficiency of the constables under him, and also for the peace of his subdistrict. He has constantly to furnish returns and reports to his District Inspector. He has also to keep the station records and books; and as these 'office' duties are numerous and occasionally somewhat intricate, he must be possessed of some literary ability. He has also to arrange for the outdoor work of his party and to see that it is properly done. He must be capable of thinking and acting for himself in cases of emergency, when time does not admit of communicating with and receiving orders from his superiors. He must immediately visit the scene of an outrage, make inquiries, and report without delay to the District Inspector.

The first duty learned by the constable—the lowest grade of the Force—is obedience in carrying out the orders of his superiors; but, like his sergeant, he is often in a position in which he has no one from whom to receive orders, and so must act on his own responsibility. He must keep himself clean and smart in appearance; his arms and accoutrements must be always serviceable and in good order; and he must be ever ready to turn out for a sudden call of duty. He has to do his share of patrolling, execute warrants, serve summonses, attend on and carry out the orders of the magistrates, and, in short, he has to perform all the ordinary duties of a policeman anywhere.

The thorough local knowledge which a party should possess, and on which great stress is laid in selecting a good policeman, is chiefly gained by constant patrolling through the whole of a subdistrict. There are never fewer than two policemen on a patrol, and the durations and duties of patrols vary much according to those particular parts of Ireland where they are performed. The party must make themselves fully acquainted with all that is happening and going to happen in their neighbourhood; and day patrols have a good opportunity of obtaining this knowledge by mixing and conversing—nay, even 'gossiping'—with the people whom they chance to meet. Night patrols generally confine themselves to watching suspected characters and localities, and protecting obnoxious persons; and have frequently to remain in ambush in the open air for many hours, perhaps in the depth of winter, exposed to the fury of the elements in an inclement climate. Sometimes they may be sheltered

from rain and wind by a hedge, haystack, or fence—commonly called a 'ditch' in Ireland—and often they have no shelter. There are occasions, too, when such patrols have to be performed at considerable distances from the barracks, and sometimes over bogs or moors or across mountains; so that in bad weather, which is the rule rather than the exception in Ireland, they are productive of great hardship—in many cases of loss of health, and in not a few instances death has resulted from such exposure. Besides this important duty of patrolling, which averages from four to six hours daily, 'beat' duty has to be performed in towns and large villages in a manner similar to the beat duty in English towns, where the class of offences is somewhat alike.

Whenever fairs or large markets are held in towns, the police have to attend in force, to prevent rows and faction fights, which latter are now, however, dying out, though they used to be common occurrences after fairs not many years ago. Between the years 1830 and 1840 sudden tumults and daring outrages occurred in Ireland, especially in connection with the payment of tithes, and on several occasions the constabulary were brought into violent contact with the people, and very often with melancholy results to both parties. In December 1831 an officer and thirty-six men, who were protecting a process-server, were attacked in a narrow defile by the country-people, and nearly half the protecting force with their officer were murdered on the spot, the survivors narrowly escaping with their lives. Shooting at the police was not an uncommon occurrence even in recent years. In a remote part of Ireland a school Inspector was examining a class of children in Scripture, and coming to the story of Moses he asked: 'Why did Moses flee from Egypt?' None of the class could answer till he came to a little fellow at the end, who suddenly seemed struck with a brilliant idea, and piped out: 'Cos he shot a peeler, sir!' This story shows how the 'young idea' identified Moses with the flying Fenian, and the Egyptian taskmaster with the 'peeler.'

The pay of a constable in the R. I. C. varies from about a pound to twenty-seven shillings and sixpence a week, according to the number of years he has served. His pay increases on promotion; and if he attains to the rank of Head-constable, he receives about two pounds a week. There are also various allowances which amount to something in the year. An unmarried constable 'messes' with the rest of his unmarried comrades, and this 'messing' costs him about thirty-five shillings a month; and as there is, practically speaking, very little, if any, other necessary expenditure, he can, if thriftily inclined, save what is to him a considerable sum after some years' service.

The officers of the Irish constabulary are appointed partly by competition and partly by the promotion of a limited number of head-constables from the ranks. Every year the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland nominates about six gentlemen for each vacancy, and the literary examination for the vacant appointments is conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners. The candidates must be unmarried, between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-six, and over five feet six inches in height. The successful candidates

are sent to the Depot for training in drill and police duties generally; and after half a year, there, or sometimes more, they must pass a further examination before being sent down to the country to take charge of a district. Their pay and allowances then amount to about £250 per annum, and gradually rise till after about twenty years' service, when the income of a District Inspector is about £450. His promotion to the rank of County Inspector is of course accompanied by a further increase in pay.

The duties of a District Inspector are many and various, and he has no easy time in a disturbed district. He must inspect all the stations in his district once every month in the daytime, and sometimes at night. He must attend every petty sessions held in his district, where he has the conduct of all the most important criminal cases. He must visit immediately the scene of any outrage, no matter how trivial, occurring in his district: he must be on the alert with regard to occurrences likely to disturb the peace, and be ready to afford his superiors the fullest information on every matter connected with his district. He must take command of parties of his men when engaged in preserving order at races, fairs, and meetings of large numbers of people; and he has sometimes, at a moment's notice, to proceed in charge of a detachment of men to a distant part of the country, where he may be absent for weeks, or even months, as the circumstances of the case may require. He has also a fair average amount of office-work to perform daily.

Another duty that he is enjoined to perform is perhaps the most difficult of all—to 'keep in touch' with all the local magistrates. As these latter include 'all sorts and conditions' of men, who occasionally differ from one another on very trivial points, and some of whom are very often inclined to differ with the police, it is no easy task for a police-officer—especially if he has a temper—to avoid falling foul of some of 'their worships' at the local bench or elsewhere. Happy is the 'D. I.' who is able to keep on the even tenor of his way without coming into collision with any of these rustic magnates.

Though there are some unpleasant drawbacks in the life of a police-officer in Ireland, on the whole his life is pleasant, and no wonder that there are so many applications for nominations for the vacancies. He can always take part in any of the sports of the neighbourhood; and indeed in a quiet district, except for occasional routine duties and a limited income, he is like a local country gentleman. Some of them have their lines cast in very pleasant places—some in just the reverse; but there is always this consolation for the latter—that they are not likely to be long stationed in a disagreeable locality. As a rule, a police-officer is allowed to remain at a station for about five years—sometimes longer, sometimes shorter; and then, if they wish it, or if the exigences of the public service require, they may pack up their traps and seek 'fresh woods and pastures new.'

The Royal Irish Constabulary have a splendid record. In the trying times of their early establishment they encountered many difficulties nobly and successfully, and gradually won their way

into the public esteem. Their reputation is not confined to Ireland alone. Their fame has reached those regions wherever the 'Union-jack' flies, and wherever the English language is spoken. Over and over again have Irish constables, by special request, gone out to England's colonies to instruct the native police forces there, where they have risen to positions of dignity and trust, and have nobly maintained the credit of their old Force at home.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THREE INTERVIEWS.

GEORGE snatched a morsel of lunch at the bar of the Refreshment Room on his arrival at the London terminus, and then he drove to his father's at Rutland Gate. There had been a luncheon party, and the guests were driving away as George drove up. It struck three o'clock as he entered his father's house with beating heart.

'What's up, my lad?' asked Suffield, meeting his son in the hall, and glancing at the port-manteaus being handed down from the roof of the cab.

'Come, father,' said George, 'and let us talk quick.—Let these traps be left in the hall,' he said to the wondering footman: 'I don't expect to sleep here to-night.'

His father led the way into the library, and turned, saying, 'Well, my lad?'

'Let us sit down, father, together,' said George, setting his handbag on the table and taking a seat. 'I have discovered something that has made it necessary I should come to see you at once.'

'Oh,' said his father, 'you have found something at last! I thought there should be something more than the plans for Daniel to run off with.—But go on.'

'I have to confess, father, that I have been speculating largely in cotton.'

'Ha! You have!'

'I wanted to make our firm the biggest of its kind, and I wanted to make a good provision for the time when I might marry Bell.'

'You did evil, my son, and expected good to come.'

'I had read of a baker in France that developed an enormous business, because he determined not to deal with flour-agents: he imported all the flour and grain he could use, and his business grew till he had a whole fleet of ships owned by himself at work for him. "Now," I thought, "that's what we should do! We ought to import all our own cotton." I began small efforts in buying very early, though much did not happen till the beginning of the season in September. But as soon almost as I knew him, that Daniel had tempted me with his knowledge of Indian cotton, and led me on.'

Suffield groaned. 'The black man,' he murmured, 'led me on! It's an excuse, lad, as old as Adam!'

'Am I trying to excuse myself?' said George. 'I don't wish to, father. I am responsible and to blame. I only meant to show you how it all came about. Daniel was indeed very clever. He

knew all the varieties of Indian cotton, and he had picked up with a Parsee who dealt in them.—You remember Tanderjee?

'Another black man!' groaned his father. 'I wouldn't trust one o' them!'

'Tanderjee knew all about the shipments and the agents of Bombay, and between them, Daniel and he made one or two very profitable movements. But they had very little money.'

'Daniel, I suppose, would have had none at all if it hadn't been for Uncle Harry?'

'No. So Tanderjee came to me with a proposal, first, that I should help him with money and share in his profits, and afterwards, that I should advance money on consignments at a reduced price to enable them to be shipped.'

'I see it all! I see it all! It has been done before, my lad. A kind of confidence trick. They show you good samples, and get you to advance good money, and then they deliver rubbish!—Go on, my lad.'

'I advanced three-fourths once or twice. There seemed very little risk in that, you know, father. Indian cotton has for a good while shown a better average of quality than American, and it is so well packed that there is hardly any fear of damage or loss by fire or water.'

'Go on.'

'But the last time he asked me to give him a cheque, instead of making the common arrangement to be drawn upon.'

'Confidence trick again!'

'Yesterday, I was told that the first half of the consignment had arrived in dock,' George doggedly continued, 'and on examination proved not worth more than twopence a pound.'

'What had you paid for it?'

'Fivepence.'

'And for how much did you give him a cheque?'

'Seven thousand five hundred.—Now I find Tanderjee has disappeared as well as Daniel.'

'Oh, ho! He's gone, too, is he? Gone together—are they?'

'I suspect so—and gone, I should think, to Bombay. Where else should they have gone with the designs for the patent machines?'

'I've been thinking,' said his father, 'they might have been taken straight to Germany for the machines to be manufactured at once and sent on to Bombay; but there's no doubt it's Bombay the whole business is meant for.—But, now, my lad, I suppose you've come proposing to do something?'

'Find how they have gone, and follow them! That's what I propose to do.'

'Follow them yourself? Where's the good of that?'

'Not so much for the sake of the money Tanderjee has gone off with—though that's a good deal!—as because of the plans. As you have yourself said, father, they might take them to an engineer at once. However, I've been such a fool, I'm ready to defer to your opinion of what I should do.—But I've something else I must tell you first, father,' continued George with evident reluctance. 'I'm engaged now in cotton transactions along with Gorgonio.'

'What? In that cornering game of his that I've heard of?'

'Yes, father. He has no money; and I have

become responsible for the payment of differences and so on.'

'You have?—You scamp, George! You incorrigible scamp! To think that son o' mine should ever have a hand in the wickedest kind o' thing that's done in business!' He gazed at his son with an anger and sternness of demeanour the like of which his son had never seen before.

'Wickedest thing in business, father? How so?'

'Hast thought o' th' other men ruined when a corner succeeds?—o' th' mills stopped, or put on half-time, wi' forcing up prices?'

'No. I hadn't thought of these things.'

'Then,' said his father, 'it's time thou did, lad! Thou'dst better get out o' that corner at once!'

'I can't, father—until the end of the month: the transactions are open till the 31st of January!'

'Get out at once, I tell tha!—and save thy character wi' all honest men!'

'But just think what will happen! Prices will go down with a rush, and we shall lose over one hundred thousand pounds!'

'A hundred thousand! Good heavens!—But I might ha' guessed a man cannot back a cotton corner all by himself for less! But it must be done, lad, to save thy character and my own! I was an owd fool to trust tha wi' so much!—But thou hast run thy rig, and now thou'dst better go thy ways!—Thy mother and I'll ha' to go back to work and see what we can do!'

The father rose, stood with his back to the fireplace, and gazed with absent mind at the haughty lords of Padiham that glared on him from the opposite wall. The young man was thoroughly humbled. He beat his foot on the carpet, and his lip quivered.

'Don't speak to me like that, father!' said he. 'I've made a tremendous mistake, but I meant no harm!'

'I believe they a' say that, lad!—But go thy ways!'

'Here's a hundred pounds I drew to-day, father,' said George, putting his purse on the table—'to go after those black men with: don't you want me to take that? Don't you want me to go?'

'Take it; take it. A little more or less don't matter. Take it, and do as tha likes wi' it!—and go where tha likes!'

'Don't be so hard, father,' said George. 'Don't take my hope away! The bitterest thing to me is that if I don't save this, I'll have lost money that you and mother have worked hard to win! Bid me go for your sake, father! And don't burst the corner up at once, father! It will cripple your business!'

'Thou'dst best leave thy corner and thy Gorgonio to me, lad! And go and make what thou can o' thy black men!'

'I don't care for myself!' pleaded George. 'I only want to show that I can do something!—that I am fit to be trusted!' And the young man laid his face on his arm and sobbed.

'There, lad, there!' said his father, laying his hand on his son's shoulder and giving him an affectionate grip, while his lip trembled. 'Let's say no more, but make what we can o't. When a' is said and done, thou'rt my own son,

and my only one, and what's mine is thine! Come, lad, come! Let's shake hands!' And they shook hands, while the father said: 'Thou'rt not a bad lad, but thou'rt a fool, George!'

At that moment Mrs Suffield entered, and exclaimed to George: 'What's all this? I suppose your mother is of no account in the house now?'

'What dost think, Joan?' said Suffield. 'Here's our George been trying to make a cotton corner!'

'Well, and what if he has, my dear?' said his wife.

'Ah! What if he has? And what if he loses his character there, and all th' brass into th' bargain?'

'No! never!' exclaimed George's mother, kissing him. 'He's not such a bad lad!'

'Father will tell you all about it, mother,' said George seriously. 'I must run to see Isabel.'

As he went out, a telegram was handed to him. It was from his bankers. It declared that twelve of the notes whose numbers had been sent had been handed into the Bank of England and exchanged for a draft upon the Oriental Bank, Bombay, on December 27th, by a dark man who looked like a native of India.

'Daniel or Tanderjee,' said George; and returned to put the telegram into his father's hands.

Isabel sat waiting for him in a condition of great agitation. His morning telegram had assigned no reason for the hasty journey and the urgent request for an interview; so she wondered if by any means, occult or other, he had learned or divined her desire to be free of her engagement to him. When he was announced she felt herself turn pale, and when he entered and pressed her hand, she trembled so violently that George could not but note it.

'Are you ill, Bell?' he asked with concern.

'No, George,' she answered. 'But your sudden descent upon me has startled me. Is there—is there,' she asked humbly—so humbly that George was surprised at the new tone in her—'any special reason for this sudden visit?—You'll have some tea?' She rose to ring the bell—and to release her hand from his.

'I must not stay, Bell. I have come to tell you something of great consequence, and then I must be off. I have been a great fool, Bell.' (Isabel clasped her hands, and trembled afresh.) 'I have speculated in cotton very seriously; and that black Daniel and another black man have gone off—to India, I believe—with money and with other things that are of such importance that if I don't recover them—what with these and another mistake of mine—the firm will be crippled, if not ruined!'

'Oh, my poor George!' she cried. 'Take my money!—do! And make things right with it!'

'My dear Bell!' he exclaimed, rising, 'I couldn't apply a penny of your money to mend the trouble I've made by my own folly!'

'Sit down, George dear,' said she, 'and let us talk of this quietly.'

'There is no time for talk, my dear Bell!'

said George. 'My father will tell you all about it.'

'But won't you take my money?' said she almost piteously. 'The money was designed by Uncle Harry for the benefit of the family, I am sure, if the family ever needed it. He was always talking to me of our family coming first. You will take the money—won't you? I can write a cheque at once!'

'Bell, my dear, you are generosity—you are goodness itself!—but I will not touch a penny of your money! I am going to succeed, or fail, by myself in this, Bell! I want to show my father that if I make a blunder, I can try my best to repair it! And I am going to find those black villains, even if I should have to go to the other side of the world!—Do you know Ainsworth's address, Bell?'

'Mr Ainsworth's address?' echoed Isabel, beset anew with an unaccountable alarm.

'I want to ask him about that letter he wrote to me: about the condition in which he saw Daniel. I was an ungrateful fool. I believe if I had paid attention to what he wrote me, I should have been saved this trouble with Daniel!—Do you know, Bell, why I tore his letter up? I was jealous of him, Bell!'

Isabel had heard him confess almost as much before, but not so explicitly. It struck her now as if she had heard it for the first time: such a strange feeling of guilt was hanging about her heart.

'No!' she said, scarce knowing what she said, and clasping her hands to restrain herself. 'Surely not!'

'I was.—Now, give me his address, if you know it, and let me go.'

Isabel wrote the address with trembling fingers, and handed it to him, saying: 'It is the barest chance that you will find him in; though he is as likely to be at home now as at any time.—And then you are going to pursue those men. I hope you will succeed in your quest, George!—I do, indeed!' She could find nothing better—nothing more charged with feeling—than that to say: she could not belie herself.

George looked tenderly on her, and took her hand. 'Let me kiss you once, Bell, before I go.'

When he was gone, she sat down in a passion of repugnance of herself, and wrote a few lines to Ainsworth:

'My dear—George has been here. He's in great trouble. I could say nothing to him of what is in our minds. He asked me for your address. You have seen him, I hope. We had better not meet again till this is past. It is more than I can endure. I cannot humiliate myself in my own eyes. I love you, my dear; but I will not be base and snatch the pleasure of seeing you—when that pleasure makes me ashamed. Oh, let me do what I think is right and honest, and help me to do it.—Ever your own.'

Alan Ainsworth sat in his old lodgings in Woburn Place when he was surprised to hear 'Mr Suffield' announced, and amazed to see George walk in.

'I have to apologise to you, Ainsworth,' said George at once, 'for intruding on you. But I am in trouble and in haste—and I want to ask you particularly about what you wrote to me last

summer concerning that black rascal of mine, Daniel Trichinopoly.'

'Oh, you have at last found he is a rascal, then?' said Ainsworth.

'If I had listened to you, Ainsworth, that day you said you saw him in the new mill, or even later, when you wrote to me, I should have been spared the trouble. I behaved badly; I behaved like a cub; and I ask you to forgive me.'

'My dear fellow,' said Ainsworth, taking the proffered hand, 'I have nothing to forgive!—nothing!' He said that sincerely, but somewhat awkwardly; for he felt that on the whole George had much to forgive him.—'In what way, may I ask, has his rascality developed?'

George told him the story of his own folly and of Daniel's guile as briefly as he could.

'And now, I see,' said Ainsworth, 'you want to trace him?'

'To follow and catch him, please God!' said George fervently.

'Well, when I saw him,' said Ainsworth, 'he was just like one of those lascar fellows that are sailors or stokers on the Peninsular and Oriental steamers.—Was he anything of a sailor, do you know?'

'I should say, not a bit,' answered George.

'And now I think of it,' said Ainsworth, 'it must have been stoking he was dreaming of in his opium sleep. I remember perfectly—it made a great impression on me—the horror with which he talked of the fire!—the fire and the water!'

'A lascar stoker on an Indian boat!' exclaimed George. 'That's very likely. He'd think himself completely hid in that way beyond thought of detection.—But there's no time to be lost,' said he, rising.

Ainsworth insisted on accompanying him, and they went out together, Ainsworth longing to be frank and confess his love for Isabel, while he vainly felt how impossible it was to tell his companion such a thing then. They took a cab to Scotland Yard to find, or to hear of, the detective who had charge of Daniel's case. Scotland Yard had not yet discovered what had become of Daniel, and the two young men communicated their suspicion and its basis. The suspicion seemed to the official mind worth taking into account; and a detective was detailed to accompany them to the dock office of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. There, after much difficulty diving into the memory of the worried dock-agent—for he was eaten up with business, that day being the sailing day of the company—it was elicited that a lascar answering to Daniel's description, and bearing even Daniel's name, had sailed that very day at noon as a stoker in the *Travancore* in place of a defaulting lascar. Was the agent sure that was not a week ago? George asked. The agent was quite sure that none but return lascars sailed a week ago. A visit to the office of the company in Leadenhall Street added the strengthening fact that there had sailed as a second-class passenger for Bombay in the *Travancore* a Parsee, giving the name of Mookerjee.

So much success at setting out cheered George beyond measure, and he was all agog to be off in pursuit—though how a successful pursuit was to be devised he did not know, since the first port of call for the *Travancore* was Gibraltar. He had reckoned that, if the fugitives had sailed—

as they might have done—the week before, he might have caught them up by travelling overland by the mail-train to Brindisi.

'They have six hours' start of us!' exclaimed George, looking at his watch.

The detective who had accompanied them from Scotland Yard proposed that an authoritative telegram should be at once sent to the shipping agent at Gibraltar demanding the detention of one Daniel, a stoker on board of the *Travancore*; and that the other detective, who had taken charge of the case from the first, should journey with George, with warrants for the arrest of Daniel Trichinopoly and Mr Tanderjee. Then George bade 'good-bye' to Ainsworth, and went on to Rutland Gate alone.

Arrived there, he found Lord Clitheroe waiting to accompany him on whatever quest he might be going, with a portmanteau ready packed.

'I happened to look in,' said he, 'and your father told me about this business—I—he hastened to explain, in answer to a blush on George's face—'being almost one of the family. And so I made up my mind to go with you wherever you are going. It's not right for a man to go on a sport of that sort by himself.'

'It's awfully good of you,' said George gratefully, 'to think of coming.' And he related all he had discovered.

'The P. & O. boat calls at Gibraltar on Tuesday—does it not?' said Clitheroe. 'Rail at once to Marseilles, I would suggest—and then on by sea or by rail, as best we can. I think I can be of use to you on the route.'

George had a word or two with his father alone—while Phemy took the opportunity of pressing Clitheroe's hand, and murmuring, 'Aren't you a dear!' and then—with a basket of provision, which Mrs Suffield insisted they should take, because there was no time for dinner and her son had scarcely tasted food since morning—he and Lord Clitheroe drove away through darkness and fog to Charing Cross, to take the 8.15 mail-train, calling first at Scotland Yard for the detective who was to accompany them.

IN A CATHEDRAL CITY.

THROUGH a smiling land, in all its summer beauty, we reach the old cathedral city of Canterbury. From the moment in which the suburbs of London, with their endless rows of villas and patches of garden, were left behind, to that in which the lofty tower of the Cathedral came in sight, the journey has been one long succession of beautiful pictures. Pleasant valleys dotted with cattle browsing in the meadows; wooded hills with gray ivy-clad church towers peeping out here and there; hop-grounds, orchards, and corn-fields; deep cuttings of sandstone and chalk, busy towns, and picturesque villages, have followed one another swiftly. Through this pleasant country, Chaucer's pilgrims rode leisurely, more than six hundred years ago, on their way to the shrine of Thomas à Becket. Fresh towns have sprung up since then, and many of the places through which they passed have grown to six times the size they were then; but nature has not altered, and they could not have enjoyed its beauties more than

we have done. They entered Canterbury on the opposite side to that at which the traveller from Victoria alights.

Outside the station are modern houses that tell us it has outgrown its limit since those far-off times. Yet he who will may find enough traces of the old city as the pilgrims saw it. Here, for instance, not a stone's-throw from the station yard, is a part of the city wall, skirting the picturesque Dane John gardens. This wall, with many gates and towers and posterns, ran all round the city, making a thick and solid rampart. All the gates but one are gone, for the citizens of Canterbury love not what is old; much of the wall has been destroyed, and what remains has been built upon in some places and shut out from view in others; but here and there it can be seen on the northern side of the city.

Outside it stood the great monastery of St Augustine. It covered as much ground as the present cathedral and its precincts. Its abbots and priors held vast possessions, and claimed equal privilege with the sister establishment within the walls. In its church the first five Archbishops of Canterbury were buried; and until the death of Becket riveted all eyes on the cathedral, its shrines and relics were unrivalled. Of this historic place, only the outer gateway is to be seen. Until the beginning of the present century, there were the remains of a very lofty tower of beautiful workmanship, called St Ethelbert's Tower; but vandalism swept it away. Fire more than once destroyed the old monastic buildings; Henry VIII. scattered its monks and its treasures. What remained of it was by turns a fives-court, a public-house, and a brewery; so that it is little wonder that there is nothing left to-day but the gateway.

Strangely enough, while apathy, ignorance, and vandalism have united to raze to the ground this famous place, they have left untouched the church of St Martin. Perhaps its distance from the city may have had something to do with this, for it lies out beyond the monastery. But whatever the reason may be, modern pilgrims may thank a kindly fate for leaving them something genuinely old, and yet not a ruin. The church of St Martin, or at all events a part of it, was a Roman temple. It was made into a place of worship by the early Saxon Christians, and such it has remained ever since. The massive ivy-clad tower, the Roman, Norman, and Early English architecture, the ancient tomb in which the Saxon queen Bertha is said to have been buried, the wonderful font, the old brasses, the battered gravestones in the churchyard—one lingers over them all, lost in wonder, and is loth to leave them. Dean Stanley called this the Mother Church of England; and without doubt it would be hard to find its equal. To have seen this fine old building is to be well repaid for the journey.

There was another building outside the North-gate of the city in Chaucer's time, the Hospital of St John, and here it still stands, its magnificent oaken gateway black with age. But it is now in a busy thoroughfare, and the change from the bustle and noise of the street into the quiet secluded garden is very welcome. There is a fine old sixteenth-century kitchen to be seen here; and the little chapel is full of interest; but here,

again, the vandal has been at work, destroying parts and marring others.

Passing now into the city, we turn first to the cathedral. There are many spots about the close from which the outside of this splendid pile can be studied, notably from what is known as the Green Court. The only sounds that reach the ear are the cawing of the rooks in the elm-trees near at hand, and the strains of the organ within the building; and we can sit and sketch and dream as long as we like undisturbed. All the western part of the cathedral as it stands now, including the beautiful central tower, was built between the close of the fourteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries. All to the east of that is of even earlier date, having been built by William of Sens and William the Englishman; and this rests upon work still earlier, for the crypt was built by Lanfranc, on his becoming Archbishop of Canterbury.

Like the pilgrims of old, we enter the cathedral by the south porch, and find ourselves in the nave. From this we pass to the scene of Becket's martyrdom, and hear the story of that memorable deed, committed more than seven hundred years ago, that made Canterbury Cathedral famous for all time. Changes have taken place around this spot; but we need not hesitate to believe that it was here that the prelate turned to bay, and after a fierce struggle with his opponents, was struck down.

In the choir and north-east transept are tombs of famous archbishops, some curious wall-paintings, and the desk to which the Bible was once chained for whomsoever would to read. Close by is the vestry where the richer and more fortunate pilgrims were shown the Becket relics. Under the domed roof of the Trinity Chapel stood Becket's shrine. To this spot, from all parts of Christendom for many centuries, came kings, princes, nobles, rich burghers such as mine host of the 'Tabard' and his goodly company, to lay their oblations at the feet of the saint, to do penance for their sins, to say their paternosters, to get a glimpse of the richly-jewelled shrine, to wander as we do round the cathedral, and so home again, having seen enough to last them a lifetime. Whether they went up and down the steps leading to the chapel on their knees is extremely doubtful; considering the numbers who undertook this pilgrimage every year, the wear of the steps by their shoes is easily accounted for without putting forward any other reason.

Unfortunately for us, there is nothing to look at but a bare pavement; and it does seem a strange thing that in this age of restorations, no attempt has ever been made to restore Becket's shrine.

Next we see the tomb of Edward the Black Prince, with his surcoat, gauntlets, and shield hanging above it—a very notable monument. Then there is the splendid Warriors' Chapel, full of stately tombs; the ancient crypt, where once the bodies of Becket and the Black Prince were buried, and where the French Refugee Church is still shown. The Cloisters, the Chapter-House, the Dark Entry, the famous Norman Staircase in the precincts: the day is getting old before we can turn our backs upon the cathedral, and even then we have left much unseen.

The city is full of winding lanes and quaint

domestic architecture, at least three centuries old. In the High Street, old inns with sloping floors and lattice windows stand side by side with handsome modern shops and offices. Indeed, the very place where the pilgrims stayed is pointed out. It is no longer an inn, but a baby-linen shop. Some of them have old-fashioned names that half tell us their history. There is the 'Fleur-de-lys,' for instance, reminding us of the days when those emblems figured in the national arms. Near to this is the 'George and Dragon,' a very good specimen of the old coaching inn. Half-way down the High Street we cross the arm of the river Stour, a narrow winding stream, over which the houses seem to meet.

Just here is another of those hospitals founded for the benefit of the poor by charitable people in olden times, for which Canterbury is famous. Eastbridge Hospital—originally intended for the relief of poor pilgrims—was founded many hundreds of years ago, and the present building is of great age. Like most of these institutions, it has had a chequered history, having been spoiled of its possessions several times and re-endowed. It still harbours a few pensioners, but is chiefly a show-place, having some remarkable wall-paintings. The Black Friars and the Gray Friars also had their monasteries near here, and parts of the old buildings are still to be seen.

Like all cathedral cities, Canterbury is full of churches, most of them old, and all of them more or less interesting, according to the extent to which they have escaped the hands of the vandal and the restorer. A restored church has its monuments removed from their original position to make way for pews, its brasses stolen, its old oak pulpit taken down and chopped up for firewood, and replaced by a modern stone one. In fact, whatever was old is carefully put out of sight. In Canterbury they rarely trouble themselves to restore a church; they either let it fall into utter ruin, or else they destroy it. Whether the citizens will ever see the error of their ways, seems very doubtful; meanwhile, every year witnesses some act of vandalism.

In St Mildred's Church, at the bottom of Stour Street, near the castle, Izaak Walton was married. John Caxton, the brother of the famous printer, lies buried in St Alphege, near the cathedral; and William Somner, the antiquary, to whom the city owes a debt of gratitude that it is never likely to pay—for he first wrote its history, and took the greatest interest in its antiquities—rests in the church of St Margaret, just out of the High Street.

At the western end of that street is the one remaining gateway of the city, the Westgate. It is a fine stone archway, flanked on either side by a round tower. The walls of it are of great thickness, and it had loopholes for the archers and bowmen. It was for a long time a prison; and there is a document amongst the archives of the city that sets out that any stranger taken for a crime in the city was to be committed to the Westgate; and the heirs of certain persons, in respect of certain tenements near the gate, held by them of the lord of the manor, were to look after the prisoner by night; and the miller of Westgate Mill was to have charge of him during the day, though what he had to do with it does not seem quite clear; and the said lord of the

manor was to find the fetters and cords to bind him with.

Retracing our steps to the station, we pass the keep of Canterbury Castle. It is very similar to that at Rochester, which, to the honour of the townsmen, has been made a spot of beauty, set in the midst of pleasant gardens. The people of Canterbury have turned theirs into a coal-store for the gasworks.

Dusk is closing in as we walk through the beautifully-kept Dane John gardens; and with a sigh of regret we cast a last look at the beautiful tower of the cathedral, rising above the rest of the city, ere a bend of the railway line shuts it from our view.

THE OLD SLAVE-SHIP.

It would be a matter of some little difficulty to say, out of the many vanished types of ships, which of them all was most terrible in its appeal to the human passions. Perhaps the pirate—the genuine, old-world, Jolly Roger of the Spanish Main—might be held to be the most ghastly: the convict ship, too, was rendered a weird and lurid spectre of the ocean by the grim significance of her living freight of crime and misery; but, for pure tragic horror, there could never have gone any species of craft more fraught with melancholy and shocking associations than the slaver. To think of her is to recall stories of incredible barbarities perpetrated upon the crouching blacks, confined neck to neck down in the stifling 'tween decks; along with memories of that horribly famous tract of waters known as the Middle Passage. There are plenty of men still alive—and younger men, too, than one might imagine—who can yet recollect the slaver as among the commonest objects of the Caribbean Sea. Happily for the honour of the British flag, we have long been out of the traffic.

Yet there remains a weird kind of interest in the old slave-ship. What manner of craft was she? Tradition asserts her to have commonly been a long, low, rakish-looking schooner or polacre; with masts of a loftiness and spars of a width to give her a prodigious spread of white wings; keen as a yacht in her lines; tall bulwarks, broken at intervals by the grinning muzzles of carronades; and invariably furnished with that mysterious-looking object under a tarpaulin upon the fore-castle which one knows as well as possible will eventually turn out to be nothing more nor less than a 'long-Tom' of heavy calibre. In the main, there can be no doubt that this typical portrait is correct. If one would know the character of vessel the West Indian slaver really was, and have a picture of her and the class of gentry who composed her crew, rendered with integrity in a highly dramatic manner, it is to be found to perfection in the pages of 'Tom Cringle's Log.' No man was ever better qualified than Michael Scott to portray the slaver; and in that splendid passage of the hearty old sea-yarn which narrates the action with the Guineaman, he has given us a most graphic account of the slave-ship of his day.

Nor is the type which Tom Cringle illustrates by any means a modern creation. In a note embodied in that valuable work, Lindsay's

'History of Merchant Shipping,' is given a description of a slaver of 1786, as contained in a return upon the subject presented to Parliament, by Mr Macpherson. This ship—with a lower deck 100 feet in length and 25 feet beam—when leaving the coast of Africa, carried, besides her crew, 351 men, 121 women, 90 boys, and 41 girls—a total of 603! She lost by death on her passage 10 men, 5 women, 3 boys, and 1 girl.

In some very entertaining notes of the voyage of H.M.S. 'Thunderer' in 1843, taken by her navigating master, Mr H. Davy, is a brief account of the later Cuban slavers. After remarking that in Havana and other western ports the slave-ships are familiar enough objects, greatly admired for their beauty of form, tall spars, and general rakish, Red-Rover-like appearance: how they are also abundantly well found in every respect, and rendered as efficient and seaworthy as lavish expenditure can make them, Mr Davy goes on to describe how altered the system had become in the Mozambique, in the Brazils, and in the West Indies themselves, compared with what it formerly was. At the period of his writing, the Cuban slavers found it necessary to have recourse to every species of trickery to conceal their identity; for the blue waters of the Mexican Gulf were studded with British cruisers vigilantly alert for craft with clean-swept holds and doubtful papers. 'The vessels thus employed,' writes Mr Davy, 'bear the semblance of the fair-trading merchantmen as much as possible, being barques and ships from 300 to 450 tons burden, of American and Baltic build, and preserving the resemblance in paint and general appearance below and aloft; they are generally well found, and if such a word can be allowed, are the most comfortable ships for the slaves. The smaller vessels, wretched in every respect, look like crazy old coasters, of various forms and rigs, but mostly as brigs. Such are the guises that slavers assume in pursuit of their horrid but too lucrative traffic, from the celebrated "Venus" and "Secora," to those unseaworthy craft.'

Captain Sir Richard Grant speaks of these two infamous ships, the 'Venus' and 'Socorro' (not 'Secora,' according to Mr Davy), in the 'Nautical Magazine' for September 1839. Arriving at Havana in the 'Cornwallis' in the year 1838, Sir Richard found the port crowded with slavers, and amongst them the two crafts already mentioned. 'The slave-vessels,' says this lively writer, 'are interspersed among the shipping on the Cabana shore, and are easily distinguished by their neat and rakish appearance. At the time I write there are upwards of twenty ships, brigs, brigantines, and a fanciful variety of schooners; scarcely a day passes but that some of them ship out, always under the Spanish flag; and others, having run their cargo, hoist the Portuguese colours, and come boldly in. The two largest and finest are the ships "Venus" and "Socorro," each about 350 tons. They are much masted, in fact all legs and wings; I was surprised at their immense topsails. They are two beautiful corvettes, pierced for twenty guns, fitted in most costly style, and well found. The "Venus" is as sharp as our river steamers, and looks rather ticklish; her best voyage she made in three months fourteen days, landing close to the Havana 830 slaves. It was considered the best speculation

that had been made for a considerable time, and well rewarded the proprietors, who made the captain a present of 20,000 dollars. The "Socorro" arrived, and landed near Port Mariel 570 slaves, upwards of 200 having died on the passage. I went on board just as she anchored; she was very filthy, had thrown her guns overboard or landed them. The captain, who was a Frenchman, said they had had very bad weather. He was chuckling at having eluded the "Nimrod," which vessel came in about an hour after him.'

Lord Palmerston's Bill for the suppression of the slave-trade, introduced and passed in 1839, gave great powers to the commanders of British war-vessels to board and overhaul any suspected ships. Naval officers were empowered to detain and take charge of any vessel fitted with hatches with open gratings, instead of the closed hatches which are usual in merchant vessels; divisions or bulkheads in the hold or on deck more numerous than necessary for vessels engaged in lawful trade; spare planks fitted for being laid down as a second or slave deck; shackles, bolts, or handcuffs; a larger quantity of water, a greater number of empty casks or tanks, and a more numerous supply of mess-tubs or kids than was consistent with the requirements of the crew of a merchantman; an extraordinary quantity of provisions, particularly rice, flour, and maize, unless a manifest could be produced proving it to be part of the cargo; and, finally, carrying a larger quantity of mats or matting than could possibly be necessary for the mere use of the crew.

The result of this rigorous enactment was to make our cruisers more alert than ever in West Indian and African waters; and in the year following (1840), 76 vessels were taken and condemned, and 3192 slaves set free. Yet the infamous traffic continued to be pursued with as great activity as ever. Englishmen may well feel a justifiable flush of pride on learning, from the returns presented to the House of Commons on February 26, 1850, that between the years 1840 and 1848 British men-of-war had taken no fewer than 625 ships, whereof 578 had been condemned, and the enormous number of 38,033 slaves set at liberty. In proportion as they were hunted, however, so the slavers seemed to have grown more defiant and daring; and on one occasion whilst the steam corvette 'Pluto' was blockading the mouth of the Congo, a schooner, deep with a cargo of blacks, came gliding down the river and ran boldly past the war-vessel. The crews of these vessels so taken were found chiefly to consist of Spaniards and Portuguese, Dutch and French Creoles, and a sort of Lingua-Franca men, of no nation, or rather of every nation, belonging nowhere, claiming no country as their own, and speaking all the Atlantic languages.

In the year 1850 the British Government, believing that a good measure to arrest this detestable traffic would be by entering into treaties with the savage kings from whose territories the unhappy blacks were chiefly drawn, sent a mission to the sovereign of Dahomey. The expedition consisted of Messrs Duncan, Cruikshank, Winnett, Forbes, and Becroft. As a result of the success they met with, we give a copy of a letter of which Mr Becroft was the bearer. The epistle, written at the sable mon-

arch's dictation, ran as follows: 'The king of Dahomey presents his best compliments to the Queen of England. The presents which she has sent him [chiefly umbrellas!] are very acceptable, and are good for his face. When Governor Winnett visited the king, the king told him that he must consult his people before he could give a final answer about the slave-trade. He cannot see that he and his people can do without it. It is from the slave-trade that he derives his principal revenue. This he explained in a long palaver to Mr Cruikshank. He begs the Queen of England to put a stop to the slave-trade everywhere else, and allow him to continue it. The king begs the Queen to make a law that no ships be allowed to trade at any place nearer his dominions than Whydah, as by means of trading-vessels the people are getting rich and resisting his authority. He hopes the Queen will send him some good Tower guns and blunderbusses, and plenty of them, to enable him to make war.' What was diplomacy to do in the face of such a policy?

On the 4th of June 1832, His Majesty's ship 'Curlew,' commanded by Captain Trotter, arrived off the river Nazareth, and having very good intelligence that a schooner, known to be a slaver, lay up this stream, Captain Trotter despatched three boats, manned by forty men, armed to the teeth, in quest of her. After rowing all night, the boats got sight of the object of their pursuit lying at anchor, and the better to secure her capture, they kept close inshore, that their approach might not be perceived. By this means they got within a mile of her unobserved, when, finding it impossible any longer to conceal themselves, they made a dash for the schooner and displayed their colours. Immediately they were seen, the slaver's crew took hastily to their boats and made for the shore, except one man, who was observed to follow shortly afterwards in a canoe. The blue-jackets gave chase; but the schooner's people had so far got the start of them that they had landed and disappeared before they could be overhauled. The 'Curlew's' men then boarded the vessel, and found that she had been set on fire near the magazine, in which were stowed sixteen casks of powder. By the prompt exertions of the captors, the flames were extinguished. The lieutenant in charge then overhauled the schooner, and found her fitted up for carrying slaves. Search was made for the vessel's papers; but, as had been expected, she had none on board. One curious document was discovered, however, well worthy of reproduction as an example of the orders which were delivered to the skipper of a slaver prior to setting out upon his voyage. The manuscript, which was written in Spanish, was headed 'Instructions for Peter Gilbert, Captain and Master of the Spanish schooner "Panda," and may be summarised as follows:

(1) You are authorised, from the time of your sailing, to pursue such a course as may appear to you to be best, first consulting the first-mate, Bernardo de Soto. (2) Upon your arrival at the place of your destination, you will use all diligence in your power in the purchasing and shipment of your cargo. (3) You will take particular care that there be preserved on board, between the officers and men, the greatest subordination and

best order. (4) Neatness and cleanliness being particular objects of interest, you will take the greatest pains that they be observed on board, and that the officers contribute their care and zeal to effect this object. (5) You will observe as much as possible meeting with any sail, particularly if there be any appearance of her being a suspicious one; therefore, you will have kept a good lookout from the masthead, charging them with the greatest vigilance, particularly in dangerous places. (6) A list of landing-places, &c. (7) Immediately upon your arrival, at whatever place it may be, you are to give proper notice of the place where your cargo is, stating the number of [slaves] you have brought, &c. (8) In case of extremity, and you cannot escape the chase of an enemy, you will disembark wherever you can; for, in extreme cases, there is no other way to do than to use your best judgment to save the voyage. We have no other instructions to give you, but that, in an unforeseen event, you are authorised to follow the dictates of your best judgment and prudence, first procuring, if need be, the opinion of the other officers.'

This curious document was unsigned. The name Peter Gilbert has a suspiciously British twang about it; but it turns out that the master of the 'Panda' was a Spanish Yankee, and that his name was really Pedro Gilbert.

The old slave-ship exists no longer save in the form of an Arab dhow, a Chinese junk, or a Zanzibar dug-out. The disappearance of the West Indian slaver from off the seas dates from the conclusion of the American civil war. The moral effect of that great fight for the black man's liberty was too overwhelming for even the Spaniards of Havana to stand against; and the stealthy, rakish schooner stole away for the last time to join the shades of countless other departed types.

TO BE A CHILD.

A VILLANELLE.

I SOMETIMES fondly used to pray
(Although the wish was weak and vain)
To be a child again at play.

Thoughts of the early budding May
Thrilled through the prayer which, in my pain,
I sometimes fondly used to pray.

Sweet fragrance from the woodland way,
And song of cuckoo, made me fain
To be a child again at play.

It was a coward's prayer, you say,
That with an aching heart and brain
I sometimes fondly used to pray;

But listen—'tis the skylark's lay!—
How sweet upon the daisied plain
To be a child again at play!

For freedom from the city gray,
For meadow-path and country lane,
I sometimes fondly used to pray
To be a child again at play.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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ABOUT INSURANCE.

INSURANCE is a subject in which the majority of men are interested as holders of policies on their persons or properties; but comparatively little is known of the history of this branch of commerce, or of the knotty questions in connection with it which have from time to time called for solution.

It is not easy to briefly explain the difference between insurance and assurance; but authorities lay it down that assurance relates to an event which is certain, and insurance to one that is uncertain, or may be only partly fulfilled. Thus, a contract to pay a sum of money at death or a given age would be an assurance; but one insures his house or ship, since he may suffer partial loss or none at all. But in practice the terms are treated as synonymous. The principle, again, that insurance is merely a distribution of loss, is not quite obvious when compensation comes from a company seeking a profit from its business: but it is so, the fortunate indemnifying the unfortunate. This is readily seen when members of a trade co-operate for mutual protection against, say, fire; and still more clearly when, as in the case of the canton of Zürich, compensation for loss by fire is given out of the public funds. Some corporations, especially of those connected with shipping, are their own underwriters, setting aside a certain sum as an insurance fund, and saving what they would otherwise pay in premiums. Thus, if the ordinary rate be ten per cent., the owners can afford to lose the whole of their property every ten years; and the practice has this to recommend it—more care is likely to be exercised in keeping vessels in a seaworthy condition.

Marine insurance, which is the oldest form, is of uncertain origin; but it was most probably familiar to the merchants of the republics of Genoa and Venice; while its antiquity in this country is clearly set forth in the preamble to an Act of Parliament of 1601 appointing a Commission to adjudicate on disputes arising out of

insurance. There we learn that 'it has been time out of mind and usage amongst merchants, when they make any great adventure, to give some consideration of money to other persons to have from them assurance made of their goods, merchandises, ships, and things adventured, or some part thereof.' In 1719 the Royal Exchange and London Assurance Companies were by royal charter given a monopoly of this branch of insurance, except as against individual underwriters; and this monopoly, though contrary to the common law, was allowed to exist until 1825. In connection with maritime insurance, reference to Lloyd's cannot be avoided, it being by far the most extensive organisation of the kind, insuring a very large proportion of British shipping, and possessing agents all over the world, whose duty it is to forward to London early intelligence of the arrival and sailing of vessels and of disasters. This great association of underwriters took its name from a coffee-house which in the time of Queen Anne stood at the corner of Abchurch Lane. The house was afterwards removed to the vicinity of the Royal Exchange, the underwriters going with it; but, later, they obtained rooms in the Exchange, where they are now housed.

Fire insurance comes next to marine in order of antiquity. Enforced or voluntary contributions to recompense sufferers from fire may be traced far back in history; but no attempt was made to treat the matter on business principles until after the Great Fire of London. In 1681 an office was opened for the purpose 'at the backside of the Royal Exchange;' the Hand-in-Hand was established in 1696; and several other companies soon followed. Scotland had its first fire office in 1720, Germany in 1750, and America in 1752, with Benjamin Franklin as one of the directors. The stamp duty on policies, which in 1816 amounted to three shillings for every hundred pounds insured, retarded the growth of the business; but in 1869 the tax was removed. Perhaps more caution is required in the conduct of this branch of insurance than of any other, the risks being not only of endless variety but subject

to constant change. The safety of a private house is affected by the character of the occupants, its age, the illuminants used, the water-supply, and so on; while as regards business premises no year passes without danger being discovered in some substance or circumstance to which hitherto no attention had been paid. A striking instance of the kind is that of flour-dust, which when mixed in certain proportions with atmospheric air has been found to be a powerful explosive. Arson by policy-holders, again, is a source of serious loss; and unfortunately retribution does not always follow, as, unless convincing evidence can be procured, companies are unwilling to imperil their reputation for liberal dealing by a prosecution which is likely to prove abortive. A House of Commons Committee in 1867 received evidence that during the fourteen preceding years the proportion of suspicious burnings had risen from thirty-four to fifty-two per cent. of the total number; and a recent prosecution showed the existence of a gang which had for twenty-five years made arson their business, one of them, who was known as 'the Fire King,' being alleged to have been concerned in five hundred burnings, and to have received in the shape of insurance some twenty-four thousand pounds.

In the seventeenth century it was customary for persons to insure their lives for short periods or against certain contingencies, and annuity societies began to gain a footing; but the first association to guarantee a sum of money at death was the Amicable, founded in 1706. One grave fault in the rules of this corporation—the equality of premium irrespective of age—was avoided by its successors, of which the earliest were the Royal Exchange and London Assurance, both incorporated in 1719. The Equitable, which commenced operations in 1756, broke new ground in issuing policies on joint lives and survivorships, and for fixed periods; but the data upon which all these offices worked were imperfect, no mortality tables being at the time available. For a long time the table constructed by Mr Joshua Milne, from information supplied by a Carlisle doctor in 1787, was the generally accepted one; but that and others subsequently compiled have been rendered obsolete by tables prepared in 1869 by the Council of the Institute of Actuaries in conjunction with the principal insurance companies. Life offices are carefully looked after by the State, being required to deposit twenty thousand pounds with the Court of Chancery until their security is assured by the possession of a reserve fund of forty thousand pounds. Annual accounts, and at certain periods actuarial reports, have also to be presented to the Board of Trade; and various other precautions are taken for preventing the formation of bogus companies and the continuance of companies whose solvency is doubtful.

Insurance against railway accidents dates from 1849, and against accidents generally from 1856. Many of the life offices have since taken up this business, which received an immense impetus from the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. Other branches are the guarantee of fidelity, and burglary and plate-glass insurance. The first is an obvious improvement on the old system of personal security, under which the employee was obliged to lie under a compliment to one or more

persons, of whose existence and solvency the employer had to periodically satisfy himself. The guarantee societies, too, are willing to give a collective bond for the members of a staff, arrangements being made in case of change to substitute one name for another; and all the premiums can be made payable on the same day. The offices which give security against burglary offer skilled advice as to the protection of premises, and lend men to guard unoccupied houses. Of course the rates of premium vary with the nature of the premises, and, in the case of shops, of the stock. Loss and damage may be insured against jointly or singly. The rate to cover damage only is a uniform one of two shillings per cent., except as regards jewellers' establishments; and those for loss range between two shillings and twelve and sixpence per cent.

As might be expected, a branch of business of so varied and complicated a character as insurance has occupied much of the time of the judiciary. Mr C. F. Morrell, barrister-at-law, the author of a recently published manual on *The Law of Insurance*, which is an excellent compendium of recognised authorities on the subject, and to which the writer of this article is largely indebted, cites a vast number of cases, many of them interesting. As regards misstatements in proposals, it has been decided that an error is not material unless the premium be affected, and that if a representation be substantially correct, the policy holds good. A single room in a building could not be 'truly and accurately' described as a dwelling-house, but the discrepancy has been decided to be unimportant; as also the statement that no fires were kept, though one was occasionally lit in order to air the premises. Again, there is a difference between an actual equipment of sixteen men, eleven boys, nine guns, and six swivels, and an alleged one of twelve guns and twenty men; but the error was not allowed to void the policy. But no reservation is permitted, as a man found to his cost when, a fire having broken out two doors away, he hurried off, and, without mentioning that occurrence, insured his premises. The fire broke out again two days later, spread to his place, and destroyed it; but the concealment deprived him of any claim upon the insurers. Similar decisions have been given as regards a life policy, where a person learned, after sending in his proposal, that he had a dangerous disease, but did not inform the insurance company; and where the insured failed to mention that a ship then engaged in peaceful pursuits had at one time been a celebrated Confederate cruiser.

We may wander for a moment in order to remark that soldiers, sailors, and travellers are now treated much more liberally than was formerly the case. Fifty or sixty years ago the Elbe and Garonne bounded the area beyond which the insured might not travel; but the forbidden area for ordinary premiums is now contained between thirty-five degrees north and thirty degrees south latitude, special rules, however, applying to Asia; and persons can go even within that area on payment of an extra premium; while 'whole-world policies' are issued by some offices at moderate rates. The magnitude of war premiums has seriously discouraged insurance among soldiers and sailors. A lieu-

tenant, for instance, engaged in the Egyptian war of 1882 was obliged, on a policy for five hundred pounds, to pay an extra sum of thirty pounds per annum; and two officers employed in the expedition to Ashantee paid twenty-one and twenty-five per cent. respectively. But it is not unusual for offices to remit the extra charge, in the event of the policy-holder returning in safety; and altogether the effect of competition is seen in increased liberality in this as in other directions. It is an axiom of law that nobody ought to benefit by his own crime, a provision which forbids the payment of insurance to a fire-raiser or a scuttler, and which led to an interesting trial in connection with the Maybrick case. Briefly, Mr Maybrick insured his life for two thousand pounds in favour of his wife. The insurance company resisted a claim set up by her representatives, on the ground that she had been convicted of poisoning the deceased; and the claim was abandoned. But the company also resisted that of the children, arguing that Mrs Maybrick was, under the Married Woman's Property Act, the only person entitled to the money; and the Divisional Court supported the contention. The Court of Appeal, however, decided differently, holding practically that Mrs Maybrick was as one dead, and that the money should pass to the children, as her husband's heirs.

The perils of the sea have been responsible for many legal disputes. A steamer, for example, meeting another in distress, attempted to tow her into port, and while so doing was herself wrecked. On a suit by the consignees of the cargo against the owners of the ship, it was declared that while deviation in order to save life was justifiable, it was not if property alone were in question. (It may probably be assumed that the charter-party did not expressly provide for such a contingency.) Again, a voyage having been delayed in consequence of tempestuous weather, the cargo, which was fresh meat, was ruined; but the loss was held not to come within 'perils of the sea, all other perils and misfortunes;' and the ship-owner, consequently, was liable for the loss. Nor is leakage caused by the gnawing of rats included in that category.

To the non-legal mind the term 'accident' would appear to be easily defined; but the late Lord Chief-Justice Cockburn thought not, and on several occasions insurance companies have sought a definition in the courts of law. It has been decided that a sunstroke is not an accident, but that injury to the spine through lifting a heavy weight is one. Even if physical ailments contribute to an accident, it is covered by the policy. The relatives of a man who while bathing in shallow water was seized with a fit and suffocated, sustained their claim; as did those of a man who when similarly seized fell under a train and was killed. Again, a person having fallen and dislocated his shoulder was put to bed and carefully nursed; but in less than a month he died of pneumonia. The connection between that complaint and a dislocated shoulder is not at once visible; but on the ground that the restlessness and susceptibility to cold produced by the accident led to the disease which killed him, the relatives were held to be entitled to claim.

'The influence of intoxicating liquor' has been authoritatively defined as 'influence which disturbs the balance of a man's mind or the intelligent exercise of his faculties;' and injuries received while in that condition are not covered by an accident policy. Nor are those caused by running obvious risk, as crossing a railway, even at a proper place, without exercising due care to avoid passing trains.

Less curious, perhaps, but not less important, are those cases, of which there have been several, but to which we have no space to do more than allude, where claimants were defeated by some of the numerous exceptions which companies have framed for their own protection; and if persons insuring desire to avoid disappointment for themselves or for those they leave behind, they will closely examine, and learn the exact value of, that somewhat complicated document, a policy of insurance.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER V.

To . . . Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd—Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus.

MILTON.

'I WANT to show you a picture which I have been painting at intervals for twenty years,' Mr Ludlow said one day; 'and which a conversation I had with you a little time ago has inspired me to go on with; and I mean to work at it and finish it for next year's Academy. I want you and Kitty to sit to me for two figures in it. Kitty's is just the face I want for it—her round apple cheek and Ribstone pippin colouring will be exactly the right contrast to the apple blossom tints in the central figure.—And you, he said reflectively, studying her face and figure in a manner that would have been cruelly embarrassing to vanity or self-consciousness, but which Sage bore without flinching or gaining any colour in her smooth, pale cheek—a calmness to which I would draw the attention of those readers who still suspect a flirtation to lie concealed under the friendship between Owen Ludlow and Sage—'And you, I think I will dress in dead green—partly to suggest your name, Sage, and partly the apple-tree foliage, which is as dull a green as Nature has in her colour-box; though it is just right to set off the beautiful golden and red and brown of the fruit. I think you shall hold a long spray of ivy or a great sheaf of narcissus, and be all green and white and gold with the sun on your hair.'

'What is the picture called?'

'Pomona,' he answered; 'and I began painting it twenty years ago. Do you know the story?—how Spring loved her the goddess of fruit-trees? It is easy to see how such a myth arose, if you stand in an orchard in May. I fancy painters have mostly imagined her from an autumnal point of view, with fruit and rich autumn colouring; but I like better to think of her with her lover the Spring, who was always young himself, and gave to her everlasting youth, which we know is true, for we see it every year for ourselves.—But he came to her disguised as

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an old woman; and I have sometimes wondered how that idea crept into the story in the warm, sunny South, though it is very suggestive of some of our bitter, cutting east-wind spring days, that woo the apple blossom in very shrewish, cantankerous, nagging fashion.—But, after all, there is nothing to compare to our English spring, in spite of its capricious, changeable ways and nasty little tempers. I have seen Vertumnus in many parts of the world; but, when he is gracious and kind in England, he has a subtle charm which is wanting in him in other countries; and I have the same feeling about English apple blossom, though I suspect this of being British prejudice, as I have seen glorious orchards in America and in Normandy.—I wonder how you will like my Vertumnus? I have tried to paint him old and dull and faded, and yet with a hint of youth and passion showing through. I don't know if I have succeeded. Sometimes I think I am attempting the impossible, and am tempted to paint him out, and let Pomona stand by herself, and Vertumnus be only represented by the spring sunshine.—Well, we will show it to Kitty without telling her the story, and see what she makes of it. Children have a wonderful, ignorant directness of criticism; they will hit the blot ninety-nine times out of a hundred; while other people go circling round, distracted by dozens of second-hand, acquired opinions, or unconsciously ashamed to say what they really think. I could give worlds sometimes to see things with a child's eyes.

Since that first evening when the boys and Kitty had so reluctantly accepted Owen Ludlow's invitation to tea, and even Sage had searched about in her mind for some excuse for declining it, no further reluctance had been manifested to accept his hospitality; indeed, Sage had sometimes to protest against uninvited invasions of the painter's studio, though Mr Ludlow assured her that the children were free to come and go as they liked.

Scar Cliff Farm stood on the high land above Scar, on nearly the highest point of the ridge that runs out into the sea, forming one end of Shingle Bay, and ending in Scar Point. It must have been a very bleak and exposed place in winter, when the great, rough west winds came roaring across the Atlantic, or the east wind whistled shrill and bitter. These swept right over the head of little Scar in its snug niche in the cliffs; but the farm must have felt their full fury, as the twisted and distorted trees testified, which grew between the farm and Scar Point, and which looked as if they were in full retreat from the edge of the cliff, vainly seeking shelter from the rude wind, which had blown their petticoats over their heads.

Owen Ludlow's studio was a large room, built on at the side of the farm, with a north light, and larger windows than the rest of the farm possessed. I think at one time it must have been a barn, and I also have dark suspicions that it was used in old times for storing away smuggled goods—those old times, which the boys so greatly regretted had passed away, when cargoes of brandy and lace and tobacco were run into snug corners among the rocks on dark nights, and the revenue cutter hovered about the coast, ready to pounce; and there were thrilling encounters of desperate

men on the cliff's paths, and pistols and cutlasses were the order of the day, and life was not the peaceful, loafing existence along the coast that it seems nowadays. I think it was the big room and the north light that kept Owen Ludlow at Scar, as well as the fascinations of Scar Point, which he had described to Sage; and it may have been partly, also, the kind face of Mrs Stock, the farmer's wife, a good, little dumpling of a woman, who treated all men-folk as poor helpless creatures, requiring endless humouring, and quite unable to take care of themselves.

She had a big solemn Methodist husband, Job Stock, who attended little Bethel at Shingle with great regularity, being elder or some sort of office-bearer there, though it could have been no office requiring many words, as he was a remarkably taciturn man, his wisdom, if he had any—and I think he had—being inarticulate. His wife set great store by his sanctity and learning, and treated him with a curious mixture of reverence and contempt, as being at the same time a shining light and a poor creature.

Kitty was not at all averse to sitting to Owen Ludlow, having already had a taste of the process when he made the sketch of her sitting on the boat, though he was half done before she was aware what he was about; and she declared her willingness to sit till Christmas if she might have Twopenny, Mrs Stock's large tabby cat, on her lap all the time.

That picture which Owen Ludlow had taken twenty years to paint, and which he displayed to Sage and Kitty that afternoon, had hardly been shown to any one before; and there was a curious nervousness in his mind as he turned the large canvas round and placed it in the proper light. It seemed like turning his very heart out to public view—it was like being suddenly called upon to shout his most private and heartfelt prayers from the house-top; and at the moment he felt that, if it cost him so much to display it to his gentle, appreciative girl-friend, and to the child, whose unbiased opinion he had wished for only a few hours before, it would be altogether unendurable to have it on the Academy wall, and to have it looked at through fashionable double eye-glasses, and criticised either ignorantly or scientifically. 'No. 389.—What is that? Pomona. Let me see, who was she? Some one in the Bible, wasn't it? Or was it in one of Shakespeare's plays?—Who did it? Ludlow? Ludlow? Don't know the name. We really ought to have marked our catalogue before we came, so as not to waste our time on unknown painters.'

Or worse still, perhaps. 'How's that for flesh tints? Out of drawing in that arm, eh? Where did he raise his model? Oh, any one can see that with half an eye; it's Pattie Seymour, Jones's Madonna, and Smith's Phryne.'

Great heavens! what desecration!

'She must have been very lovely,' Sage said, knowing—though he had never told her—that it was Katharine, the young wife, dead long ago, who smiled out of the canvas. She was dressed in a loose classical dress of creamy white, showing here and there an under garment of soft pink; and she was stretching one dainty hand to pick a narcissus growing at her feet; while the other hand rested lightly on the lichen-covered branch of the apple-tree under which she stood, and

which was covered with apple blossom of the same tint as her complexion, through which showed the sky of the very same blue as her eyes.

If all the world were like Sage, Owen Ludlow felt he would not have minded all the world seeing his treasure.

But Kitty? She was standing tilting slowly backwards and forwards from heel to toe, a habit of hers when she was deeply ruminating; and her brows were knitted over her eyes, which were fixed, not on the central figure, which was the only thing that Sage looked at, but on the other figure, in the shadow, half-turned away—another woman, with a worn, handsome, dark face, and a certain dignity in her tall spare figure, looking down at the sweet, radiant face of the girl with glowing, dark eyes.

'I don't understand what it means,' Kitty said with that perplexed frown; 'and I don't like that old woman. She puts me in mind of the wolf in Little Red Riding-hood—"What big eyes you have, grandmother!"—"The better to see you with, my dear."—She's horrid. She looks as if she were going to eat the girl.'

'Oh, hush, hush! Kitty,' Sage interrupted with a quick glance at Owen Ludlow's face, to see if he were offended at such openly adverse criticism; but he only laughed.

'I think, on the whole, that is a feather in my cap,' he said. 'I've looked at it till I could see no meaning in it, and Vertumnus was just an ordinary old woman without a sign of anything out of the common about her. If it tells its tale to every one as well as it does to Kitty, I shall be well content.'

CHAPTER VI.

I was a sketcher then;
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build upon a rock.
TENNYSON.

To both Sage and Kitty those sittings to Owen Ludlow were very pleasant. Kitty did not find the solace of Mrs Stock's cat invariably necessary, though it was freely accorded to her whenever she wished.

It was no very important part of the picture that the two girls filled. I daresay many who looked at it when it was finished hardly noticed the slim, fair girl on the right side in the dull green, clinging dress, holding a trail of ivy loosely in her hand; or the child sitting at her feet in a russet brown dress, and with her round red cheek and warm colouring of hair and complexion showing up richly against the dull hue of her companion's dress.

The attention was concentrated, as was right, and intended, on the central figures; but Kitty, at any rate, regarded the picture as a portrait of herself and Sage, with the figures of Pomona and Vertumnus forming an insignificant background.

Sage, too, lived a good deal in the picture, though with her the central figures played a larger part. Pomona was her friend, Vertumnus had made her his confidante. By-and-by, when the disguise fell away, and the young god stood confessed, Pomona would turn to her in her surprise, and clinging to her with those fair, soft arms, hide her shy, sweet face on her shoulder.

I wonder—but this never occurred to Sage's mind—if, when that supreme moment came, Vertumnus or Pomona either would have cared for the presence of a third, however sympathetic.

'Sage,' Owen protested, 'you have introduced a new element into the picture. I never intended or imagined that any one should have seen through Vertumnus' disguise; but I have done my utmost to take the recognition of him out of your eyes, and it is always there. Well, let it be—lookers-on, they say, see most of the game; so perhaps the little maiden standing by saw more than Pomona herself. I painted Vertumnus from a young fellow who was with me for a long time in California. He was hardly more than a boy then: let me see, that must be something like ten years ago. He had got into some sort of a scrape at home, and fallen out with his people. He was a good-looking, clever lad, and had been spoilt and made much of; and from all he told me, I'm sure his father was only too anxious to receive the prodigal back, and kill the fatted calf; but he couldn't make up his foolish, young mind to eat humble-pie, which is often the form in which the fatted calf is served up, and to be forgiven and rejoiced over; so he went right off to America; and there, I fancy, he did a good deal of the pig-minding and husk-eating part of the business before I came across him. He was pretty well at the end of even those resources when he stumbled into our ranch one night, and just dropped at the door as we sat smoking the pipe of peace after our day's work. Collins thought he was drunk, and I thought he was dead; but he was neither one nor the other; though he did his best to justify my opinion any time the next six weeks, when he lay on my bed, and Collins and I nursed and doctored him on principles evolved out of our inner consciousness. I wonder we did not kill him twenty times over between us; but he had the constitution of a horse, and survived our treatment, and was benighted enough to believe that we saved his life, and was so outrageously grateful, that Collins declared that life was insupportable under the weight of virtue imputed to him. But we both of us liked the young fellow; and we got so used to having him pottering about us, that when he went home to his people, we found the old diggings, that had done well enough before, so quiet and dull, that with one consent we agreed to strike our tents and return to civilisation.'

'Have you seen him since?'

'Oh yes; he often swoops down on me when he's in England. He is a Secretary or something at the Embassy at Edelstadt—plenty of fun and not much money. I think it's rather a throwaway, and that he had stuff in him to do something better; but his people are the smart, fashionable sort, and I think they expect him to marry money, and get on that way.'

'Not marry Pomona?'

'No; her apples were not golden. You can't tell from the picture how good-looking he is, for I have taken the youth and the sex out of his face. I wish I had the sketch I made of him for the picture to show you; but I sent it to his mother. It was while I was painting it that I found out who he was, for he kept his name dark, and always protested that he wouldn't go home till he had made his fortune—or, at any rate,

a competency. But fortunes are not made in a few days, or competencies either; and I had my doubts if he was the sort to make either; and it did not look like doing it in a hurry, just pottering round and washing my brushes, and filling old Collins's pipe; and I knew he had a mother, for he talked of her no end, when he was light-headed with the fever. So, when he dropped out by accident the name of the place where his father lived in Yorkshire, I pretended to take no notice; but I wrote to a man I knew not far from there, and asked him to find out who they were, and to drop them a hint of their son's whereabouts; and a few weeks later, old Collins came in with a letter directed to Maurice Moore, which we both agreed was a name we had never heard, and that it must be some one at Nelson's ranch, ten miles on. But just then I happened to look up, and saw my young friend's face crimson, and his mouth twitching, though, if his name was Robert Baines, as he had made out, there seemed no reason why he should have taken any notice. But I guessed in a minute what it meant; and I just tossed the letter down on the table, and got Collins out of the way for a bit; and when we came back, both the letter and Baines were gone; and indeed Baines never came back, for in the evening Maurice Moore came in and told Collins and me that he had heard from home, and that his mother was ill, and he supposed there was no help for it but that he must go back. He could not imagine how they had traced him out, and I don't think to this day he knows. It's all very well to say what's in a name? But there is a good deal; and I have never quite felt that Maurice Moore and Robert Baines are the same; and I have a sort of fancy that some day the old Bob will come sauntering in, in his flannels and broad felt hat; and we shall all laugh to think we ever could have mistaken Maurice Moore for him.'

It is very curious how often it happens in life that you think or hear of a person immediately before you see him; that some one comes into your mind of whom, perhaps, you have not thought for weeks or months, and the minute after, you meet him in the street, or find a letter from him on the breakfast table. So it happened in this instance that the very day when Owen Ludlow had been telling Sage the story of Maurice Moore, he appeared on the scene, coming, as it seemed to Sage, right out of the sunset, and arriving on the extreme end of Scar Point, while the painter and the two girls sat on the beach watching the glowing sky.

'Look!' Sage exclaimed; and Owen Ludlow, who had perceived him at the same moment, echoed the word. It was too far off to distinguish who it was; but even at that distance Sage was certain that Kitty's guesses as to his identity were not correct, and that it was neither Cottam nor Leach, nor any other of the Scar men. They watched him as he came along the top of the ridge, distinct against the sky, and then lost sight of him as he turned down the cliff-path towards Scar; and they had forgotten all about him, and were slowly wending their way from the beach to the village, when some one came with a flying leap from the bank above, right in front of the painter, and seized him by the shoulders and whirled him round.

'Bless my heart! Sakes alive! Goody gracious! Well, a never!' Ludlow exclaimed in the accents of a frightened old woman.—'Sage, this wild man of the woods, this octopus, this Jack-in-the-box, this bolt from the blue is Maurice Moore!' 'But Sage had needed no introduction, for she knew it was Vertumnus.'

MILK-TREES.

PLANTS yielding a milky juice are not at all uncommon; they can be found in numerous families of the vegetable kingdom and in all parts of the world. Thus, in our own country we have the Dandelion, Poppy, and certain members of the order Campanulaceæ (Harebell family), and also species of Urticaceæ (Nettleworts). It is to the acrid juice secreted by the gland at the base of the sting of the common stinging nettle, that we owe the unpleasant effects produced by contact with this plant.

Although many of these plants yield a milk which is highly acrid, and in some cases very poisonous, there are a number whose latex possesses useful properties. Thus, we have the 'Carica Papaya,' the juice of which has already been alluded to in an article upon Vegetable Pepsine which appeared in the *Journal* of October 1, 1892. India-rubber and gutta-percha are each the solidified milk of various species of plants; and last, but not least, we have five trees in the New World which are stated to produce milk as abundantly as cows, and quite as palatable. One of the best known of these, 'Brosimum galactodendron,' is a tree of the Bread-fruit family. It grows from fifty to one hundred feet in height, and is found in large natural forests on the mountains near Cariaco and elsewhere along the sea-coast of Venezuela. The milk, which is obtained by making incisions in the trunk of the tree, has a slightly balsamic odour, and a taste resembling that of sweet cream. It is very nourishing, and perfectly wholesome, the only unpleasant feature about it is that it is rather glutinous.

Humboldt, writing upon the plant, says: 'We drank considerable quantities of it in the evening before we went to bed, and very early in the morning, without feeling the least injurious effect. The negroes and the free people who work in the plantations drink it, dipping into it their bread of maize or cassava. The majordomo of the farm told us that the negroes grow sensibly fatter during the season that the Palo de Vaca—one of the Spanish names for the tree—furnishes them with most milk. This juice exposed to the air presents at its surface—perhaps in consequence of the absorption of the atmospheric oxygen—membranes of a strongly animalised substance, yellowish, stringy, and resembling a cheesy substance. For several months of the year not a single shower moistens its foliage; its branches appear dead and dried; but when the trunk is pierced, there flows from it a sweet and nourishing milk. It is at the rising of the sun that this vegetable fountain is most abundant; the blacks and natives are then seen hastening from all quarters, furnished with large bowls to receive the milk, which thickens and grows yellow on its surface. Some

empty their bowls under the tree itself; others carry the juice home to their children.'

Humboldt advised Boussingault to submit it to a chemical analysis, which he did. He says the milk produced from the tree is of a thicker consistence than that of the cow, and its reaction is slightly acid; exposed to air, it turns sour, and coagulates into a sort of cheese.

Summing up the results of his analyses, he says: 'We have found in this milk (1) A fatty substance like beeswax, melting at one hundred and twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit, very soluble in ether, but less soluble in boiling alcohol. It probably consists of several substances; and after being melted and cooled down, has the appearance of virgin wax. We made good candles with it. (2) A nitrogenised substance analogous to caseine, and recalling the vegetable fibrine which Vauquelin discovered in the sap of the "Carica Papaya." (3) A saccharine substance, the exact nature of which we were unable to determine. (4) Salts of potash, lime, and magnesia partly in the state of phosphates. For some time M. Boussingault was unable, owing to other pressing matters, to ascertain the nature of the sweet matters; but he ultimately determined them as made up of sugar, inverted sugar and gum, easily turned to sugar.' In concluding his report, he says: 'The vegetable milk by its constitution approaches as nearly as possible to the milk of the cow, for it contains a fatty substance, saccharine matters, albumen, and phosphates. But the proportion of these substances is different in the vegetable milk. The amount of fixed matter is three times larger than that in the milk of the cow; so that the vegetable milk approaches more nearly to cream than to milk.'

Dr Spruce, the renowned South American traveller, mentions another tree, a member of the Dog-bane family, the juice of which is used as milk. On the bark being wounded, the milk flows abundantly, and is of the consistency of cow's milk, of the purest white, and sweet to the taste. The Indian mode of taking it is to apply the mouth directly to the wound, and thus receive the milk as it flows. Dr Spruce says he has often partaken of it without experiencing any ill effects.

In Guiana, the natives employ the milk from a tree belonging to the same family as the last named; in the vernacular it is known as Hyahya, and to botanists as 'Tabernaemontana utilis' (so named after Jacobus Theodorus Tabernaemontanus, a German physician and botanist). The milk has the same flavour as sweet cow's milk, but is rather sticky, on account of its containing some caoutchouc.

In Para, a lofty tree, belonging to the Star Apple family, attaining a height of one hundred feet, is used in a similar manner to the others mentioned. Incisions are made in the bark, and the milky juice flows out copiously, about the consistence of thick cream, and if it were not for its taste, which is somewhat peculiar, could hardly be distinguished from it.

Besides the general usefulness of the juice as milk, it possesses a property which, although far more valuable, is oftentimes overlooked. Our readers will have noticed the fact that the milk is always viscid, and contains a little caoutchouc: this renders it a most important remedy for

dysentery. Its utility in this respect has been personally confirmed by an English gentleman who, some years back, resided on the Pacific coast. He says: 'I was attacked with diarrhoea, which in two days passed into very severe dysentery. In the space of twelve hours I was reduced to a state of utter prostration, suffering the most excruciating pains. The bloody discharge was so terrible that it seemed possible to predict death within a few hours. The violent phase of the disease only developed at nightfall, and I passed the night in a helpless state. At daybreak the wife of one of our inspectors was called in as a nurse, and by nine o'clock *leche de vaca* (Spanish for the milk) was obtained. Up to this time I had been getting rapidly worse, and was then hardly conscious. The milk was given to me—a tablespoonful in a glass of water—every half-hour till twelve o'clock mid-day, and at this hour I was perfectly free from dysentery or the slightest symptom of it. Broths and light foods were then given to me for a few days, and I was restored to perfect health without taking any more milk or other medicine, and without having the least recurrence of symptoms of dysentery.'

The tree from which this milk was obtained was the 'Clusia galactodendron,' a native of Venezuela, but found also on the Pacific coast, and in one or two other places. It is said to contain a resinous and an astringent principle, and an aromatic and tonic substance. The action of this combination is considered to be mechanical, so far as relates to the resin, which no doubt coats the intestines with a film and allays irritation. No other medicine is used in Choco, or on the Pacific coast of New Granada, for dysentery, and this disease is thought little or nothing of, as it is so easily cured.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.—SUFFIELD GOES INTO THE 'CORNER.'

ISABEL'S opportunity had come: the crisis had arrived—which she had so vividly anticipated some weeks before—when her 'family,' who had rescued and nurtured her youth, needed the surrender of her wealth, if not of herself. Without hesitation she sat down and wrote a cheque for fifty thousand pounds, payable 'to George Suffield, Esq.' ('my dear uncle,' she had a mind to add, so that all the world might guess from this document how good he was). She knew enough of her own business to be aware that there was not nearly so much money as that lying to her credit at the bank; but she also knew that certain securities could be quickly realised on the morrow. She did not wish to encounter George again; so she waited until after dinner, and then she set out with her cheque for Rutland Gate. She followed the footman into the library, where, he said, Mr Suffield sat alone. She knocked, and a smothered voice said, 'Come in.' She entered. Her uncle was sitting up in his easy-chair with a red bandana over his head, and an open book near him on the table.

'Trying to have an after-dinner nap?' said

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Isabel. 'I am so sorry to have interrupted you, uncle! But I wanted to see you alone.'

'No apologies, my dear,' said he—'no apologies. I was just looking at that *Don Quixote* there—wonderful book that!—and those pictures of Doré's—wonderful imagination Doré had, and all that sort of thing; and I was reading where that rascal, Sancho Panza, says, "Blessed be the man that invented sleep!" (nobody invented it, of course, you know)—"it wraps you about like a cloak!" And thinks I to myself, "By Jingo, now if I don't try it!"'

'You dear old uncle!' said she. 'And I interrupted your experiment!'

'It's of no consequence, my dear,' said he, with a laugh at his own joke; 'for I believe I've tried th' experiment before.—Sit down, and tell me th' news. I can't give you long, because I must be off presently to catch th' night-train down to Lancashire.'

'I believe, uncle,' said she, 'I've come on the same business as you must be going on.'

'Sayst tha, lass?' said he, and a shade of unusual seriousness settled on his face.

'George has told me all about it,' said Isabel, now somewhat shy about broaching her business; 'and I want you to do me a great favour, uncle.'

'What I can do, I will, my lass,' answered her uncle, eyeing her.

'I want you to let me help you with the money Uncle Harry left me. I have brought a cheque with me; there is not so much as that at present in the bank, but I shall make it all right to-morrow. Take it, please, uncle.'

He took the cheque from her hand, and looked at it and looked at her.

'It's not the whole,' said she, with a blush. 'But some of the securities will take a little time to realise—won't they?'

'It's the biggest cheque I ever saw!' exclaimed her uncle, looking at it again.

'And you will take it and use it, uncle, as a—' as a present from me?'

She was doubtful of his look: it did not seem to her that of an acceptor of a present.

'I'll take it, my lass'—

'Oh, thank you, uncle!' she exclaimed.

'I'll take it, my lass, but I'll not use it. But I'll frame it with a gold frame, and I'll hang it up and keep it as the biggest and the kindest cheque I ever saw!'

'Don't, uncle,' said she, with a deep blush of confusion and disappointment—'don't treat me as a child—as if I don't understand what I am doing!'

'Thou'rt nobbut a child to me, Bell, my dear,' said her uncle, rising with tears in his eyes, and patting her cheek, as he had been wont when she was a little girl. 'Thou'lt always be to me the bit of a lonely lass that gave me her hand in this London twenty years ago, and came away wi' me to Lancashire, and that has been a daughter to me ever since.—I understand, my lass, why thou'st done this! I thank tha, my dear!' He took her hand and pressed it. 'But it conna be! Can a father take his lass's bit of brass because she's generous enough to hand it over to him, and because he has been an owd fool?'

At that, Isabel was touched enough to shed tears, and foolish enough to have not a word to say.

The footman entered and addressed Mr Suffield. 'The keb's at the door, sir,' said he, and withdrew.

'Well, Bell, my dear,' said Suffield, 'I must go. But first—in case of mishap.'—He sat down and took pen and ink and wrote across the back of Isabel's cheque, 'Cancelled by Geo. Suffield,' folded it and put it in his pocket-book. 'Now, lass,' said he, rising again, 'kiss thy uncle, and say "Good-bye."'

Isabel kissed her uncle affectionately, saying: 'But I haven't done with you yet. It remains to be seen whether you are to have your way, uncle, or I mine.'

Her aunt entered to see that Suffield was properly wrapped up for his journey, and to beg that she might hear every day how matters went. Isabel and she stood on the steps to see the excellent man enter the cab and drive away through the winter night, to remedy or control the evils wrought by the self-confidence and rash ambition of his son.

Suffield went down to Lancashire strong in the main resolves to clear the name of his house from the offence and iniquity of 'cornering,' and to purge his business of such irregularities as had crept into it during his son's reign. It was not yet quite evident to himself into what details of action these resolves would lead him; for though, in the first flush of his indignation, he had been ready to make an immediate sweep of the 'corner'—so far as George was concerned in it—he now saw, being calm and having considered, that while ruin might be brought on himself by haste, no harm need be wrought on others by delay and temporising. He would like to 'unload' himself of the Gorgonian responsibilities—for his son's responsibilities were his—without gain to himself and without loss to others; he feared it was impossible to 'unload' at all without some loss to himself; but he hoped that by management the loss might be kept small.

When he showed himself at the works in the early morning, all were delighted to see him, but all wondered what had 'come to Mester George,' that 'th' owd mester' was there alone. Late in the day the effect was similar in the City—in his own office, in the streets, and on 'Change.

'Hallo, George!' was the greeting of old acquaintances. 'What's brought tha here again?'

'Business, my lad—business,' was his answer. 'Matters o' business to be seen to. But tha knows th' saying: "A wise head keeps a close tongue."'

Next morning he received a telegram from George, from Marseilles: 'Both train and steamer no go. Going on by steam-yacht. See Gorgonio.'

'Hired the yacht, I expect,' said Suffield to himself. 'That's more expense to little purpose!—And now, I suppose, in any case I'd better see that Gorgonio creature about this cornering.'

But the day was Saturday, when business closed early. Suffield, therefore, resolved to leave Gorgonio alone till Monday morning. He sat down and wrote to him that he wished to see him on very important business, if he would be so good as be at liberty to listen to him at an early hour on Monday. But his wish was grati-

fied sooner than he anticipated. He was just thinking of locking his writing-table and going home to Holdsworth, when Mr Gorgonio was announced.

'Show him in,' said Suffield, and twisted round in his chair to receive him on the defensive.

Gorgonio entered with smiles and bows, and a general profuseness of affability and politeness. He had, he said, expected to meet Mr Suffiel the younger: he presumed he was addressing the father of Mr Suffiel the younger?

'Yea,' said Suffield; 'I'm responsible for him both as his father and as head of the firm.' And he gave Gorgonio a pointed look to emphasise his statement.

'I am please, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio politely, 'to make your agreeable acquaintance.'

'I'm sorry to say, sir,' replied Suffield, 'that I can't return the compliment.'

Gorgonio looked a little put out by that reply; and perceiving that Mr Suffield was not only not prepossessed in his favour but absolutely prejudiced against him, his amiability sank into a more insinuating and watchful quality.

'I come over,' said he, 'to fill an engagement to lunch with your son, but I suppose he have forgot.'

'I suppose he did,' said Suffield; 'and you see he's not here to-day. Still, if you like to lunch with me'—

'Thank you, Mr Suffiel'; but I cannot impose upon your politeness.'

'Just as you please, sir.—But what,' continued Suffield, 'is this precious cotton business you and my son are concerned in?'

'You must excuse me, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio; 'but I cannot speak of your son's private business.'

'Private business be hanged, sir!' said Suffield. 'It's not so peculiar and private to my son but that, so far as I understand yet, my money's pledged in it! What is the game?'

'You must excuse me, Mr Suffiel,' persisted Gorgonio. 'But at least I cannot tell you without your son's authority.'

'Very well. If you refuse to enlighten me fully about this business, I must refuse to be accountable at all for my son's engagements.'

'We had better wait, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'till your son can be present.'

'My son, sir, cannot be present for two or three weeks'—

'Two or three weeks?—weeks?'

'He has gone away on a voyage—for the good of his own health, and mine, sir, and I cannot say when you will have an opportunity of seeing him.'

'It is very bad weather for voyage,' remarked Gorgonio, now gray-skinned and sharp-eyed with alarm and suspicion.

'My son's an Englishman, sir,' said Suffield; 'and he prefers a voyage in bad weather, with the sea as rough as the wind can make it. But that's neither here nor there.—Are you going to explain to me the position of things, or are you not?'

'I am to speak to you, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'as if you were your son—is that so?'

'That is so.—Now, fire away.'

'Well, Mr Suffiel, the second part of that con-

signment from Bombay what you did give Mr Tanderjee a three-fourths advance for, is come into dock; I have seen it this morning, and it is not—any more than the other—worth two-pence a pound!'

'I'll see that cotton on Monday morning myself,' said Suffield, taking out his tablets and making a note. 'Go on.'

Gorgonio stared in some surprise: obviously this was not the same man as Mr Suffiel the younger.

'I have bought for us,' continued Gorgonio, 'in the last two days ten thousand more bales for January delivery.'

'At what price?'

'At six and five-eighths.'

'And what is the "spot" price?'

'Spot, Mr Suffield, is six and eleven-sixteenths; so, you see, we do very well.'

'Now,' said Suffiel, 'we come to the business I wanted to talk to you about: I had written to you to make an engagement for that purpose. You'll oblige me, sir, by buying no more; about the getting rid of what we have I can't speak till I know the whole situation.'

'Getting rid, Mr Suffiel! Unloading, Mr Suffiel! Oh, my great heaven!—do you know what you're saying, Mr Suffiel? The business is going just beautiful! Prices is steady! Nobody is afraid! Nobody believes nothing is going to happen! We hold two hundred thousand bales at this moment against a stock of a little over seventy thousand!—and nobody guesses it!—Get rid, Mr Suffiel? Bust up the loveliest corner as ever was?—and lose your chance of more than one hundred thousand pounds profit? Oh, surely no, Mr Suffiel! you are joking.'

'I've never knowingly made, money dishonestly,' said Suffield with unusual sternness, 'and I and mine are not going to begin now! If I made the profit you name out of this cornering business, I'd do it only by ruining or crippling scores of men! I won't do it! And if I could, I'd shake the whole business off my hands this minute! But my son engaged to back you with money in this, and I'm responsible for my son. He gave you his word'—

'He give me his bond!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'I have it on paper! It is in black and white!'

'His word would ha' been binding enough,' said Suffield quietly. 'He gave you his word, and I must be bound by it. But since I—that is, my son—engaged to find the necessary money, I must have a voice in the business—and a final voice. And I say I want to have done wi' it as soon as possible: you'll do no cornering wi' my help. Clear it out—and the sooner the better. Only, at the same time, as I don't want to see anybody else lose, I don't want to lose myself if I can help it.'

'You are bound to lose, Mr Suffiel!' said Gorgonio desperately. 'Bound! When the "bears" find you selling—and you can't sell two hundred thousand bales in a hurry without being found out—down they'll send the prices!'

'Well,' said Suffield with a grim tightening of his month, 'all I can say is: let us lose as little as possible.—You seem to have known how to

* 'Spot' price means, the price for delivery at once, or on the 'spot.'

buy without raising suspicions; you should be able to sell.'

'And what, Mr Suffiel, is to become of my profit?'

'You'll have your broker's commission from me: won't that do?' said Suffield.

'That is very little!—for all the time, all the brain, all the skill and knowledge I have spent on this business! Ah, this beautiful corner!—to be spoil!'

'I'll do this much more,' said Suffield: 'if you can get off these bales at contract prices—at the prices you took them up at—you shall have double commission; and that, sir, is, in my opinion, more than twice as much as you deserve. A man that plans and makes a corner should be sent to hard labour and fed on skilly, just as much as a man that steals his neighbour's purse.—Good-morning, sir. I'll call on you on Monday, when, maybe, you'll see your way a bit better.'

IN IRON-LAND.

THERE are few dwellers in towns who are unacquainted with the inconvenience which arises when 'the streets are up.' Vehicular traffic has to be diverted into side-streets, and pedestrians as they pass along the pavement look down over temporary barriers into deep channels which are being hollowed out below the roadway. It may be that the business man as he passes the same spot morning after morning on his way to his office takes a little interest in watching the progress of the proceedings from the first stroke of the pickaxe on the hard road, until he sees the huge water-pipes, or perhaps the smaller gas-pipes, lowered into the cavity constructed for them. And perhaps the thought strikes him, whence come all these black pipes, which form the arteries for gas or water, branching out in all directions beneath the surface in our towns?

Well, a very great number of these pipes come from Staveley, in Derbyshire, where iron-works have been in existence for more than two hundred years; and the name 'Staveley Iron-works' is not an unknown one on coal-trucks, for the existing company are not only iron manufacturers, but extensive colliery owners as well.

It is in the second half of the seventeenth century that we first come across mention of 'a furnace' at Staveley. There was iron ore in the neighbourhood, which was dug and smelted on the spot, the material employed in the furnace being the wood which grew on the hill-sides around. Local ore is no longer employed, and most of that now used comes from Northamptonshire. The land on which these first works were situated was leased from the family of Frechville, who had already been at Staveley Hall for about three hundred years. The undertaking was a very small one, and the smelted iron could, so bad was the state of the roads, only be carted away in the summer. Some hundred years later we find a 'forge' mentioned, which shows us that the iron had now begun to be worked up at Staveley into manufactured articles. The business continued in private hands, growing gradually, until it became that of a company in 1864. The rapid progress which it has made in the last half-century may be estimated from the fact that

in the year 1840 there were only one hundred and twenty men employed in the works, while now there are eleven hundred. Those who like statistics will also be interested to hear that fifty thousand tons of castings and thirty thousand tons of pig-iron are turned out annually from the works. Of these castings, the larger number consists of water and gas pipes, though other articles are made; and at one time cannon-balls were manufactured at Staveley.

Leaving for the present the site of the ancient 'forge,' let us enter the principal works which lie between the railway line and the river Rother. A row of huge blast furnaces is the most conspicuous feature before us as we walk down from the station; and these, again, are flanked by the tall chimneys of the engine-houses. We make our way to the offices, and are soon provided with a guide. The first thing which strikes us as we walk across the yard is that we are surrounded on nearly every side by stacks of black pipes of all sizes; and here, just in front of the offices, we come across an archaeological curiosity. Side by side with a line of new iron pipes is a collection of trunks of trees hollowed out down the centre. These tree-trunks were the water-pipes of our ancestors, and the ones we are looking at actually formed a part of the original system constructed by Sir Hugh Myddleton, about the year 1666, for the purpose of supplying London with water, and were discovered beneath the Euston Road a short time ago. They seem to have done their work well, though their bore is not a large one. The largest modern pipes which are pointed out to us in the Staveley works are forty inches in diameter. Should the scheme of emptying one of the Welsh lakes into London ever become a reality, pipes of pretty considerable magnitude will be necessary to pour the water into the metropolis.

We are first taken into the pipe-factory, where we see deep circular holes sunk in the sand, which form the moulds in which the pipes are cast. The central core has, in order to give it sufficient adhesive character, to be formed of a very evil-smelling compound. The pipes when cast are finished off neatly at the end, and turned smooth on the outside and at the collar, where they fit into one another. They are then taken to another part of the works, where they are tested as to their soundness. This is done by closing up the ends of the pipe and then forcing water into it by means of hydraulic pressure. When the pipe is as full of water as it can possibly be, a workman strikes it smartly with a hammer, and under this treatment any flaw is sure to discover itself and burst. Sometimes oil is used instead of water in the testing process. The pipes are finally dipped in a huge caldron of boiling pitch, and when dry, are ready for use. It may be added, however, that different companies have different ideas with regard to the size, length, and finish of gas and water pipes, so that the Staveley works have to be ready for different classes of customers.

Blast furnaces are too well known to need any full description. Suffice it to say that coal and iron ore are packed into enormous cylindrical furnaces of some fifty feet in height; that the melted iron is run out from the furnaces into channels, or furrows, marked on beds of sand, and

that in the form which it thus assumes of short rough bars, it is called 'pig-iron.' The blasts of hot air which are forced into the furnaces—hence their name—are driven by a fine old-fashioned beam-engine of great size. It is curious to notice in the engine-room how mechanical checks are used to test the work that is done. There is pointed out to us against the wall a dial which records the number of revolutions of the fly-wheel during any specified time, and by means of this tell-tale index the manager can inform himself as to whether the engine-man has kept his machine at full working power.

But there is a great deal of machinery at the Staveley works besides that required in connection with blast furnaces and pipe-casting, for here the company constructs all the engines and other machinery needful for their numerous collieries, which are situated on the spot or in the neighbourhood. We are therefore invited to inspect the fitting-shops with their lathes, punching and cutting machines, steam-hammers, and all other appliances necessary for the construction of a steam-engine.

From the noise and heat and dirt of the work-shops of this character, it is pleasant to turn into the clean and quiet pattern-making shops. In these we see a band of workmen engaged in complicated carpentry, somewhat resembling the manufacture of furniture. But they are not engaged in cabinet-making, but are constructing, according to drawings prepared by the engineers, the wooden patterns or models which are to give their shape to the moulds in the sandbeds in which the iron castings are to be formed.

And now we cross the little Rother, which runs through the middle of the works, and divides the older part from the more modern portion. The little river runs merrily along over its stony bed, and a few trees stand yet upon its banks. Doubtless it was formerly a clear trout-stream, though its waters are of course now much befouled. On the banks of the river the original 'forge' once stood, and the Rother performed, by means of a large water-wheel, the work of moving the simple machinery employed in former years. Close to the site of the old mill is a house where the manager lived. It was once a pleasant habitation, with a garden, by the side of the stream; but soon the overhanging and rapidly increasing bank of 'tip,' or refuse from the works, will swallow it up. A little farther on is a mullioned-windowed house, perhaps nearly three hundred years old, still standing amidst grimy surroundings. This was once the farmhouse of the estate.

And now we have passed right across the works and from one bank of the Rother to the other, and we find that we have reached another line of railway, for the works are hemmed in by the iron road on each side. Upon a hill above this railway we see the modern workmen's village, crowning a slight elevation known as Barrow Hill. Close to the line stands a well-built and well-appointed Mechanics' Institute; and farther up the hill is a school chapel, which is served by the clergy of the mother-church of Staveley, in the old village, about a mile and a half away. In the school we see hanging on the wall the portrait

of Mr R. Barrow, the last private owner of the works; and one is glad to note that the company have not failed to carry on and develop the various organisations for the good of the workmen which he or his predecessors in the business originated. It is in contemplation that a permanent church should be built here, and then the existing building will no longer be used as it is now, and with much inconvenience, for a double purpose.

It is satisfactory to find, as we do now nearly everywhere, that the workpeople of large manufacturers are not treated as mere machines, but that provision is made for the moral and spiritual good of themselves and of their families by their employers. It is in such ways that a right aspect is put on one side of British industry and commerce, which was perhaps once neglected; and under such auspices it is to be expected that commercial enterprise will flourish in this island even more than it has done before.

A MALAGASY GHOST-STORY.

ONE evening I was sitting beneath the veranda of a house on the borders of the Upper Forest in Madagascar. It was one of those glorious evenings only to be found in the tropics, when the afterglow of sunset enriches and enhances the beauty of everything before darkness hides them for another night; when red flowers look like flame, and yellow like burnished gold. As the sun sank deeper below the horizon, the colours slowly changed, one blending with another till all grew sombre. Over to the east, behind the Forest, shot up the great white beams of the rising moon, distinct and regular. The trees stood out in bold relief; the very leaves seemed to separate and let the moonbeams through.

Grand as was the scene, my thoughts, I must confess, were hardly in keeping with it. I was thinking of pigs. I had been told by some natives that some wild pigs had been devastating their crops, and I was wondering how I could get a shot at them that night.

As I sat pulling at my cigar, and wondering if it were possible to secure the services of an old native who was said to be exceptionally skilled in the matter of pigs, I saw a shadowy form coming towards me; and presently the dusky figure of a native stepped out of the shadow into the moonlight, his white *lamba* (a long cloth worn by natives) shining brightly as he threw it farther over his shoulder.

'Why!' I exclaimed, 'it is Rainikoto himself—the very man I wanted.—Hi! Rainikoto, will you go pig-hunting with me to-night?'

'How do you do, sir?' he said with native politeness before he answered the question.—'What did you ask, sir?'

'Come with me to-night to look for that old boar that is eating up all your manioc, will you?'

'Where?'

'Oh, anywhere; I don't mind. At that little

open glade in the forest about a *rice-cooking** off, away to the east.'

'At the clearing to the east?'

'Yes.'

'I can't go; I have business to do.'

'Nonsense, man! What business can you have to do?'

'I can't go, sir,' he said again, squatting down on his hams beside me, and arranging his *lamba* so as to cover his mouth.

'But why?'

'I am an old man, and don't care for sitting up all night, as I used to do. I like sleeping better than shooting.—But what made you choose that place?'

'I thought it looked a likely spot, so many paths meet there.'

'Go about midnight; you are certain to see a pig,' he said, looking up with a curious expression.

I was surprised by the man's manner, it was so totally different from anything I had been accustomed to see in a native.

'Funny you should pick that place,' he added after a time.

'You seem to know it well, and say it is good; then why funny, my relation?'

'Oh, I know it very well.'

'I'll give you a dollar to come with me.'

The old man laughed. 'It is a big sum,' he said—'a week's pay. But not for fifteen weeks' pay would I come to that place at night, my master.'

'Oh, all right!' I said, pretending not to be curious. 'I'll go myself.'

I watched for some sign; but he sat looking out straight before him and evidently disinclined to talk. 'Is there a ghost there, Rainikoto?'

'Yes, perhaps,' he said, without moving a muscle.

'Have you seen it?'

'Yes, perhaps,' he again said, readjusting his *lamba*.

'Will you tell me about it?'

The old man sat perfectly still, as if in deep thought. No European could sit so long without moving. Not a limb, not the quiver of an eyelid. I waited for an answer, but none came. After a time, he took out his small polished bamboo tobacco-box. Shaking out a large pinch of the snuff-like preparation into the palm of his hand, he opened his mouth, and, by a peculiar jerk, tipped it in below his tongue—a decided hint for me that he meant to keep his story to himself, whatever it might be.

I knew it was no good pressing him then, so I lit another cigar and took no apparent notice.

Presently, native fashion, he spat out his tobacco, and seemingly addressing himself as much as

me, he began: 'White men don't believe in ghosts, and witchcraft, and *bagimla*;* they laugh at them, and at those who do.'

'Witchcraft, perhaps, my friend, and *bagimla* and *sikidy* [divination]; but we like to hear of ghosts. I do not feel at all like laughing; indeed, I very much wish to hear about it.'

It was a long time ago (he began so suddenly it made me start)—it was a long time ago; two kings and two queens have turned their backs upon us since then. I was but a little lad, but I remember it quite distinctly. I am old now; but I remember it well, as well as if it were only yesterday. My father was going into the Forest to get wood, only a short distance, so he took me with him. We had not gone far when we heard the long low whine of a lost dog. 'The board-hunters are out early,' said my father, evidently surprised; 'they must have slept in the Forest. Ho! è, è, è, è!' he shouted; but there was no answer except from several dogs, which joined in one long howl.

'Ah! they are all lost,' he said; 'and no one shouting to let them hear. Ho! è, è, è, è! Ho! è, è, è, è!'

Again the loud chorus came ringing and echoing through the wood. We turned aside, and made our way in the direction of the dogs. Cry upon cry now arose. I remember it well. Am I likely to forget it? It was early morning, and there had been a heavy dew; my feet were cold and wet, and the dogs frightened me. I felt chilled and scared. My father had girded himself, and his brown skin glistened in the morning sun. How fast he went!—pushing his way through the tangled growth. I could scarcely keep up with him, for the thorny creepers caught my legs, although my father helped to clear the way, striking with his axe at the great lianas that stopped our path. I think in the excitement he almost forgot me, for he guessed that something was wrong, and he held his spear ready shortened in his right hand. It seemed a long, long time before we reached the dogs. They were all together in the clearing to the east. It has not grown up as others do; it is just the same. There they sat, some howling, some licking the wounds received from a tussle with the board—

'Look, father! what is that?' I cried.

'À drè! à drè! It is a corpse. There are two: Rainimanga and Rainigapy—both killed by one pig,' he said, turning them over.

Ah! I remember them well, sir, these gashed bodies. It was a horrible sight for any one, much more for a little lad. The shaft of a broken spear lay near; and still grasped in the hand of one, lay the second spear. A look of surprise spread over my father's face as he gazed upon the man who held the spear.

'This wound would not have killed, and he never threw his spear. The other is nearly torn to bits! His spear has gone,' he said. 'I do not understand.—And what is this? Money! fifteen dollars!—How came that money here? Seven in one purse, and eight in the other.'

* A native way of measuring distance—equal twenty minutes; equal about a mile and a quarter.

* *Bagimla* are the supposed aboriginal inhabitants, whose graves and spirits are held in great awe and respect.

He looked at me, and then, as if thinking aloud, he added: 'No! I will not take it. It has bad luck in it. I'll give it to their wives. Besides, if I kept it, they would say I had killed these men. I wish I knew how they got it, though!'

We soon raised the whole neighbourhood. The two men had come from the village over yonder (he said, pointing with his lips to a village about three miles away)—and their friends went and brought the bodies in. What wailing and mourning there was! what beating of tom-toms! But the money my father gave up was much more talked about than the deaths. Never had any one but the chief—nay, not even he—had so much before. The funeral was very grand: several oxen were killed; and there was a lot of *toaka* [native rum] in *miny* [earthen water-pots]. The money was a great comfort to their wives. We heard soon afterwards that a trader from the coast had dropped his purse, and he offered a reward; but then the reward was less than the money in the purse, so of course he never got it.

I soon ceased to think of that day, though the shock lasted long. As I grew up, I, too, became a hunter and forester. Malagasy, as you know, are not fond of hunting like you white men; the Beganogand tribe are the most so; but even only a few of us care for it. I liked it, and soon became proficient. One day a white man came to our village and stayed there. He was looking for birds, which he skinned: he never ate them, which surprised us. He taught me to skin and shoot; and when he went away he gave me the gun. I was very proud of it; and soon I found I could get wild-pig much easier by waiting for them at nights and shooting, than by hunting them with dogs. So I used to go to the bush where you wish to go to, to-night.

He looked up at me with a sharp, keen, side-long glance, as if to read my thoughts, and then proceeded:

I nearly always got some, though you white men don't, for you have no patience; you sit and wait for one hour, perhaps, and then you get up and walk a little, or think another place better, or go home; but we Malagasy will sit without moving for hours. Whenever pig came this way, I was sure to be waiting for them, and the glade you mentioned was a favourite place. You'll see some to-night, sir, when you go, for I know their habits well. The herd that were in the sweet-potatoes and manioc last night, will come that way; they will be there about midnight, and return about second cock-crow.

His wrinkled old face broke into a sort of satirical smile, as he paused. Without knowing quite why, I began to feel 'creepy'; but I answered with apparent unconcern: 'Well, I hope so, Rainikoto. But you have not yet told me about the ghost, you know.'

'Oh, I shall. I am coming to it. But you had better go, and it will save me the trouble of telling you. You will see it all then for yourself.'

'I should like to hear it first, you know, to see if it agrees with what you saw.'

'Well, master, you are my father and mother, and I should like to please you; but it is a long story.'

'Go on, my relation,' I said, answering his politeness in the orthodox way.

He got up, readjusted his *lamba*, and squatting down a little more in front of me, began:

'It was on the 15th day of the moon Alahatsy—'

'Why! that's to-day!' I said.

Is it? (he said). Let me think. Yes; so it is. That is funny.—Well, it was on this very day, about ten years ago, I went to watch for pig at yonder glade. It was just such another night as this. The day had been very hot, and these little whirlwinds had been raising their dusty columns on the road—the spirits of our forefathers visiting the earth or returning to heaven, we Malagasy say. There had been a good many that day. I remember well. But they have not much to do with the story, nothing in your eyes.—A herd of pig had been among the village crops the night before. I had tracked them, and found out the way they had come. I noticed the slot of a huge boar, and I meant to have him. They passed right through the clearing. That glade has never altered, as the others do; it is the same now as then; and it was the same then as when I was a little boy; but it never struck me till after that night, and then I noticed it. The grass grows just the same, and the trees do not seem to change.

The old man, I noticed, was dropping into the native style of rhetoric, a form not unseldom heard in British pulpits, a certain reckless way of wandering up and down the keys of thought, and then the persistent striking of a single chord, with an emphasis varying directly as the number of repetitions.

Ay, it was just such another night as this, just the same; the same little fleecy clouds rushed across the full moon. The children were dancing in its rays, as they are now down yonder, and their song came rising and falling on the wind as now you hear it. The night was just the same; the crickets chirped and whistled in the grass; the great cicada rang his rattle as loudly as he now is doing—just the same. The dew was sparkling on the broad leaves, like tears on the cheeks of a young wife who has lost her child, her first-born. The frogs croaked in the marshes—a sign of rain, I've heard you say: we call it the women's parliament, for it is much talk and little meaning; for here, it is no sign of rain. Croak they will, as frogs and women always must. They could not live without it. Ay, master, the night was just—

'The same, my dear relation. Let us agree that the night was just the same,' I said, breaking in rather rudely, perhaps. 'The very birds, beasts, fishes, insects, you know, they always are the same, except when it is raining.'

'I said you would laugh at me. If you laugh already, what will you do before the end?'

'I laugh! My dearest father and mother, I am so anxious to hear the end that I have even been rude. Pray, excuse my haste; my eagerness outstepped my manners.'

Malagasy are not easily offended, and he soon went on again.

It was a short time before midnight that I started. I took my gun and spear and the usual little hatchet we all carry. No one went with me—I was quite alone. I soon reached the place,

and sat down, hiding behind a large clump of *sewa-be*, through the broad leaves of which I could watch the whole glade from end to end. It is about thirty *repy* [fathoms] long. The moon shone brightly; not a cloud obscured its rays; not a breath of wind could be felt inside the forest; but the tops of the taller trees rustled gently, and the twisting leaves showed their white linings with every little puff. The tree-frogs alone seemed to break the silence, for they alone were near me.

I had sat about two hours, and had seen nothing. I began to think the pigs must have passed out, or gone another way; and I had made up my mind to alter my position, so as to see them better when they came back in the early morning; but still I sat on, not caring to own myself at fault. I was just opening my tobacco-box, and had put my gun down by my side; my spear was sticking upright in the ground before me, and my axe on my knees, when I became conscious that something was going to happen, but I knew not what. I felt my head, to see if I were faint or dreaming. I never felt any feeling like it before, or since—a sort of trembling, cold, indescribable feeling, as if one's spirit were fighting with one's body. I was afraid, and thought I was ill—perhaps dying, perhaps bewitched; and I rose to go home. So disturbed was I, that I forgot to pick up my gun. Just at that moment a huge boar rushed past, his bristles all up, and his little eyes flaming from under his grizzled brows. He was covered with mud from head to tail; his jaws were set as if for fighting; he looked distressed, and evidently hunted, being hard put to it. He was the largest and oldest boar I had ever seen, for his horns* were very long and large, and his tusks gleamed long and sharp in the moonlight. I could easily have shot him, had I had my gun; but I was startled and surprised; and he was past before I regained my presence of mind. I held my axe, though, and without knowing what I did, I hurled it after him. Round and round it flew and lit a foot in front. I thought it must have grazed him; but he never stopped. I was astonished, for nothing followed; and a thing that did not strike me at once, but which I vividly recalled afterwards, was, that there was no sound; yet he had run right through some dry fern.

The old man stopped and altered his position. It evidently made him nervous to recall that night's adventures, even when sitting inside a veranda, and near one of the all-powerful white men. Glancing timidly over his shoulder, he began again.

I got up, master, and picked up the axe. For a time the funny feeling had left me, owing, I suppose, to the excitement; but as I touched the axe, my hand shook like a rush in the wind, and became as cold as the dead. I looked at it, to see if there was blood on it, and I ran my finger along the edge. It was the finger of the other hand, and it shivered like the hand that held the axe. I was horribly afraid now, and knew not what to think. I wished to go home; but I wished still more to know what had become of the boar, and what had chased it. I remem-

bered his enormous size, and I thought my eyes, being ill, might have magnified it, or that I had even seen a vision. I stooped down to examine the slot in the wet clay; but there was not a mark. I could not believe it. I knelt down and peered into the clay; not a sign. I was on the point of rising— Oh, sir, I shall never forget it. No! not to my dying day. There he was!—the boar! right on me, not ten yards off, and coming hard down on me—looking death in every line. I gasped, I shuddered; but I was still a man, and all my trembling ceased as I jumped up for one last effort. There was no room to move, for I had followed him out of the glade to that narrow passage between the high clay-banks; for there, if anywhere, I knew his marks would show. Five-feet perpendicular banks on either hand, and an immense boar in full charge. He had come without noise, or I must have heard him yards away. I had just time to get on my feet and strike at his head with the axe with all my force. I meant, as soon as I felt the axe bite, to jump high, and so miss the rush and tusks. It was no use to jump and not strike, for he would have turned on me again. I just saw his great red carcase as it loomed before me; there was time for much thought, but for little action. Down came my axe on his head; but there was no resistance! I lost my balance, for I had thrown all my weight on to the blow, and fell right on to the top of him.

I shut my eyes, and breathed a prayer to the Great Spirit to receive my soul. I knew I was a dead man, unless a miracle was wrought, for I should never be able to get up before he would be on me again, even if he missed me then. How long I lay I knew not; but at last I found I was lying unhurt in the path and no sign of the boar. I looked cautiously round without rising, in case he was there, waiting for me. Yes, there he was again—he, too, unhurt. How I ever missed his head I could not then imagine, for I was an expert axeman, and I saw the blade fairly on him. Some sudden twist had saved him, I thought. But what was he doing? I thought him mad. For there he stood at bay against a tree near the glade; but not a sound, not a grunt, rushing as if at dogs with all his bristles set. Look, master, I see him now!

The old man had got up; his eyes glared as his excitement increased, and I confess to having felt very uncomfortable myself.

Look! there he stands!—No! no! You can't see him, but I do. Yes! I see it all over again. I see him rushing madly at those phantom dogs, biting, goring, trampling, shaking them off; and then with one wild rush he broke his bay and ran right up to me—the spirit of my forefathers!—*right through me*, and only a shudder, a dull, trembling, cold, clammy shudder, as on he went. My hair stood on end; my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth—a horrid taste filled it; my knees shook; my heart leaped and bounded against my ribs, and I could not move. On he rushed. I watched him—ay, how I watched him! the great boar's ghost, for now I knew. Back again he came. He kept about the place. In desperation and half crazy myself, I gained strength to strike another blow. My axe passed through him, leaving a large gap, that closed again. My dread increased, and I thought I should have died.—Fifteen dollars, you say!

* The Malagasy wild boar has a large horn-like growth above each tusk.

Nay! not for all the money you have, would I pass that night again. It would mean death now, for I am older, and my heart could not bear the strain, even if that were all.

But there is worse, worse! I wonder I ever lived to tell the tale. The boar had broken bay twice, and was standing for the third time, when I saw two men run into the glade. They were girded tight, and had on the little straw skull-caps we foresters wear. They each had his spear raised, and rushed together towards the boar. I saw their mouths work, but heard no sound. They were both fine tall men, almost of the same height, and very like each other—for were they not brothers? I was then almost in a stupor from long-continued fear. I could neither move nor speak, only look. I wished to cry out, but could not, for I knew they must be the two men, Rainimanga and Rainigapy, whose bodies we had found dead years ago, when I was but a little boy. I knew I should see how it all happened now. I was close to where they passed, but they took no notice of me. As they did so, the same chill ran through me once more, as it had done when the boar passed by. As they ran on, an evil look came over the face of the hindermost. I never saw so fiendish an expression; all the evil passions man is prone to seemed stamped upon that face. Handsome as he was, he looked like a *kinoly*.*

I could see all plainly, for an artificial light lit up both the men and boar. The hideousness of the man's expression increased till he got within a few yards of the boar; then he leaped upon his brother from behind and seized his throat. Ah! what a fearful struggle that was! I shrieked and shrieked; but my mouth was parched, and the scream ended only in an uncertain sound. I tried to run and help, but I could not. I tried to shut my eyes, but I could not. Over and over the two rolled; but the vice-like grip never relaxed. The eyes seemed to start from the head of the one that was held; his face blackened, blood began to trickle from his mouth. It was horrible, horrible! A few moments more and all was over.

The murderer arose, gave one look at the corpse, picked up his spear, rushed at the boar, which still stood at bay. High above his head he raised his spear, poised it, gave it the twisting motion, and then, quick as lightning, threw it. It struck well, just behind the shoulder. With one savage bite, the boar severed the shaft and charged the man. In the murder of his brother he had forgotten his axe. The boar was upon him. One great shock, and his leg was ripped up as he turned to flee. Back again, another rush before he had recovered himself, and the tusks ran into the bone and severed the sinews. The man staggered and fell. He dragged himself slowly; but another rush of the huge animal and his side was open. Then the boar, with bloodshot eyes and staggering gait, ran away to die. I fainted; and when I recovered, it was dawn. For a year I was ill, and have never sat for pig in that glade since.

'That day was the 15th day of the moon, Alahasaty?' I asked.

He nodded.

* A kind of ghostly demon—the half-decomposed body of a man come to life again.

'I think, my dearest father and mother,' I said, 'you must have been asleep.'

Whereupon he shook his head, rose slowly, and departed.

ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILES.

No more striking illustration of the dangers we incur by interfering with the balance of nature could well be cited than the fact that the authorities in some parts of Florida have found it necessary to legislate for the preservation of Alligators. These hideous saurians abound in the Southern Mississippi and its tributaries; and when a use was discovered for their skins, even zoologists were not heard to protest against their speedy extermination. The reason of the prohibition is not far to seek: the cane-rat, which dwells in the swampy banks of the rivers, has increased proportionately with the destruction of the alligators, and threatens ruin to all harvests by the water-side. The result is that the authorities have passed a law forbidding the slaughter of alligators for the space of three years, under a penalty of twenty dollars; or a hundred during the breeding season.

The 'Alligator Mississippiensis' attains its greatest length in Florida, and specimens have been found twenty-three feet long. They do not appear ever to leave fresh water; during the winter they hibernate in the mud on the margins of their haunts. In the neighbourhood of Bazru Zara, on the Mississippi, vast flats of lakes and marshes stretch away on either bank; every year these are flooded by the overflow of the river, when they are visited by myriads of fish. The heat soon partly dries up these lagoons, leaving only about a few feet of water in them, thus exposing a vast amount of prey to the birds and alligators. In the deepest portions, quantities of these imprisoned fish accumulate, and these are known in the country as alligator holes. Thither the horrid reptiles crowd, and as evaporation proceeds, soon exterminate all the captives. Alligators feed principally during the night, when they are said to assemble in large herds, driving the fish before them into the estuaries. Alligators are very numerous in Mexican and Central American waters. The natives of Mexico, when they find an isolated alligator asleep, throw a lasso round its body, and, when secured, gag it. After this, the brute's career is terminated by repeated blows on the head. Another method is practised by the inhabitants of the banks of the Upper Orinoco. A tree is bent—generally, a bamboo is selected, from its elasticity—till the top is brought down to the butt; a bait is then placed on a sharp hook, the line attached to it being fastened securely to the small end of the bent tree, which is caused to relax its position by an ingenious piece of mechanism which gives way the moment the least strain is felt upon the line. The tree-point becoming thus released, straightens itself with great velocity, and drags the caiman from the water.

Various negro tribes place the alligator among their gods. In Madagascar, says the Rev. Mr Ellis, 'the natives invoke their forbearance with prayers, or seek protection from charms, rather than attack them; even the shaking of a spear

over the monsters would be regarded as an act of sacrilegious insult to the guardians of the flood, imperilling the life of the offender the next time, he should venture into the water.' In all heathen lands where alligators are found, more or less respect is paid to them, and savages are everywhere reluctant to kill them. According to the natives, they will seize white flesh in preference to black or brown; but a dog is asserted to be the caiman's *bonne bouche*.

The relations in which Crocodiles were regarded by the early Egyptians is not the least puzzling of the many problems that beset the Egyptologist. That they were worshipped is indubitable; yet what are we to make of that strange cemetery where countless thousands are entombed, the spaces between the larger specimens being packed in with eggs and little ones? Such numbers could not have perished naturally; and if they were objects of worship, it is clear they were not allowed to multiply unchecked.

One wonderful fact in the natural history of the crocodile was noticed by Herodotus, and though for a long time regarded as a fable, has been confirmed by modern research. The 'Father of History' tells us: 'When the crocodile takes his food in the Nile, the interior of its mouth is always covered with flies. All birds, with one exception, flee from the crocodile; but this one, the Nile bird, far from avoiding it, flies towards the reptile with the greatest eagerness, and renders it a very essential service. Every time the crocodile goes on shore to sleep, and at the moment when it lies extended with open jaws, the Nile bird enters the mouth of the terrible animal and delivers it from the flies which it finds there. The crocodile shows its recognition of the service by never harming the bird.' The fly alluded to is our common gnat, while the bird is a kind of plover.

Crocodiles are more voracious than alligators. Sir Samuel Baker says that many children fall victims every year on the banks of the Liamba when their mothers go to fetch water. The crocodile stuns its victim with a blow from its powerful tail, and then drags it into the river, where it is soon drowned. In general, when the crocodile perceives a man, it dives, and furtively glides away from the side which he occupies. Sometimes, on the other hand, it precipitates itself with surprising agility towards the person it has discovered, which may be noticed from the disturbance on the surface of the water.

One of the innumerable curious sights of India is the Nuggar tank of Kurachi. In former times, the crocodiles which inhabit it roamed the neighbourhood at their will, seeking whom they might devour; but so great were their depredations that the authorities were forced to build a wall round their haunt. This is a swamp, caused by hot springs, the medicinal virtues of which have been known from early times, and are attributed to the sanctity of a Mohammedan whose tomb is close by, and to whom the crocodiles are sacred. The tank, as it is called, is about one hundred and fifty yards long by about half that distance in breadth. In this space one observer counted over two hundred reptiles, from eight to fifteen feet long, and smaller ones innumerable. They are so tame, in a sense, that it is necessary to poke them with a stick before

they will move. Buffaloes are always standing in the water, and are not attacked; but any other animal is instantly seized. 'The whole appearance of the place,' says one writer, 'with its green, slimy, stagnant water, and so many of these huge uncouth monsters moving sluggishly about, is disgusting in the extreme, and it will long be remembered by me as the most loathsome spot I ever beheld.'

However necessary it may be to preserve alligators in Florida, there is little doubt that in other parts of the world the destruction of these reptiles would prove an unmixed benefit to the native population, ridding the neighbourhood of dangerous foes, and promoting a trade in the leather thus obtained.

IN THE VALLEY.

TO-DAY, when the sun was lighting my house on the pine-clad hill,

The bleat of a bird was ruffled as it perched on my window sill,

And a leaf was chased by the kitten on the breeze-swept garden walk,

And the dainty head
Of a dahlia red

Was stirred on its slender stalk.

Oh, happy the bird at the rose-tree, unheeding the threatening storm!

And happy the blithe leaf-chaser, rejoicing in sunshine warm!

They take no thought for the morrow—they know no cares to-day;

And the thousand things
That the future brings

Are a blank to such as they.

But I, by the household ingle, can interpret the looming clouds,

For the wind 'soo-hoos' through the keyhole, and a shadow the house enshrouds;

And I know I must quit my mountain, and go down to the Vale below,

For my house is chill
On the windy hill,

When the autumn tempests blow.

My mind is for ever drawing an instructive parallel

'Twixt temporal things that perish and eternal things that dwell—

When billows and waves surround me, and waters my soul o'erflow,

I descend in hope
From the mountain top

To the sheltering Vale below.

I go down to the Valley of Silence, where the worldly are never met;

I know there is 'balm and healing' there for eyes that with tears are wet;

And I find, in its sweet seclusion, gentle solace for all my care,

For that Valley pure,
With its shelter sure,

Is the beautiful Vale of Prayer.

NANNIE POWER-O'DONOGHUE.

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A SIAMESE PAGEANT.

By DAVID KER.

THE two great festivals of the Siamese year—the White Elephant's birthday having not yet taken rank there as a Bank holiday—are the birthday of the reigning king, and His Majesty's visit in state to the chief local temples towards the end of autumn. I say 'the king' advisedly, for there is now but one, the office of 'Second King' having recently been abolished on the occasion of the late incumbent's death. This may perhaps be a change for the better, for the duplicate kingship produced at times some rather awkward complications, as in the case of a quarrel between the two monarchs, not many years ago, when the Second King rushed down to the English Consulate and put himself under British protection against the First King; while the First King locked himself up in his bedroom for a week for fear of being murdered by the Second King.

Our stay in Bangkok—which has superseded Siam's ancient inland metropolis, Ayuthia, as St Petersburg superseded Moscow—included both the great national holidays. In September came the birthday of 'the Golden-footed Prince and Lord of the White Elephant,' Prabaht Sombetch Phra Paramendr Maha Chulalongkorn Klow—may his life be as long as his name!—and a few weeks later followed the 'Visiting of the Temples.'

The birthday celebration was very well worth seeing, though some of its ceremonies were copied too closely from those of European courts not to appear somewhat incongruous in so thoroughly Asiatic a city. It was certainly no joke for us unfortunate Europeans to swelter beneath a tropical sun in full-dress suits of black broad-cloth, while waiting to offer our congratulations to the king. It fared even worse with the poor Siamese princes and nobles in their cumbersome dresses of coloured silk, stiff with gold embroidery; that worn by Prince Bhaskarawongse—which he afterwards showed me when I visited

his house—being so heavy that I could barely lift it with one hand.

But the great procession that followed a little later was picturesque enough to have atoned for much more serious hardships. Through the vast paved court-yard of the palace—above which its three successive roofs towered in one great blaze of green and gold—came, marching, to the music of a well-trained military band, a picked body of grenadiers in the uniform of the Siamese line—white frocks and sun-helmets, and blue trousers with a white stripe down the side. Then followed the scarlet jackets, and red morsehair plumes, and fine black horses of the cavalry of the Guard, succeeded by the Foot Guards in dark-blue coats, armed with English rifle. Behind these came the crew of the king's model yacht—about a score of bright young native sailor-lads, who looked very smart and 'ship-shape' in their British man-o'-war jackets. To them succeeded—as my English host observed with a grin—a regiment of genuine *infantry*—that is, several dozen tiny Siamese children, dressed as Highland soldiers—to our no small surprise—in the gay tartan of the Clan Stewart, which set off their solemn little brown faces very picturesquely.

And now a fresh burst of music heralded the arrival of the native grandees, carried by white-robed slaves in carved chairs of ivory or inlaid wood, under the shade of huge many-coloured umbrellas, which reminded us of those that we had seen overshadowing the black royalties of West Africa. Then followed the king's brothers, beneath still larger umbrellas fringed with gold; and finally—with a swarm of richly-dressed attendants before and around him, carrying bundles of rattans across the palms of their outstretched hands—appeared the king himself—a slim, rather good-looking young man of thirty—accompanied by three of his children, among whom the four-year-old Crown-prince is conspicuous by the tiny crown of diamonds which encircles his little top-knot of fuzzy black hair.

Altogether, it was a famous show; and the only drawback to its barbaric splendour was the group

of uncouth creatures in bottle-shaped helmets that guard the outer gate, whose brown, ape-like forms, clad in faded scarlet jackets trimmed with tawdry gold lace, were irresistibly suggestive of an organ-grinder's monkey.

That night both banks of the Me-Nam (Mother of Waters), which forms the main thoroughfare of this amphibious capital, were profusely illuminated, the very ships having every line of their hulls and rigging traced against the darkness in living fire. Conspicuous amid the swarm of crowns, arches, towers, stars, &c. that hovered phantom-like in the dark air, figured a monster letter-box formed by countless tiny jets of fire—symbolising the postal service recently established by the king through the interior of Siam—around which a ring of shining letters wished 'Prosperity to the King and the Postal and Telegraph Union.' A girdle of stars encircled the vast tower of the Wat-Cheng (Elephant Temple) on the right bank; and the tall spear-pointed pagoda that sentinelled the royal manseum stood out in one great spire of quivering flame against the vast gulf of blackness, like the red-hot pinnacles of Dante's infernal city glaring through the sunless gloom of the nether world.

A month later came the second and more characteristic of the two great national pageants—the 'Visitation of the Temples' by the king and his court—and, early on the appointed morning, in order to make sure of having a full view of the day's proceedings, we established ourselves, by the advice of a veteran English resident, in the court-yard of the most celebrated temple of all—the far-famed Wat-Cheng.

This eldest and most stately of the great temples of Bangkok is now fast falling to decay, the whole lower part of it being little better than an absolute ruin; for in Siam, as in Burma, no one ever dreams of repairing anything; and when any building—house, temple, or palace—begins to crumble away, the custom is not to restore it, but to build another in its stead. The damp, slimy pavement of the weed-grown court-yard is heaped with the remains of shattered cornices and fallen pillars; and stones, dust, and rubbish have choked up not a few of the small, gloomy cells that form a kind of cloister around the four sides of the quadrangle, which, once tenanted by yellow-robed Buddhist monks with shaven crowns, are now shared by toads and serpents, with gangs of native thieves.

Through one of the countless clefts in these mouldering walls struggles a stray gleam of sunshine, glimmering faintly upon the gilded fragments of the sacred images of Buddha, one of which has a somewhat curious history. Between two blocks of stone in the niche where it used to stand may still be seen a narrow opening, not unlike the slit of a letter-box, into which once fell the offerings dropped through the mouth of the idol by the rich, and subsequently taken

out from behind by the poor, in the belief that the holy image itself sent them the money. But in process of time, when the temple began to decay and to be deserted by its richer worshippers, the contributions gradually ceased; and then the poorer folk, finding that their idol had suspended the payment of his periodical dividends, avenged his remissness by breaking him in pieces on the spot.

This abode of desolation, however, has still some inhabitants of its own, of a very appropriate kind. As you pick your way amid the heaps of ruin, grim-looking warriors start up before you with brandished weapons, and hideous monsters threaten you with greedy fangs and uplifted paws. But no sound issues from the gaping jaws—the ponderous clubs never fall, the menacing claws never strike; all are of cold, hard stone, like the spell-bound guardians of some enchanted palace, awaiting the destined champion whose coming shall arouse them from the torpor of ages.

When you stand at the foot of the great pagoda itself, you seem to be looking up at a mountain of living rainbows, flashing and quivering incessantly like falling water; and it requires some time to grasp all the details of this singular structure, seemingly so magnificent, but really so mean and poor. Around the central tower stand ranged like a life-guard four massive pagodas of the bell-shaped pattern, so universal both in Burma and Siam, each ascended by a steep narrow stair, and all four inlaid with coloured porcelain, while above them a mighty pinnacle springs up into the sky like an embodied prayer, to a height of more than two hundred feet.

At the first glance the blaze of many-coloured splendour that lights up this tower from base to summit might lead one to suppose it thickly set with precious stones, or at least inlaid with the costliest porcelain. But the admiring spectator is grievously disillusionised when he comes nearer to it, and sees that this show of glittering magnificence is produced merely by countless fragments of common earthenware plates dabbed into a thick coating of stucco, like almonds in hard-bake!

Between the sentinel towers, the pyramidal sides of the structure slope upward in one great mass of sculptured archways, painted crockets, carved cornices, and scale-shaped tiles of green and gold, rising terrace above terrace, without order and without end. Ever and anon start up weirdly through this wilderness of gorgeous hues a long line of goblin forms in many-coloured robes and pointed caps, whose uplifted arms seem to support the projecting cornice overhead—intended to represent angels, though their black, misshapen visages and huge tusks make them look more like devils.

In the court-yard of this strange place we posted ourselves on the appointed day, to await the coming of the king and his suite. We had no lack of company, for the whole enclosure, so voiceless and deserted at other times, was now full to overflowing. White-frosted slaves; hel-

meted soldiers; doll-faced Chinamen in huge straw hats; blue-coated Guardsmen; stunted, greasy market-women with hair cropped as short as the bristles of a scrubbing-brush; bare-limbed peasants from the rice-swamps, whose dark skin was covered as with a blue gauze veil by the elaborate tattooing which their superstition believed to be a sure charm against all weapons; and children in the native full-dress of a string of beads round the neck and a brass ring on each wrist caddied around us like a sea.

Thanks to the kindness of the Siamese Cabinet Ministers, room had been made for our party—which included the British Consul and the American ambassador, General H—, on a raised stone platform occupied by themselves, close to the spot where the king was to land; and from this point of vantage we beheld not a few spectacles which, however common in this strange region, would be abundantly startling anywhere else.

Just in front of us halted a native boat, one of the crew of which, while rowing, had held between his toes the 'buri' or native cigar that he had just been smoking, formed of a huge reed stuffed with tobacco. In an open space a little to the rear of the seething crowd around us, a group of supple, slender-limbed native children, with nothing on but a wreath of flowers around their solitary 'head-tuft' of bristly black hair—the cutting of which is to a Siamese boy what the putting on of his first tail-coat is to an English one—were playing a kind of Orientalised lawn-tennis with a ball of palm-pith, which they struck to and fro, not with their hands, but with their feet, using the sole and the instep with equal ease.

A little farther on, a small Siamese cottage of plank and shingle was coming gravely up the river by itself, steered with a huge clumsy oar by its proprietor, who stood on the wooden stair in front of the door with his children around him. One of these—a little mite barely old enough to walk alone—suddenly tumbled overboard, but, apparently not a whit discomposed, coolly swam after his locomotive home, and scrambled up again to the side of his philosophic father, who seemed as little disturbed by this incident as the hero of it himself.

But all at once a buzz of excitement through the crowd, and a general turning of heads up the river toward the palace, warned us that the 'Procession of Barges'—the great show of the day—was just coming in sight. And a gallant sight it was. The king's state barge, which headed the procession, was one blaze of bright paint and gilding throughout its entire length, which was very considerable, for it was rowed by a hundred men, all as gorgeous as tropical butterflies in their uniform of scarlet and blue, which are the royal colours of Siam. Bow and stern alike were one mass of gilding, and twisted into fantastic curves, which glittering in the cloudless sun, might well have been mistaken for the coils of a monstrous snake; and over the stern hung, by way of ornament, the tail of a 'yák,' the famous 'grunting ox' of Tibet. Near the bow stood a richly dressed personage, who seemed to act as boatswain, and regulated the movements of the oarsmen by thumping against the planks upon which he stood the end of a long bamboo which he held in his

right hand; and just behind him was planted a small cannon, as if to shoot him in case he neglected his duty. After every stroke, all the hundred rowers shot their broad-bladed oars into the air at once, with a sudden jerk, the effect of which—all the oars being profusely gilded—was like that of a flash of lightning.

Just amidships, beneath a small open-sided pavilion loaded with barbaric ornaments, sat the young king himself, with the pagoda-shaped crown of Siam upon his head. This crown is only worn once in three years, which is just as well for the unfortunate wearer, its weight being fully thirty-six pounds English; and were it to fall off, there is no saying what might be the consequence, only one official in the whole realm being empowered to touch the crown, which even the king himself must not do. In fact, the dilemma is the same as that of the luckless king of Spain who was burned to death because the proper officer was not at hand to put him out. Following the king came the boats of the various princes and nobles, similarly decorated, the crews being as gay as a flower-show in their dresses of bright yellow, green, blue, or crimson, to which the dazzling sunshine did full justice. But one and all kept at a respectful distance from the king's barge, it being ordained by law that the crew of any boat daring to run against that which carries the person of Siamese royalty, shall all be beheaded on the spot; and though this humane statute has lately fallen into disuse, the native boatmen had evidently a wholesome fear of seeing it suddenly revived for their especial benefit.

On landing from his barge, the king was borne into the court-yard of the ancient temple upon a kind of litter; but the same distinction was not extended to all his numerous brothers, three or four of whom—strapping lads of fifteen or sixteen—were carried like babies in the arms of their native attendants, with their bare brown limbs dangling down in a queer, helpless fashion that recalled to me how I had once seen the august governor of an African colony dragged out of the surf on to the beach, with his feet higher than his head, by the black hands of three or four stalwart negroes.

As the Lord of the White Elephant went past, the native spectators, to a man, went down on their hands and knees and bowed their faces to the very dust; and at the same instant I myself performed an equally low prostration without intending it. One of the Siamese Ministers—a corpulent old fellow with a broad, heavy, good-humoured face—had just offered me a light open-work iron chair recently imported from Paris, which shut up like a penknife the moment I sat down upon it, and sent me rolling in the dust, to the immeasurable delight of the bystanders. The only thing to be done was to get up again and join in the laugh; but hardly had I done so, when down went the old Minister himself in turn, in precisely the same fashion, and lay sprawling on his back in the dirt, his great bulk and weight making it no easy matter for him to rise again.

How much of this absurd scene the king had witnessed, I cannot tell; but I afterwards learned that he had singled out my wife and myself as new faces in the Ministerial circle—for he was already familiar with those of the Consul and the General—and had asked one of his courtiers who

we were. The latter answered—there being naturally no Siamese equivalent for 'newspaper correspondents'—that we were 'people who made marks on paper'—a not inapt definition of a good many authors of the present day.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER VII.

Henceforth my name has been
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,
A center'd, glory-circled memory,
And a peculiar treasure brooking no
Exchange or currency.

TENNYSOON.

'I THINK,' Owen Ludlow said to himself a fortnight later, contemplating his picture with a strange mixture of irritation and amusement, 'that something fresh has been imported into this, besides the recognition in the girl's eyes. It really is hard lines on a fellow to have the whole intention of his work altered in spite of himself, without either with your leave or by your leave; and it's not quite fair on the story which the picture is meant to illustrate. There is not the slightest hint in the mythological dictionaries of any other girl looking at Vertumnus with eyes like that. Recognition indeed! it might have been so a fortnight ago; it means a good deal more now; and it upsets the balance of my picture too, for I don't believe, if Vertumnus had looked away from Pomona for a moment, he would not have been fascinated by those sweet eyes. I think I have made Pomona a shade too unconscious of Vertumnus. I don't believe, beautiful as she is, that in real life such sublime unconsciousness would have had a chance against the feeling in the other's eyes. Those are unconscious, too, of their own meaning, but vividly conscious of him. Pshaw! Why can't I paint as I please? a touch here, a shadow there; and surely one can alter the expression to anything one pleases; but try my hardest, I can't fetch that look out of the girl's face in the picture, any more than I could in real life.'

And here the painter left off contemplating his own picture, to look at another that he could see through the middle window of the large bow, the apple-tree without the fair figure of Pomona, but with Vertumnus smiling down at Sage as he dropped the rosy apples he was gathering from the boughs over her head, into her skirt, held to receive them.

Sage had given a little sigh to herself that first evening of Maurice Moore's arrival; for she thought that Owen Ludlow would no longer care for her company, and the sittings would most likely be discontinued. But Owen would not hear of such a thing; nor, when she came, would he let Maurice slope off along the cliff with his pipe and a novel, as he once or twice made a very mild feint of doing, to leave the sittings undisturbed; and often the painter would cut short the sitting, and propose that they should all adjourn to some favourite haunt of his on cliff or shore; or that Sage should show Maurice the way across the cliffs, or scramble with him across the rocks at low tide to some little bay or cluster of fishermen's cottages.

Altogether, I don't think Owen Ludlow need

have been so much surprised at that look in Sage's face, for if he had been the most designing, match-making mother in society, and Maurice had been the biggest catch in the matrimonial market, and Sage one of six daughters awaiting promotion, he could hardly have thrown them together more artfully. One would have thought that fifty years' experience of life might have taught him what to expect when a young girl was constantly in the company of such a good-looking, agreeable, young fellow as Maurice Moore; and perhaps if there had been a mixture of the tenderer feeling in Owen's friendship for Sage—and, in passing, I must protest against my own use of the word 'tender' as applied specially to love, seeing that friendship is often far tenderer—he would have been more alive to the danger, jealousy being keener eyed and more nearly allied to love than to friendship. But how could he have foreseen, he protested to himself, that Maurice would have looked twice at such a quiet, little thing as Sage, in her shabby serge frock, with her simple shy manners, when he was used to fashionable society, and was continually brought in contact with beautiful and elegant women? Why, ten years ago in California, when he was little more than a boy, he had had more love affairs than Ludlow had thought possible in the course of an ordinary lifetime; and since then, every time he and Ludlow had met there had been some affair of the heart more or less serious, generally less, to relate.

But who would have thought that he would have noticed little Sage? whom Ludlow, fond as he was of her, had never till now thought at all pretty, and who indeed was not so. But now Sage seemed suddenly endowed with something curiously like beauty, whether from the new expression in her face, or from Ludlow seeing her with Maurice's eyes, as one so often sees people and places from another person's point of view, sometimes getting sudden new revelations in this way about faces or scenes one has known for years with a very different impression.

He, certainly—and Maurice told him so plainly—had not done her justice in the picture, and this went to prove that it was not the new expression alone that had beautified her, for that had found its way, against the painter's will, into the picture.

Well, anyhow, the painter told himself, it would soon come to an end. Maurice would have to leave in two days, and the boys' holidays were nearly over; and Sage would go back to London to the old life of ordering dinner and mending the boys' socks, and this would be only a pleasant, bright memory, with Maurice Moore a picturesque figure in the foreground.

It was no use turning crusty now, and making himself disagreeable and spoiling sport for these two last days, and yet that look in Sage's eyes in the picture and in reality made him uneasy, as meaning something more than being 'the summer pilot of an empty heart unto the shores of nothing,' and as showing great possibilities of happiness or heartbreak as circumstances might dictate.

But he was not left long to his reflections that afternoon, for his studio was invaded by a company armed with crooked sticks and baskets and a black kettle of noble proportions, for all the world was going blackberrying to the Landslip,

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Mrs Rockett having undertaken to make as much jam as they could find blackberries and jars to contain it.

The Landslip is about three miles along the coast from Scar, where some years ago a large piece of the cliff fell in the night, leaving a great chasm, with rocks and masses of earth heaped up anyhow in very chaotic fashion, which nature, year after year, in her gentle, kindly manner, was trying to restore to order, clothing the torn, rugged blocks with lichen and tufts of fern and trails of ivy, carpeting the hollows with moss, filling up nooks with the stinking iris, which is pretty enough to deserve a prettier name, though I am bound to confess it also merits that one, and which just now was beginning to split its seed-vessels and show the coral berries inside. Some of the trees had come down in the slip from the level of the cliff above, and must have felt sadly shaken, and are in queer positions with twisted trunks, straining to get back to the perpendicular, and over these, and over the young growth of beech and ash saplings and nut-bushes, has been thrown a tangle of rose branches and brambles and clematis, the last enacting the part of old-man's-beard now, instead of the fragrant traveller's joy of the summer.

Here and there, out of the thick undergrowth, rose rocky islands, which had resisted the general downfall, and reared up rough, rugged blocks, as if in defiance of the smoothing influence of nature; and on one of these Ludlow took his seat when his blackberrying ardour had abated, which soon happens at fifty. Sitting up there, he looked, Maurice said, like the cormorant on the tree of knowledge in the garden of Eden, or the little cherub perched up aloft; and from that elevated position he could command the length and breadth of the defile caused by the landslip, and could catch occasional glimpses of the rest of the party among the bushes, or in the little oases of open space, and could hear the boys shouting to one another.

'Oh, I say, come here! here's a jolly lot!'

'Hullo there, Dennis, where have you got to?'

'Kitty, Kitty, come on, can't you?'

Shouts that gradually grew fainter as they went farther down the Landslip.

That idea of the cormorant had naturally suggested to Ludlow's mind that first pair of lovers in Eden; and a glimpse of Maurice and Sage as they passed down a little glade together, fitted in so well with the rest of the picture, that he smiled to himself in half-irritated amusement. They did not seem to be doing much blackberry-gathering. Maurice used his crooked stick to clear the branches out of Sage's path; and sometimes they stood for a few minutes under a bush, which I am sure Kitty or the boys would have gathered a harvest from, and strayed on again without adding one to the very modest heap in Sage's basket.

It was all so new to Sage; the ordinary courtesy of a young man to a girl was as yet quite an unknown thing to her; not that Dr Merridew would ever allow the boys to be rude to her; and he himself treated her with an old-fashioned, chivalrous respect; but the treatment most girls are used to in society, being waited upon and

taken care of, Sage had no experience of; and even Owen Ludlow's treatment had not quite the same flavour.

The situation had not the same novelty to Maurice. As I have said before, he had had many affairs of the heart, and, I am afraid, had often and often gone much further than he did to-day with Sage in the Landslip without the heart being concerned in the affair at all; but there was a charm in little Sage, with this new evanescent beauty about her which love confers; and there was a sort of fitness and tranquil appropriateness about her surroundings that took his fancy and pleased his taste; and fancy and taste make up a large part of many men's hearts, and of some women's, and with them you have to cut down deep through the white sugar and almond paste before you come to the cake itself; and many people think the almond paste the best part of the business.

'Hullo! Hullo! Hullo!' The cormorant on the tree of knowledge is summoning his widely scattered party for tea.

'Tea-time!' Sage exclaims.—'Why! we were not to have tea till five.'

'And now it is half-past,' says Maurice, looking at his watch.

They could hardly believe two whole hours had passed since they reached the Landslip; and they looked a little shamefacedly at their basket, which hardly contained enough blackberries to conceal the bottom.

'We must have upset the basket getting through those bushes,' Sage said.

'Or, perhaps,' he suggested, 'the boys have been along and picked all the blackberries.'

There must be something to account for the emptiness of the basket.

'Coo-ee! Coo-ee!' The painter's sonorous voice rings out, and is echoed among the rocks, and brings back an answering shout from far-away Dennis and Nigel and Will; and a shrill little 'Coo-ee' from Kitty, nearer home.

They have all much farther to come back than Sage and Maurice; and yet, when these two loiterers arrive at the great flat slab of stone on which the fire has been built up, they find all the others collected, and a brisk fire burning under the kettle, hung in gypsy fashion on sticks over the blaze. Gypsy teas have been so numerous since they came to Scar, that the children are all quite equal to the occasion, and none of the catastrophes happen that used to be so frequent at first—important articles such as matches forgotten, damp wood, upset kettle, smoky water, and ant-hills chosen for seats. To-day, the spot chosen was most judicious, as the smoke curled away up between two upright stones that formed a natural chimney, and did not come straight in the faces of the party, as often happened.

Sage had arrived too late on the scene to undertake her usual office of unpacking the baskets and making the tea, as the boys had undertaken the former duty with great bustling; and Kitty was presiding over the teapot with much importance, and resentment at any interference.

So Maurice found Sage a seat among the mossy stones, where she sat at ease. She had taken off her hat; and her head with its soft plaits, from which little rings escaped wherever they got the

chance, was resting back on a cushion of moss. There was a little colour in her usually pale cheeks, and a soft radiant light in her eyes, and such a look of great content when Maurice settled himself at her feet, that Ludlow's uneasy feelings revived, and his attention was so distracted that he let the kettle boil over and scalded his finger. He cast such wrathful glances at Maurice, that that young reprobate, out of mischief, threw still greater *empressment* into his manner to the girl, and looked up at her with more sentiment in his dark eyes, and sank his voice to a softer, more confidential tone, so that the painter could not hear the words, which were matter-of-fact enough, but only the tone, which was lover-like.

September days are short, so the sun was setting before tea was done, glorifying the whole place with crimson light, shooting shafts of liquid gold between tree-trunks, bringing out wonderful tints, deepening blue shadows, sharpening outlines, and, overhead, sprinkling the sky with little pink butterfly clouds, turning golden as they neared the west. It was one of those exceptionally beautiful sunsets that come now and then to make us look up from the mud and above the brick walls which bound our view in ordinary life.

Ludlow's attention was distracted from his displeasure with Maurice, and Maurice ceased to wish to aggravate Ludlow; the children left off wrangling over their blackberries, and even the boys sat with their knees drawn up to their chins, staring at the gorgeous panoply; and Sage, leaning back luxuriously on her mossy cushion, felt that the loveliness was almost more than she could bear; but with her, poor child, I think anything seen as that was, over Maurice Moore's dark head, would have seemed beautiful, and life a dream of happiness, with him sitting at her feet.

When the spell was broken at last, when the boys jumped to their feet, clattering plates and cups in preparation for packing, and the painter stretched himself and said they ought to be getting under way, and Maurice got up and began rolling a cigarette, Sage drew her breath sharply with almost a sob in it, as if she had been drinking in the beauty breathlessly. If every one would have sat still, if Nigel had not suddenly flung up his heels in the air, and Will tried to balance a saucer on his nose, it seemed to her as if those ecstatic moments of sunset might have been prolonged indefinitely; but the stir seemed to end it; the sun dipped petulantly behind a cloud, and immediately the colours began to die and deaden, and the shadows grow ashen and dull; and a mist became apparent, rising from the bottom of the Landslip where the irises grew.

'We are going home over the cliffs,' Kitty said, taking possession of the painter's arm; 'and you are going to tell us all about that prairie fire from the very beginning.'

So Ludlow, who had meant to act the dragon on the way home, and keep Sage tucked under his arm, was marched off with Kitty on one side and Nigel on the other, and Dennis and Will circling round, or walking backwards in front of him.

So Ludlow had to resign himself to circumstances, and presently got so interested in his

story, that he did not think of Sage and Maurice till he reached the path leading down into Scar, when he became conscious they were far away behind, only dimly to be made out in the moonlight on the cliff.

There was some excuse for loitering on such a night, with that broad rippling silver band drawn across the dark sea, and the great, gentle moon beaming down at them, with a soft bright star to share her solitude in the quiet blue vault. From the shore below, the wash of the waves on the beach hardly broke the silence, which was so deep that they could hear the sheep cropping the short grass on the cliff behind them.

Maurice had been helping Sage to climb a steep little bit of the path—Sage, who had never been helped over any rough or steep bits of life before, having generally to drag or push some one else through difficulties—and he did not leave go of her hand when the steep part was passed, but kept it in his, and held it still as they stood looking at the moonlit sea.

He was telling her, with a regret in his tone that was infinitely sweet to her ear, though his words themselves were of the parting that made her heart sink, of his going away to the noisy, restless, society life, to the pretence and push and unreality, to the heart-burnings and jealousies, to the petty spite and paltry ambitions. He spoke of it all with such contempt and weariness, that no one could have imagined, least of all that most credulous listener whose little hand thrilled in his, that he had found this life very endurable a few weeks ago, and most probably would return to it without too great repugnance before many days were over. But he really did mean it at the time very heartily, quite as much, and perhaps more than he had meant many another tender little sentiment or softly murmured compliment in other equally romantic situations as this on the quiet cliff, with the great stretch of sea, 'that moving seems to sleep,' before them, with the broad silver stripe of moonlight across it.

So also he meant it entirely when he bent nearer to her and clasped her hand more tenderly and said: 'I shall never forget this happy time at Scar. It has been the happiest fortnight of my life.—Sage, will you forget me quite when I am gone?'

He had never called her Sage before; and from that moment the name was altered to her, sweetened, glorified, so that she could never hear it from the most indifferent lips, or write it in the most commonplace business of life, without feeling a little thrill of pleasure.

She did not answer his question. How could she, with her heart beating in such great happy throbs? But perhaps it did not want great self-assurance or conceit on Maurice's part to guess what the answer would have been, from the tremble of the hand in his, and the eloquent silence of the small face so fair in the moonlight.

After all, what had he said, and what had he done to feel any compunction about? he asked himself with irritation when he had parted from her at the cottage door, when the children's noisy narrative of the events of the day to Mrs Rockett, and display of the blackberries they had amassed, cut short the parting, and made it too public for

tenderness. It was only that he had meant it a little more, and she had believed it a little more than had happened on other occasions; when he had had a turn at that fascinating sport of fencing which we call flirtation, a charming diversion, elegant and amusing, and no harm in it, thrust and parry, point and tierce. But have a care! All of a sudden the button is off the foil; the game is turned into deadly earnest, the elegant diversion ends with a death-wound.

'Pshaw!' he said, impatiently, 'where's the harm?'

And yet, as he came into the studio, where the painter sat smoking, with a book in his hand, he felt unaccountably ashamed, and inclined to be apologetic.

THE BIRTH OF THE MECHANICAL POWERS.

THE tendency of modern research is to establish the proposition that human society is an organism which has grown to a complex form out of simple beginnings. It is difficult for the trained intellect of to-day to form a mental picture of the untrained intelligence of the earliest men, and the language in which we express that primary mental condition does not convey exact notions to the mind. It is harder to imagine than to describe a mind with no logical thought, and no knowledge of natural facts, still harder to conceive with what slowness any progress ever took place. Yet, as we travel back upon the historic past into the region of pre-history, we at length encounter men around whom and in whom there played physical forces of which they had no comprehension. Logical inference supports written tradition in saying that the remotest men had to start in life with no stock in trade but a group of faculties which as yet were wholly undeveloped.

These earliest men found themselves environed by the facts of life; and it was the observation, not only of natural events, but of the ways of other sentient beings, and themselves, which first taught them the rudiments of mechanics. There is a fable which, like most, has a philosophic basis, that men first learned the art of swimming by watching the instinctive actions of a young frog. A popular writer published some years ago a collection of instances in which human inventions were anticipated by the blind instinct of beasts or herbs, and has shown, for example, that the aquatic plant known as *Utricularia* applied the principle of the crab-pot ages before ever an archaic fisherman caught crabs by that means. And there is no doubt that in many cases the slow, half-intelligent perception of the methods adopted in Nature for achieving mechanical results was one chief source of instruction for the earliest engineers.

The axiom that example is better than precept is one which has exerted an immense influence upon social evolution, and that influence made itself felt in two ways. Some particular man would happen to do a certain thing, probably by accident, and others who noticed it would be at once filled with the desire to imitate it. In certain French watering-places, three or four years ago, there arose a fashion amongst the women of

wearing gloves of different colours—for instance, a black glove on the right hand and a white glove on the left. This practice owed its birth to the fact that at a certain concert early in the year a leader of fashion appeared in the room wearing old gloves in this way. She had put them on unconsciously, and was horrified when she discovered her blunder; but the other women present at once imagined that this was the new *mode*, and it was instantly adopted. In ways just as accidental, individuals who had acquired a reputation for special wisdom or aptitude would in early societies become at once objects of minute imitation.

All mechanical labour must in the nature of things start from the foundation afforded by the human hand. But men would live in the world a very short time before beginning to see that many mechanical enterprises required a greater hand-power than that of a single man. The inference suggested by a study of the human remains of the glacial drift is that, from the very first, men turned themselves into a sort of compound machine by pulling together. Two facts conspired to impart to this act a peculiar development. The innate distaste of men to use their own hands on the one side, and the need for disposing of prisoners taken in war on the other, would, in an age of physical struggle, when one race could hope to exist only by effacing another, lead conquering tribes to utilise the accumulated energy of living captive men. In this sense it may be said that the first machine ever invented was a slave-gang, and the first engineer its taskmaster.

But besides the energy obtained from men, early engineers were not slow to utilise the power stored up in other animals. There is evidence that even in the palæolithic age the art of domesticating animals was already in vogue; and one of the earliest scratched bones extant—the remote precursor of all pictorial art—represents a man in the act of guiding a rude lopped pole, drawn by a horse, as a sort of primitive plough. The fact that in the Danish 'kitchen-middens,' or rubbish-heaps, all the marrow bones are found to be split and gnawed, is regarded as proof of the existence at that time of a breed of domestic dogs. The ass, also, as far back as Semitic traditions go, was a beast of burden in Western Asia. When it is remembered that the ass is regarded as capable of five times the work that can be done by a man, and that the horse is ten times as powerful as a man, it will at once be perceived that the adoption of these animals as prime movers would add immensely to the mechanical capabilities of early engineers.

The precise relative date at which water-power first came into use cannot be asserted. Amongst the remains of the Stone Age, from the earliest to those which, from their superior finish and more perfect adaptation, are thought to be later in point of time, there is no class more frequent than that of mortars and pestles. Sandstone blocks, or querns, bearing hollows which have about them the aspect of having been formed by the pounding of corn upon them, have been often found, and the whole inference is supported by other considerations that during the age of Stone the water-wheel as an agent for grinding corn

was not yet invented. The utilisation of human energy involved in the grinding of corn by hand was in fact replaced by that of quadrupeds long before horse and bullock power gave way to water-power. Cattle-mills, for instance, were in use amongst the Romans at an early date. It is difficult to suppose that the first inventors of the water-wheel used it for any purpose other than grinding, and the inference is that mills driven by this power were of relatively late origin. There is reason to believe that the Egyptians had water-wheels in use in very early times; and one is known to have been erected on the Tiber in the century before Christ. The first water-mill known in history is that described in connection with the Mithridatic wars. The tide-wheel is of quite recent origin, none being recorded earlier than those used by the Venetians in 1078 A.D.

Windmills, also, were not known in Europe before the twelfth century, but are believed to have been in use in the East before this time. A sawmill is recorded to have been in use in Augsburg in 1332. The fact that of all modern African races not one has ever hit upon either water-power or wind-power seems to prove that they involve a knowledge of advanced kinematics not attained by any races out of the track of the early civilisations.

Although the property of rubbed amber was perceived by Thales as early as the seventh century before Christ, yet it need scarcely be said that heat and electricity, as practical prime movers, are developments of the past two hundred years.

Let us now examine one by one, in the order of their birth, the mechanical powers which are described as the simple machines. Here it may be observed that whereas some of the lower animals do possess a knowledge of individual powers, yet, if those particular powers fail, they are incapable of carrying out their desires by other means. Monkeys, for instance, fetch themselves cocoa-nuts and break them open at the same time by running up the palm-trunks and dropping the nuts to the ground. But if a nut should fall intact, the monkey would not have the cleverness to pick up a stone and break it; nor has it the aptitude to throw a stone upwards, and so bring the nut to the ground. Both these actions would imply the pre-requisite of an opposable thumb. Similarly, a beaver will drag a tree-trunk to the river-side, that it may be built into the beaver-dam; but if the trunk be too heavy, it will not have the power to put one trunk on another, and so roll the trunk along.

It is in this capacity for inventiveness that the divergence of human aptitude from that of animals is to be found. Thus, there is no record of any brute creature ever deliberately and of set purpose transporting a weight from one point to another by rolling it down a hill. Yet the savage race does not exist which is incapable of this simple exercise of the inventive mind. Again, there is no record of a savage who would not be smart enough to drag one trunk over a smaller one, and so lessen the friction of transport. It may be taken for granted that the roller, in the form of a pole from which lateral branches had been lopped by cutting, breaking, or fire, was one of the earliest mechanical inven-

tions. It would not be long before men perceived that by reducing the bulk of the trunk in the middle, the power of the roller was increased, because friction was reduced, and in this way the middle part of the roller would at length develop into the axle, and its two ends into wheels. There is no evidence that trollies or carts of this rough pattern existed amongst the men of the Stone Age, and the theory that they had not yet been invented is strengthened by the fact that stone implements would have been incompetent to fashion a wheel. The earliest Chaldean monuments bear sculptured representations of rude wood-carts with two fixed wheels drawn by a single ox; but these very sculptures themselves prove that metallic tools were in use at the time.

The lever must be quite as old as the roller. When several felled poles lay together helter-skelter, one of them would most likely have one of its ends resting under another, and accidental depression of the free end would reveal the fact that heavy weights might be moved by pushing under them one end of a pole, and pushing under the pole another by way of fulcrum. The transport of heavy weights, therefore, might take place quite naturally amongst the men who preceded the metallic age by the use of poles as levers and rollers. At that stage nothing in the way of a crank or axle would have been known. The lever, like other powers, was of course known long before its properties had been investigated by the mathematician. It was, in fact, not until the time of Archimedes that the lever was explained.

It may be useful here to point out that in the pre-metallic age, before nails were possible, fastenings were effected by means of knots. The older stone implements are distinguished from those of the newer age by having been lashed to a wood-shaft with leather thongs; whereas, later on, men found out how much better it was to make a hole, either in the stone head or in the wooden handle. The fact that stone implements are found scattered singly here and there seems to suggest that they had slipped by accident out of the shafts through unskilful tying; and from this we may infer that the granny-knots and other unscientific methods of tying which children instinctively adopt are a relic of the Stone Age fastenings.

From the position in which their remains are found, it may be said that the Stone Age races of Western Europe obtained their supplies of fresh water from running streams and lakes. They would therefore have no knowledge of artificial wells, which seem to have been hit upon by Syrian nomads in very early times. At first, perhaps, vessels would be lowered by a thong, and then pulled up again; but if a pole were placed across the well-mouth for purposes of safety, men would at once see the advantage of pulling the rope against the pole. Later on, they would acquire the means of fixing the pole in the holes of vertical boards, and so the pulley would arise. Even before this invention, it is probable that men hit upon the plan, when dragging a heavy weight by means of a leather thong, of passing the thong round some handy tree.

The precise manner in which the wedge was invented cannot be shown. Perhaps some archaic

workman, hammering away at a block of wood with a flint knife, found the knife enter the wood and become fixed. In the effort to wrench it out, the block would split. This theory is strengthened by the fact that the invention of the axe and the wedge is ascribed to Daedalus. Such a belief on the part of the Greeks was but one way of saying that those implements had been handed down from a time which to them was one of remote antiquity; and the juxtaposition of the axe and wedge is a confirmation of the idea that both originated under one set of circumstances.

While the engineer of to-day is a being of a very different stamp from the engineer of the long-ago, the difference is one of degree rather than kind. Modern mechanical activity has shown itself not in the invention of new machines so much as in the application of new prime movers. The tendency of the time is to replace the prime movers of the early ages by others involving less human waste. The classic trireme was to all intents and purposes a ship propelled by a compound engine, whose cranks were human elbows, and whose pistons were human arms. A rower would not miss his stroke more frequently than the needle of a sewing-machine misses a stitch. But the comparative costliness of men as prime movers has been amply demonstrated by the calculation that, to do the same number of units of work as that produced by the motor of a Cunarder no fewer than a quarter of a million rowers would be required.

But enough has been said in these brief notes to show that, before the age of Iron, men had made considerable progress in mechanical invention, and it needed only the introduction of that metal to enable them to carry out the principles already known to gigantic issues.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—IN THE 'CORNER.'

THE interval till Monday, Suffield spent in peace. He did not think it was worth his while to waste his strength in travelling to London and back in that brief time, even to have the pleasure of seeing and taking counsel with his wife. On Sunday he went to church, and then in and out among his own people, cheering the young, and gossiping with and comforting the aged: he understood his own folk and their rudely affectionate ways better than he did those of the south country.

On Monday his anxiety and trouble began, which were to last till the month ended. He was the simple-minded, honest kind of man—as I have elsewhere remarked—who, when once he suspects, entertains an uncompromising distrust. He disliked and suspected Gorgonio, and therefore he believed it was impossible for Gorgonio, of his own motion, to deal honestly in any business. When he found, on visiting the Indian cotton in dock, that Gorgonio had spoken truth when he had said it was worth no more than twopence a pound, he merely thought it was one of those cases which frequently occur, when the habitual liar has not told a lie only because it was not

worth his while, and he distrusted Gorgonio the more for his having told the truth on one occasion. When Gorgonio asked what should be done with the cotton?—should it be warehoused and sold by parcels?—Suffield suspected him of some ulterior purpose—he would have found it difficult to say what—in making the suggestion.

'No,' said he. 'Sell the rubbish off at once. It's worth no more than twopence; and if we can get twopence for it, let us be thankful.'

But they did not get twopence for it. Twopence was very cheerfully given at first; but when still more was offered and more pressed upon the market 'without reserve,' buyers—a suspicious folk—began to think the cotton must really be worse than the samples indicated; so they refused to give twopence; and before the lot was cleared out a penny was reached. And Gorgonio laughed to himself—for he had secretly bought in a considerable quantity of it at a penny—and exclaimed: 'This is beautiful way to do business! The Suffiel' père is old fool!'

But Suffield was no fool: he was only consumed by dislike of the whole business, and distrust of Gorgonio. It worried and wore him beyond measure that the 'unloading' of 'corner' responsibilities must be entrusted to Gorgonio. It chafed him so much when he sat in his office that he had to get up and take the train to Liverpool 'to see how the Asiatic scamp was getting on.' He would even hang about among the busy crowd on the Liverpool flags—a very notable and half-forlorn-seeming figure—with a kind of watchful eye on Gorgonio; and in the troubled watches of the night he dreamed horribly of Gorgonio—who more and more looked as if he had been buried in some noisome place and, after some time, had been dug up again—of his hideous, pendulous, pitted nose, and his active pig's eyes.

And Gorgonio felt he was disliked and distrusted, and saw he was under such surveillance as the simple Suffield could bring to bear. Under no circumstances was Gorgonio a sweet-tempered and forgiving creature; but under these he became vindictive and reckless—reckless of his backer's interests, and reckless even in a measure of his own. By the following Monday, when prices were 'struck' for the week, not more than twenty thousand of the two hundred thousand bales of contracts had been got rid of; and prices had gone down, so that difference would have to be paid on one hundred and eighty thousand bales! On Tuesday afternoon, Gorgonio came to Suffield and set before him, with an ill-disguised satisfaction, the reckoning which would have to be met on Thursday, the 'settling day.' Mr Suffiel must make out a cheque to be paid into the cotton bank—for a considerable number of thousands!

'This must come to an end!' said Suffield, when he had made out the cheque. 'This repeated much would ruin any man!'

'How can any man make it end, Mr Suffiel?' said Gorgonio. 'The more you sell out, the more will the prices go down!—down! It cannot help itself!'

So the days passed, and George did not return; and with waiting and worry his father began to look worn and aged: his hair turned grayer, and his cheek lost its wholesome ruddiness. It added immensely to his trouble that, under George's

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rule, the interests of the Suffield business had been sacrificed to the demands of this extraneous speculation, and that proper business payments had been half-met or postponed, to permit of money being diverted to cotton transactions.

It was impossible that the change passing upon Suffield and the load of anxiety he bore—he was of those to whom concealment was well-nigh impossible—should not be observed in so well known and remarkable a figure as his. Speculation as to reasons became common. Where was his son?—shipped off because he had run the rig pretty freely? And why did he so frequently journey to Liverpool?—and appear—as was said—on ‘the Flags?’ Men discussed these points as they saw him on ‘Change, as they sat at lunch over against him, and when he passed them in the streets. Whispers went round, and doubts began to gather: Was the house of Suffield becoming shaky? Was he there to stave off reverses brought upon the house by the ignorance and carelessness of his son? A foolish thing that was he had done, in putting his son in complete charge of the business, and going off himself to London, to swell about—oh yes! everybody knew his wife was an ambitious woman!—among London nobles in Parliament and Society! Suffield was a ‘very good sort;’ but he would come to grief yet, through his good-nature and his wife’s ambition!—Suffield saw these things in the looks and heard them in the tones of men, and understood only too well how they might help to bring a more untoward end about. And yet he could do nothing but wait and endure till the end came, putting his shaky trust in ‘that rascal Gorgonio.’

A diversion came at the end of the week. Telegrams were published in all the newspapers—in the Liverpool papers in large type—proclaiming that there had been a great fire on the quays of Savannah, in which some warehouses filled with cotton ready for shipment had been completely destroyed. The extent of the loss was not known, but the immediate result in Liverpool was the raising of the prices of cotton. Thereupon he wrote at once to Gorgonio: ‘Seize this favourable opportunity to sell out as much as ever you can;’ and then he was ashamed that he should be pleased to take advantage of a disaster which perhaps meant ruin to some.

Early next week—which was the third of the crisis—he was surprised and troubled by an anonymous letter from Liverpool. It was signed ‘One who knows,’ and it advised Mr Suffield to put no trust in Gorgonio, who was playing him false: he was working ‘both on the bull and on the bear tack;’ it was to his interest to sell little at present, and then to send down prices with a rush at the end of the month, in the endeavour to clear out. That troubled Suffield very much; for must it not have been written by some one in Gorgonio’s confidence or in Gorgonio’s office? Who else should know that Suffield had such dealings with Gorgonio? Suffield went to Liverpool to see Gorgonio, and found that part at least of the anonymous communication was true; for Gorgonio had sold comparatively little, in spite of Suffield’s urgent instruction after the news of the fire in Savannah. Then Suffield was very wroth.

‘You are not keeping faith with me, Mr

Gorgonio,’ said he. ‘I agreed to carry out my son’s compact about money, and you on that understanding agreed on your part to work off these responsibilities as quickly as possible!’

‘And, Mr Suffiel, I do work them off as quickly as possible.’

‘What, you villain!’ exclaimed Suffield. ‘And this last time, with everything in your favour, you have sold something less than ten thousand, notwithstanding my express instructions to get rid of as many as possible!’

‘What would you have, Mr Suffiel?’ cried Gorgonio, with a snarling reasonableness. ‘First you say, “Do not sell at low price!” Then you say, “Sell so many as possible!” But if I sell many as possible, I must sell at low price, because price go down under great many. Well, what? Which? I cannot please you both way! I am not two person—twice—double! I am not what you call ambidextrous! I am not amphibious! I am not hermaphrodites! No!—Try to sell both way yourself, Mr Suffiel! I am willing!’

What, then, could Suffield say or do? What could he do but fume within himself, and fret, because he was certain this man was playing him false, though he could not refute his plausible arguments? And the worst of it was—the most galling and intolerable thing!—that he must still continue tied to this man till the end of the business.

It was at that time it first became evident to Suffield that the business world in which he lived and moved was aware of his cotton entanglements. As matter of fact, the shrewd Lancashire men, whose care it was to be ‘up to’ all the moves of the complex commercial game, had for some time truly guessed what was the nature of the unworthy connection of the Suffield house with a man like Gorgonio. The disappearance, moreover, of Tanderjee—who, it was known, had had business relations with the younger Suffield—and of Daniel Trichinopoly—who had been his creature—and then of George himself, could not, and did not, fail to be remarked and interpreted. In one way and another, a tolerably accurate knowledge of the situation was common property; inasmuch that, while the older and more staid men refused to believe that a man of Suffield’s commercial probity and honour would encourage so speculative and disreputable a thing as a corner, many of the younger and more light-minded—who knew not Suffield—believed he was still trying to hold the corner for his absent son, and betted on ‘the old man’s’ power to hold out.

Under these disquieting circumstances, it is not surprising that creditors of the house of Suffield—men who commonly would have never thought of pressing for payment—urged their accounts upon the attention of Mr Suffield, who bravely met their demands and wrote them cheques, till his account at the bank began to run to fewer figures than it had been wont. And still he sought assistance or advice of no one, but sat alone in his sturdy and cheery stoicism. One morning—and this was the first event that absolutely convinced him his world was in possession of his secret—‘Mr Poynting’ was announced. Mr Poynting was the head of a firm of engineers who had for many years made all the Suffield machinery, and to whom a large

bill had fallen due. Had Mr Poynting called about that bill?—The heart of Mr Suffield sank.

'Don't be frightened of me, Suffield,' said Mr Poynting. 'I'm not intruding on you as a creditor; I'm come to see you as an old friend. To come to the point at once—you'll forgive me if I'm wrong—you are, or may be soon, pressed for money. Will ten thousand pounds for a year, or a couple of years, be of any use to you? If it will be of any use, you can have it, and welcome, my friend.'

Suffield was so moved by that generous and spontaneous offer of aid that he could not speak for a moment.

'Thou'rt good, Poynting!' said he. 'Very good! I thank tha heartily, but I mun fend for mysen! Had it been a disaster o' Providence that brought me to this I mowt ha' said different, but I ha' brought it on mysen, and I mun wrastle through it by mysen; thank yo' all th' same, Poynting.'

'I ha' understood,' said Mr Poynting, 'that it was your son backed up this attempt at a corner, unbeknown to you.'

'Oh, they say that, do they?—My poor lad! There's not many to say a good word for him now, I daresay; though I reckon they were all "Hail-fellow" wi' him when he was about.—Yes; th' foolish lad thought he was going to do a great stroke. "He that maketh haste to be rich,"' he continued, exercising his agreeable faculty for incorrect quotation, "'falleth into speculation and a snare!" Th' owd way's best! I don't hold wi' these new-fangled dodges for making money. There's no real work or wealth in them. But th' lad's away trying hard to clear off a bit of his mistake, and I'm bound to see him out of it—though it's a more serious job than I thought it would be.'

'I don't hold wi' speculation myself,' said Mr Poynting, 'and corners in anything are, I think, execrable.—But isn't it a pity, Suffield, to let all this cotton go, as they tell me it's going, at poor rates? Take the ten thousand, if it's any help to you, and hold on to the last day for a rise; and then you'll be out of it with a pound or two in your pocket.'

'Thank yo' again, Poynting; but th' cotton mun go. And I'd far rather I lost than other folk. I'll not ha' it said about me that I made a penny out of so detestable a thing as a corner! My only concern now is to save th' business; and I think I can save it—though I may ha' to go and live in a cottage again.'

'Well, Suffield,' said Poynting with resignation, 'you know th' saying: "There's nought so queer as folk." A wilful man mun ha' his way. But if you should think better o't, let me know.'

'Thank yo' again, friend,' said Suffield. 'I'll not forget; I'll remember it a' my days! And he wrung his friend's hand as he went away.'

A little later he was surprised by a visit from a bank official. The official desired to communicate a very delicate and peculiar matter of business. 'You may know or remember,' said he, 'that we were asked by Mr Suffield, junior, to trace fourteen Bank of England notes for five hundred pounds.'

'I remember,' said Suffield. 'You telegraphed to my son in London about twelve of them.'

'We have now,' said the official, 'traced another—traced it to a person in Liverpool named Gorgonio, with whom, I believe, you have dealings, Mr Suffield, and who certainly had dealings with Mr Suffield, junior, and the original holder of the note.'

'You mean Tanderjee?—I was convinced that Gorgonio was a scoundrel!'

'Precisely. Of course, that person may have received it from Tanderjee in the ordinary way of business, or he may not. It would be difficult, we think, Mr Suffield, to show that he did not; but we thought you would like to know the fact.'

Yes; Mr Suffield saw it would be difficult to show there was anything improper in Gorgonio's possession of a five hundred pound note which had passed from the hand of Tanderjee.

'I hope, Mr Suffield,' said the official, 'that this cotton business of Mr Suffield, junior, goes well now?'

'Thank you,' said Suffield; 'but it won't go well till it's gone altogether!'

A PATRIOT'S HOME AND TOMB.

GREAT HAMPDEN—or Hampden Magna, as it is officially termed, to differentiate it from the village of Little Hampden—is situated on high land among the Chiltern Hills. The place possesses at least two distinctive characteristics in addition to its connection with the patriot, John Hampden. There is neither river nor brook to be seen in the parish; and there is no assemblage of houses that can be styled a village, in the generally accepted term of the word. Instead of Great Hampden village, Hampden Row is the designation of the farmsteads and cottages, which are picturesquely scattered along the side of a somewhat large common. The undulating country around Great Hampden is finely wooded, chiefly with beech-trees, which are indigenous to the soil; but there are also many unusually large and beautiful chestnut, cedar, balm-of-Gilead, fir, and lime trees.

Before the time of the patriot, the manor of Hampden had been the property of his forefathers for several centuries. Baldwyne, the owner of the manor in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and Osbert his successor, in the reign of William the Conqueror, are stated to have been ancestors of the Hampden family. The following record is said to be copied from a vellum roll which chronicles the pedigree and alliances of the Hampdens, and bears the date of 1579: 'The manor of Hampden hath contynued in the possession of one race of gentlemen by the space of more than six hundred years, who takyne their name of the place whereof they were Lordes, grew thereupon to be called by the second name of Hampden.' This triple-centuried archive also narrates that, when Osbert was Lord, William the Conqueror gave the manor to one of his followers named William Fitz-Ansculf; but Osbert, 'whether it were by monney or some other means of friendship, so purchased the good-will of the said William Fitz-Ansculf that he suffered the said Osbert to contynue in quiet possession of his

said Lordshippe of Hampden.' It is considered that the village of Hampden, written thus, H—den, is mentioned in Doomsday Book. Baldwin de Hampden, the son of the above-mentioned Osbert, is recorded to have held the manor in the reign of Henry I.

The present residence of the Hampdens is believed to occupy partly the site of the ancient mansion; portions of which, discovered when the building was modernised in the middle of the last century, are said undoubtedly to have dated from the reign of King John. There is a tradition that this monarch visited Hampden House, and one of the apartments, in the north-west front, is still known as King John's Room.

Queen Elizabeth, during her many progresses through her dominions, seems to have left few country-houses of note unvisited. Hampden House is no exception to the rule. Her Majesty's sojourn there is twice commemorated. The bedstead is shown in which she slept; and an avenue called the Queen's Gap, we are told, was cut through the surrounding woods by her entertainer, Griffith Hampden, that his exalted guest might approach his abode by a new and impressive route. This glade, nearly a mile in length, leads in a direct line to the house, from which, through the vista, a beautiful view is seen of the open country beyond.

Hampden House is not wanting in distinction and dignity. It is embattled; a handsome centre and two wings compose the north-west front; and the south-west front is surmounted with a square tower. The building is, however, much spoilt by its having been covered with stucco. The interior is less imposing than the outside leads one to anticipate, the rooms being comparatively restricted in size. Two portraits of the patriot are pointed out amongst the pictures, but their originality seems doubtful. A full-length portrait of Oliver Cromwell, with a page tying his sash, appears better authenticated. The Protector, it will be remembered, was John Hampden's first-cousin, their mothers having been sisters.

Southward of the Queen's Gap, in the woods between Hampden and Missenden, is a place called Prestwood. This is stated to be the identical spot upon which the ship-money tax was levied which Hampden refused to pay, and for which he was tried—the trial in fact bringing about in the end the great civil war.

Great Hampden Church, the burial-place of the patriot, is dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. It is an ancient structure of flint and stone, disfigured, like the house, by a covering of stucco. It consists of a chancel, nave, and aisles. Authorities say that various styles of architecture prevail. They tell us that the nave arcades belong to the Decorated period; the chancel and the upper portion of the small embattled tower to the Perpendicular; whilst the lower portion of the tower is Early English. The church contains some interesting relics of medievalism. An age-worn stoup for holy-water arrests the attention in the large, stone-seated, south porch; on either side of the chancel arch there is a hagioscope; and a piscina is in a well-preserved condition. In most restored churches of pre-Reformation date we see the piscina in the chancel, and often also in the transepts, where side-chapels were once

located. The piscina is a small recess in the walls, furnished with a drain, reaching to the foundations, down which the sacred rinsings of the eucharistic chalice were poured. Hagioscopes, however, are seemingly rarer records of Roman Catholic England. It may not, therefore, even in these days of wide-spread general knowledge, be an altogether familiar fact that a hagioscope is an oblique opening in the interior walls of a church, through which the high-altar was visible to the worshippers in the side-aisles.

The last resting-places of many of the Hampden race are marked by brasses on the chancel floor, the oldest of which dates from 1496. The brass covering the grave of Griffith Hampden, the host of Queen Elizabeth, occupies a central position before the altar. Later members of the Hampden family are memorialised by mural tablets. The only noticeable one, upon the left wall of the chancel, commemorates both the illustrious patriot and his last descendant in the male line. The inscription upon the monument is as follows: 'John Hampden, xxiiii hereditary Lord of Great Hampden, and Burgess for Wendenover in three Parliaments. Dyed unmarried February 4, MDCCLIX, aged 58. Having bequeathed his estate and name to his kinsman, the Hon. Robert Trevor (now Hampden), son of the Right Hon. Thomas Lord Trevor, son of the Right Hon. Sir John Trevor by Ruth, daughter of John Hampden, slain in Chalgrove Field, MDCXLIII. Robert Hampden dedicated this Monument, with all due veneration, to his Great-grandfather, and to his Benefactor's memory.'

Above the inscription there is a bas-relief carved in marble. It represents, in the foreground, the mortally wounded patriot falling from his horse; and, in the background, the church and village of Chalgrove. The Hampdens' armorial bearings are emblazoned on shields, suspended from the branches of a tree that over-spreads the scene.

It is surprising to find that this family of ancient lineage have never had a private vault for interments. However, such is the case. Apparently, the graves of the Hampden family are mostly beneath the pavement in various parts of the church; but evidently some are also in the churchyard, where 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.'

The register testifies that the patriot was buried—we may be sure with many tears—among his ancestors, in their parish church, June 25, 1643, the day that followed his death. The spot of his burial is not indicated. A search for his remains was organised, in July 1828, by the desire of Lord Nugent, his biographer. An account of the proceedings appeared in the newspapers of the day. The narratives stated that the investigators examined, without any satisfactory results, the initials and dates of several leaden coffins buried beneath the flooring of the church. But at length they came upon a coffin which, judging from its position, they presumed ended their task. It was considered probable that the patriot would desire to be interred near his beloved wife, and the coffin in question was lying nearly underneath the tablet that he erected to her memory, and whereupon he affectionately recorded her numerous virtues.

Notwithstanding that the coffin-plate was too

corroded and broken to allow of the inscription being deciphered, it was resolved that the lid should be cut open. It was hoped that the condition of the body would serve to throw light upon the contradictory statements regarding the manner in which the patriot was wounded, supposing that these were his remains. The gunshot wound, that ended in death after six days of intense suffering, is said to have happened in two very different ways. According to one account, John Hampden's hand was blown off by the bursting of his own pistol, which was overcharged. This weapon, it is narrated, had been given to the patriot by his son-in-law, Sir Robert Pye. Another account says that a brace of bullets shattered the patriot's shoulder. Entire evidence of the former, and partial evidence of the latter, catastrophe are averred to have been detected in the exhumed body. The hand of the right arm appeared to have been amputated, for the hand, or rather a number of small bones, was found enclosed in a separate cloth; also the left shoulder seemed displaced, though, the bones being quite perfect, there could have been no wound likely to prove fatal. The searchers concluded that this dislocation was either caused by the force of a bullet, or by the fall from his horse, after the exploded pistol had done its deadly work.

A general opinion prevailed that John Hampden's grave had been found. But the wish, we know, is often father to the thought. Anyway, it is significant that particulars of this disinterment are omitted in Lord Nugent's life of the patriot. We may therefore infer that the precise spot where Hampden sleeps his last sleep has not been indisputably discovered.

THE CAMERA-OBSCURA.

A STORY.

By J. S. FLETCHER.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

WHEN I first joined the Coastguard service, there was a great deal more romance about it than there is nowadays. A cargo of contraband stuff came in once a week then, where it does not come in once a year now. The smugglers, too, were fellows who were not afraid of giving and taking a few blows in the exercise of their trade. Many a brush have I had with them in which blood was spilt as freely as water, firearms and cutlasses being used on both sides without compunction. It was stiff work in those days; and the coastguard of to-day who walks along his mile or two of outlook and takes occasional sightings with his glass, has small conception of what wild jobs we sometimes had in the old days when a boatful of goods came in from Holland or France to be discharged in some lonely spot on the coast.

However upright and honest in other things they might be, I always found that the coast-people had not the slightest misgivings of conscience where smuggling was concerned. It seemed as natural to them to get their spirits and tobacco free of duty as it is to an ordinary man to buy them in the usual way. I have known men who

would not have defrauded their neighbours of a penny, and whose morality and honesty were beyond question, but who were beyond repentance in the matter of smuggling. The fact was they had been taught to smuggle from their very childhood, and could not see the harm of it. Again, as many of them urged, they bought the stuff over in foreign towns and paid for it—why, then, should they not be allowed to bring it to their own homes? It was useless to attempt any explanation of the law. Dwellers in solitary places know and care little about any laws but their own.

My first station was at Porthlock, a solitary fishing village on the east side of Lizard Point. The population was a typical Cornish one, and there was scarcely a soul that was not engaged in some sea-trade or in some calling connected with the staple industry. Perhaps the parson and the doctor were the only persons not actually concerned in one or other of the boats that put out of the little quay-pool, and I am not quite sure that the doctor was not as much interested in some of them as in his practice, which was not a good one, for the place was wonderfully healthy.

I had not been long at Porthlock, however, when I came to the conclusion that if fishing was the ostensible principal pursuit of the place, in reality it was nothing of the sort. True, the boats went out religiously, and there were great hauls brought to the quay-side; but something lay behind all that. The people of Porthlock, from the old mariner of a hundred years to the sturdy urchins of eight or ten, were inveterate and determined smugglers. I could make no distinction amongst them: the doctor was as bad as any of the others, and I always had an idea that the easy-going old parson was not beyond accepting an occasional gift of brandy and tobacco that had never paid duty.

It was impossible to feel angry with these people, for they performed their nefarious practices under my very nose, and smiled in my face as they did so, just like naughty children that laugh at you when they are committing some piece of perversity. They were always friendly with me, and if I had but said the word, would have found me in as much spirits and tobacco as would have supplied me for a twelvemonth. My predecessor had been somewhat lax in his duties, and I had a pretty strong suspicion that the Porthlock folk had bribed him to willing blindness whenever his eyes ought to have been extra sharp. They soon found, however, that I was not going to aid and abet them in defrauding Her Majesty's revenue. I had come there to do my duty, and meant to do it at whatever cost.

I said as much to the doctor, a red-bearded, broad-figured Scotchman, who had seen everything and been everywhere, and who was the most genial, easy-tempered man I ever knew. He never seemed to have anything to do, save when a wee Porthlockian came into the world, or some old inhabitant went out of it, fairly worn out and venerable in years. He was a mighty man at fishing and otter-hunting, and could tell the finest stories over his glass of grog and pipe of bird's-eye. Again, he was friends with everybody, treating the fishermen as brothers, and not un seldom going out with them to sea. He was also as brave as a

lion, and was always first to respond if the life-boat was summoned.

'Why, of course,' said he, 'there's smuggling going on in the place. The drap spirits ye're drinking, man, never paid duty, nor yet the baccy in yer pipe.'

'That's a nice thing to tell a preventive officer, doctor,' I answered.

'Hoot, toot, man: dinna fash yersel' on that score. What harm will the puir bodies do to the Queen by bringing a bit cargo o' stuff across the water?'

That was how they all looked at it. They could see no harm in smuggling. It was a proper adjunct to their other trade of fishing.

There was one family in the place, however, who unblushingly proclaimed the fact that they were smugglers and nothing else. True, they did not say so in plain language; but their actions were just as eloquent as any words could be. They possessed two fine boats, and went to sea; but they never brought any fish back to the quay-pool. Sometimes they stole out of the harbour at night, and were away for a day or two. When I next caught sight of them, they were pursuing their usual vocation of lounging about the quay-pool; but there was an air of satisfaction on their dark visages which could only be accounted for in one way—they had successfully run in a cargo of contraband goods.

The name of this family was Nanjulian, and there were nine males engaged in smuggling—the father, old Zebedee Nanjulian, and his eight sons. Tall, athletic, dark-visaged men they were, all well able to show more than ordinary strength at wrestling and fighting. One of their peculiarities was a devout love of Scripture names. The eldest son was called Aaron; the second, Matthew; the third, Titus; then came in order Timothy, Cleophas, Simon, Esau, and Pharaoh. The last named was the one whom I cared less about than any of his brothers. He was about twenty-five years of age, and had an expression of countenance which I did not like. Pharaoh Nanjulian, in fact, looked the sort of man to stick at nothing. I felt sure that in a fight he would kill an enemy without compunction, and I devoutly hoped that he and I might never get across each other in the course of events.

As matters turned out, this was precisely what we did do. Not more than two miles out of Porthlock, right on the edge of the cliff, there stands a gentleman's seat, the name of which I have forgotten. He was a scientific man, who had built himself an observatory, and was always taking observations and such things about the sky and sea. I have forgotten his name too. But I have not forgotten the pretty little lodge which stood at the entrance to his grounds, nor the old lodge-keeper's pretty daughter, Bertha Penruddock. Old Penruddock had been a coast-guard man himself long years before. He was very comfortably housed in the lodge, and his duties were light enough, for there were days and days together when the gates were never opened.

My lookout extended just as far as Penruddock's place, and many a cold winter night did I step inside the cheery little cottage to warm myself at the fire. Very soon I began to feel something more than a passing interest in Bertha.

She was a pretty girl and a good girl, and would make any man a true wife. When I had come to that conclusion, I used to go to the lodge oftener than ever.

But Bertha had another suitor in the field—dark-faced Pharaoh Nanjulian. He was a strange suitor, too, never striving particularly to have speech of the girl, but always hanging about the lodge, as though he fancied that she would fall in his way sooner or later. Now and then, old Penruddock had asked him what he meant by loafing around there; and received a surly answer that the cliff was free to anybody, which was true enough. Once or twice Bertha, coming home from Porthlock, was met by Pharaoh and forced to speak to him. As he always behaved himself, and was certainly no stranger to the Penruddocks, the girl could hardly tell him that she wanted none of his company. He never made any advances to her, his sole method of making love being to stare at her pretty face and utter occasional remarks about the weather.

Master Pharaoh, however, was not minded to have a rival. He had set his heart upon marrying pretty Bertha. When he found that I was visiting the lodge-keeper rather oftener than mere friendliness called for, he waylaid me, and told me his mind straight out like a man. He was coming along the cliffs when I met him, and planted himself in my path—a tall, dark-faced young giant.

'Aw—ax your pardon; but you're a-trespassin' like on my presarves, Master Walsh.'

'Trespassing on your presarves. What do you mean?'

'Aw—ax your pardon if I be wrong; but heard you was going a main deal to Penruddock's cottage. Make so bold as to tell ye what I hear.'

'You've heard right,' I said. 'But what then? How I am trespassing on your presarves because I go to Penruddock's, I don't see.'

'Aw—well, I do mean to marry Bertha Penruddock myself, iss, sure I do; and won't have no man a-courtin' of her.'

'The young lady will please herself, I suppose,' I answered, feeling rather out of temper at this summary method of warning me off. 'I shan't stop away from Penruddock's because you tell me to do so.'

'Aw—then 'twill be unpleasant for ye, Master Walsh. Ax your pardon for tellin' ye; but 'tis terrible fuleish work to go again me.'

I said no more, but went forward and left him. That night I went to Penruddock's cottage again and told them what Pharaoh had said. Somehow or other, Bertha and I came to an understanding on that occasion, and I went homeward with ample assurance that however much Pharaoh might object, she would in due time become Mrs Edward Walsh.

Winter came on, and I soon formed a decided opinion that the Nanjulians were engaged in very extensive smuggling. From various bits of evidence that came to hand, we had no doubt whatever that valuable cargoes were being landed close to Porthlock, and so cleverly that we could not trace them. I nearly wore myself to death in keeping a lookout, and yet I came across no clue. It was a trying time, for I was on my merits, and a clever capture would have earned

for me the promotion I wanted. I grew anxious and careworn, and my peace of mind was not increased by the fact that the Nanjulians passed me with a sort of laugh-in-the-sleeve expression on their brown faces.

I came to the conclusion at last that somewhere along the neighbouring coast there was a cleverly concealed hiding-place where the smugglers were storing their goods. I would have given a year's wages to have found it. I hunted the rocks along the coast, and examined the rough ground on the headlands above, and could find nothing. Once, when I had been out all day engaged in this manner, I met several of the Nanjulians on my return, and heard them laughing in a sneering way after they had passed me. No doubt they had watched my proceedings, and were delighted to think that I was completely outwitted. But I felt sure that sooner or later the tables would be turned on old Zebedee Nanjulian and his eight sons.

One fine winter morning I found myself on the cliffs near Penruddock's cottage, and turned in there for a few minutes' chat with Bertha. The old man was out, and Bertha stood at the door with a pail of hot water and a scrubbing-brush in her hand. She had just locked the door and put the key in her pocket.

'Whither away, my girl?' I said.

'I'm going up to the Squire's latest invention, Ned,' she answered. 'He's built a thing on the Point yonder that enables you to see over the country all round. A camera-something they call it.'

'A camera-obscura,' I said. 'Ay? I should like to see that, Bertha. Is any one about?'

'The Squire's gone away for a day or two,' she answered. 'Come along, Ned. I know how to work it. You pull two or three strings, and walk round a white table—that's all. I'm going up there to scrub the floor.'

The Point, where the little wooden house for the camera-obscura had been built, was a high bit of wooded ground on the edge of a little promontory that ran out seawards, and fell sharply away to the sands. There was a good view of land and sea from it, and no better spot could have been found for the Squire's purpose. That morning was exceedingly bright and fine, and the view we had of the surrounding country was very clear. I soon learned how to manipulate the cords, and we spent a very pleasant half-hour watching the familiar objects appear on the white table. There was the town of Porthlock with its quay-pool and old-fashioned gables; then the beach and sea; then another stretch of beach and rocks; then more headland and coast; and again the lonely meadows until we came round to Porthlock once more. It was most amusing to have far-away objects brought so near home. Just as we had completed the circle, we heard old Penruddock calling Bertha's name in the grounds outside.

'He wants the key,' said Bertha; and opened the door and ran away towards the cottage. I shut the door again, and pulled the cords so that the beach beyond Porthlock was photographed on the table. It had struck me that a camera-obscura would save me many miles of walking in fine weather, for it brought all the country close to your very eyes. I pulled the reflector

round, not having any particular object in view, until a bit of coast about a mile away lay represented on the table. The scenery just there was very wild and rugged. It was known locally as the Six Sisters, because there were six obelisk-like rocks there which rose straight out of the water and the sand, four of them being below, and two a good deal above high-water mark. These rocks, with their sharp points, were very accurately represented by the camera-obscura; and I was admiring the cleverness of the invention, when I suddenly saw something which brought an exclamation of wonder to my lips.

Down the face of the cliff came five men. I recognised them at once as five of the Nanjulians. No other men in Porthlock had such tall figures or long limbs. Which five I could not say, for I could not distinguish their faces, but five Nanjulians they were. When I saw that, I slipped a catch in the door, so that no one could open it and let in the light. Then I followed the movements of the far-away group with eager eyes. It was like watching ghosts moving in a land of shadows. The five moved about aimlessly for a while, but I noticed that each wandered in a different direction. Presently they drew near each other again, and were joined by a sixth Nanjulian, who came down from the headland. Then they all went to the base of the sixth rock—the one that stood highest out of high-water mark. I could not make out what they were doing, but presently I saw them one by one disappear into the sand, as if they had been swallowed up. The sixth remained, and was busied about the base of the rock for a little while, after which he walked away along the sands in the direction of Porthlock.

I went out with a feeling of triumph. I had found the key to my puzzle: I had, by a strange chance, discovered the store-place of the Nanjulians' contraband goods. At the base of that rock there was a trap-door, covered by the sand, and affording entrance to one of those subterranean caverns where goods or men can be concealed with perfect safety. The man who remained above had done so in order to spread the sand over the trap-door again: those who had gone below were doubtless engaged in packing or arranging the fruits of their last smuggling expedition. Such was the theory I formed. I had no doubt of its being correct; it seemed to me that the time was ripe for making a splendid capture.

LINGERING AUTUMN.

THE morning mists begin to gather in the moist low-lying meadows, and linger amongst the hills and woods far into the day. The richness of colour in the forest trees, the yellowing patches in the hedgerows, and the russet-brown and gold of the ferns and bracken, show unmistakable signs that the late beauty of Autumn is with us. The amber light of the sun no longer shines on the harvest fields, for the ripened grain has been long gathered and garnered, save here and there a late crop of beans or aftermath. The drooping poppies have lost their brilliancy of colour; yarrow and hawkweeds have taken the place of scabious and toad-flax, oxeye daisies and harebells; but

the hardy pink-and-white convolvulus is still in blossom amongst the matted weeds and stubble, though the flowers are more delicate in colour; and the fragile leaflets and pinkish purple bush-vetch adds to the fading beauty of autumn.

Along the banks are bunches of white campion, their pure flowers standing fair and tall from the wild tangle of grasses and wild-oats; and growing in close proximity in the moister ditches is its sister-flower, the red campion. Sometimes that erratic wanderer, the spikenard, is found in the hedges at this season; and on the waste lands and wayside are seen marsh-mallow and yellow lady's-slipper. On sunny afternoons the humble-bees are still busy on the wild thyme and gorse bushes. Tall plants of thistles and burdock add their handsome clusters of foliage and purple heads to the scene.

The fullness of autumn is shown in the trees and hedgerows, that abound with hips and haws, sloes, blackberries, and other wild-fruit; and if there be any truth in old saws, it foretells a sharp winter; but with wild-fruits as well as cultivated sorts the cropping is more often determined by the state of the weather during the time of blossoming and setting.

There are stores of nuts and acorns, there are wild plums in abundance; and on the boughs of the old crab-trees, besides the fruit, are dainty gray-green lichens, and brownish green mosses on the gnarled old stumps. The woolly night-shade climbs and clings and straggles about the hedges; and even at this late season, some lilac blossoms are on the long trails, with the bunches of berries varying in tint from green to pale yellow, orange, red, and finally deepest crimson. Not far off is its near relative, the common night-shade, whose berries are jet black.

The bearberry was once thought poisonous in England, but is now better known, and much appreciated, making an excellent conserve. It is so used in Spain and Ireland. It was first brought to this country by the monks of Mucross Abbey. The dells and hollows under the young trees in the coppices are beginning to fill with a rich carpet of fallen leaves, though they have fallen so quietly, so gradually, we have hardly been conscious of their decay. The closing year has been a most exceptionally fine one throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles: the first months were comparatively mild, and free from sharp frost; then came the calm bright sunny spring, followed by the brilliant hot summer; and the warm welcome rains of July caused a fresh up-springing of herbage; and now the late autumn is sinking into the arms of winter with a quiet loveliness almost unprecedented. The broad harvest moon has waxed and waned in crimson splendour, succeeded by the lingering twilight and soft cool darkness of early autumn, and the wind sighs fitfully through the leaves with a gentle mournfulness.

Autumn departs, but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropped with gold;
Tweed and its tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper swells the rill;
Yet lingering notes of sylvan music swell
The deep-toned cushat and the redbreast shrill;
And yet, some tints of summer's splendour tell
When the broad sun smiles down on Ettrick's
western fell.

As October draws in, the clearer sharpness of the air, the sharply defined clouds, and the rapid shortening of the days, usually show the advance of the season; but the days are often very pleasant, and as a rule there are quite twenty fine days in this month. The few remaining members of the swallow tribe take their departure to sunnier climes, though, occasionally, stray late broods may be seen hovering over the sheltered banks of rivers and streams till the middle of November. The redwings now begin to come in flocks, and pick over the root-crops and pasture-lands in search of grubs and insects, till stress of weather sends them to happier hunting-grounds. Larks and other birds which stay the winter with us also congregate in flocks on the approach of frosty nights; and the touch of winter begins to be perceptibly felt morning and evening. The lingering late leaves will soon be down, and the noble trees, but lately standing clothed in grand masses of colour, will be stripped bare of foliage; and the sighing winds exchanged for louder, rougher tones, that eddy round the hills and woods in wild rushing blasts. The whir and rustle of birds, the crack of the gun, the scuttle and rush of dogs, and the cheery 'View halloo!' of the huntsman, all tell how swiftly the eventful year is speeding to its close. Silently it has slipped away in all its glowing splendour, its soft promise of spring, the rich fulfilment of summer, and ripeness of autumn; and soon the 'old year will lie a-dying' under the glittering eternal stars, with all its loves and hopes, its joys, ambitions, and lost opportunities, to vanish in turn in the abyss of time.

SEA-VOICES.

WHERE the broad sands lay smooth for fairy feet,
And shells of pearl shone in the dim moonlight,
The fisher-lads were courting while the bleat
Of moving flocks came through the peaceful night—
And ever like a plea
Rose the insistent murmur of the sea.

And when the fishers sailed to snare the fins
That ripple all the surface of the deep,
They went a-smiling, for 'he laughs who wins'—
Although the peewits neared in boding sweep,
And to a minor key
Was changed the boding music of the sea.

But when the storm-winds tore the gathering clouds,
And loosed their fury on the watery world,
So that the dead must gibber in their shrouds,
And into space th' unready quick be hurled—
Then ominous and free
Woke the remorseless thunder of the sea.

But when the oil of heaven had calmed the waves,
And noon was ripening over hill and lea—
Over the mourners and the ocean-graves,
Hark to the bitter sobbing of the sea!
For sorrow that must be,
The bitter, bitter grieving of the sea.

C. AMY DAWSON.

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A SECRET OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

By J. F. HOGAN, M.P.

A CABLE message from Brisbane published towards the end of July this year announced the proclamation of a British protectorate over the Pacific group known as the Solomon Islands. Thereby hangs a tale, and not the least singular of the many romances of real life that are associated with the early history of Australia. It is the story of one of the most colossal speculators of the nineteenth century, and of his unwitnessed, but, there is every reason to conclude, horrible fate. His name was Benjamin Boyd, and he was born about 1796, the son of Edward Boyd, of Merton Hall, Wigtown, a member of an old Scottish family. He claimed to be a direct descendant of a brother of the Thomas Boyd who was the ancestor of the Earls of Kilmarnock. For some years he carried on business in London as a stockbroker; and in the year 1840, being then in his forty-fourth year, Ben Boyd—to give him his familiar colonial designation—arrived at the antipodes in the capacity of managing director of a new financial institution called the Royal Banking Company of Australia, but which was in reality a syndicate of Scotch and English speculators, who had convinced themselves that huge fortunes for each and all were to be made in a few years by large and judicious investments in Australian land. As a matter of subsequent history, they were perfectly right in their calculations; but the proverbial slip between the cup and the lip came in the collapse of their trusted colonial agent (Mr Boyd) when they were all on the eve of becoming millionaires. Had they been able to hold on to their investments until the gold discoveries had sent up the value of Australian land a hundred, and even a thousand fold, they would have rejoiced in the title of lucky speculators; but the fickle goddess decided against them. They not only lost most of their original capital, but they had the added mortification of seeing others reaping the golden harvests that they had sown.

But I am anticipating the course of events. From the nature and constitution of the Royal Banking Company of Australia—a syndicate of British speculators with no practical knowledge of the colonies, and only anxious to acquire wealth without working for it—it is obvious that Mr Boyd, the managing director, and the man on the spot, could do what he pleased with the subscribed capital of the organisation. There was practically no check whatever upon his operations. Finding himself virtually uncontrolled, and with large financial resources to draw upon, he lost no time in either purchasing or leasing from the State immense areas of land in New South Wales and the districts that have since become the separate colonies of Victoria and Queensland. These he stocked with sheep and cattle; and he thus rapidly blossomed into one of the most enterprising of pioneer 'squatters.' As a further outlet for his superfluous energies, he organised a fleet of whalers, with which he pursued and captured the leviathans of the deep, that were then pretty numerous in the Australian seas, but have since been mostly scared away in the direction of the South Pole.

As a headquarters for his whaling industry, as well as a port of accommodation for his numerous squatting stations in the south of New South Wales, he resolved to build a town on the southern shore of Twofold Bay. In the establishment of this town, which he named after himself, he sank thousands of pounds; and it proved the most disastrous of all his speculations. It involved him in a long and ruinous conflict with the New South Wales Government, who were sensible of the great future importance of Twofold Bay as the one safe and commodious harbour between Sydney and Melbourne. They accordingly proclaimed a Government town on the northern side of the bay, and christened it Eden, which paradisiacal title it bears to this day. The fight for supremacy between these two towns was fierce and vigorous in the extreme. Eden of course was pushed ahead by all the motive-power of Government patronage and State

expenditure ; while Boydtown was built up into prominence and seeming prosperity by the capital of the confiding shareholders of the Royal Banking Company. It was probably to keep these latter in good humour that a most attractive and reassuring picture of Boydtown found its way into an early number of the 'Illustrated London News.' Amongst his other varied accomplishments Mr Boyd must have thoroughly mastered the art and practice of 'booming,' for in a voluminous 'Gazetteer of New South Wales' brought out in 1848 in London and Sydney by the Government Surveyor of the colony, there are actually more than twenty pages devoted to a most eulogistic description of Boydtown ; while the rival Government town of Eden is dismissed in a dozen lines. He must have been a smart man who accomplished that feat. There are besides in the Gazetteer two steel engravings illustrative of Boydtown in the heyday of its brief prosperity, one showing a number of whales being harpooned in the harbour, and the other exhibiting Boydtown as apparently the most solid, substantial, and progressive of budding cities.

Alas for the gorgeous dreams of its enterprising founder ! Boydtown has been defunct for close on forty years, although I am aware that it still retains a ghostly existence on most maps of Australia issued in Great Britain. Geographers, or, to be more specific, map-producers are one of the most conservative races under the sun. Once a town gets upon a map, it has got to stay there apparently, and the fact that it has vanished off the face of the earth is a matter of no consequence. It so happens that I have wandered amongst the ruins of Boydtown, and I can certify in the presence of Messrs Stanford, Keith-Johnston, Bartholomew, and all the other geographers, that they have been unconsciously for many years perpetuating a little fib. Boydtown is now, and has long been, a deserted and almost lifeless collection of magnificent ruins—all that is left to represent many thousands of good British money.

Boydtown is associated with my first experience as a special correspondent. It was soon after I joined the 'Melbourne Argus' that a large steamer called the 'Balclutha' disappeared in a furious gale between Melbourne and Sydney. Government steamers promptly started from each of these capitals—the 'Despatch' from the former, and the 'Captain Cook' from the latter. I was on board the 'Despatch' as the representative of the 'Argus.' We searched all along the coast until we arrived off Twofold Bay, where we fell in with the 'Captain Cook.' Neither had discovered a solitary trace of the missing steamer, nor was any evidence of her fate ever afterwards elicited. Both the 'Despatch' and the 'Captain Cook' steamed up Twofold Bay to Eden, where we all went ashore and telegraphed reports to our principals. We remained off Eden for a day to await further instructions. I availed myself of this opportunity to go round the head of the bay to the ruins of Boydtown, and see all that was to be seen of the vanished glories of the most daring and colossal of colonial speculators. I surveyed the silent walls of the towering, magnificent, but now empty abode that Mr Boyd had built and destined for

himself, where he would reign as *de facto* Governor of all the southern district, and from which he could exercise sway and influence over a country larger than France. I strolled over the monster hotel he had erected for the accommodation of the host of visitors and intending settlers that he fondly anticipated would arrive in regular batches when the name and fame of Boydtown, and the province of which it was the predicted capital, became known all over the English-speaking world. I wandered alone through the grass-grown streets by roofless cottages and past gigantic warehouses and factories that, even in their decay and abandonment, told of the phenomenal, if fleeting, prosperity of the place, and compelled a silent tribute of admiration for the luckless adventurer who could conceive and execute such titanic and far-reaching schemes. I walked along the rotting wharves and jetties, once all life and activity with the loading and discharging of ships, now without a solitary vessel moored to their worm-eaten sides. I climbed up the headland, on the highest point of which there stood the towering white-stone lighthouse that never was a lighthouse, for, after erecting it at an immense cost, Mr Boyd found that the Government had power to prevent him from ever exhibiting a light from its summit. And I came away from all these melancholy survivals of one man's mad ambition, unbridled speculation, and evanescent glory, with the philosophical reflection that, even in a young country like Australia there is abundant material for moralising on the vanity of human wishes.

'But what has all this got to do with the Solomon Islands?' I fancy I hear the reader exclaiming. Well, I am going to establish the connection now. It was necessary to give some account of the comet-like career of this extraordinary character, in order to understand and to appreciate the appalling fate that was so soon to overtake him at the hands of the Solomon Islanders. As time went on, and as the promised dividends failed repeatedly to be forthcoming, the British shareholders naturally became dissatisfied, and at last burst forth into loud murmurs against their local managing director. They demanded some more substantial return for their money than pretty pictures of Boydtown in the 'Illustrated London News,' glowing accounts of the hundreds of thousands of acres they owned, covered with multitudinous flocks and herds, and the fleets of whale-ships they possessed all over the southern seas. Boyd, besides, had 381,000 acres of land, which were his own property. Had the shareholders been patient a little longer, they would really have become, in the language of the Adelphi hero, 'rich beyond the dreams of avarice ;' but by insisting on a change of management, they deprived themselves of all the enormous added value to their properties that the opening-up of the Australian gold-fields conferred, and virtually wrecked the gigantic and far-reaching enterprises that Boyd had built up with their and his money. The upshot of the negotiations was that Boyd agreed to retire and resign all claims on the syndicate in consideration of his receiving three of the whale-ships, his yacht the 'Wanderer,' and two sections of land around Boydtown. On his retirement, the vast Australian properties he had acquired soon fell into the

English Court of Chancery, and were disposed of in London at prices that represented only a fractional part of their value twelve months afterwards. The shareholders had to make good a deficit of £80,000.

Having been thus compulsorily relieved of all cares and responsibilities in connection with the Royal Banking Company of Australia, this mercurial and most sanguine of speculators light-heartedly went on board the 'Wanderer,' and careered across the Pacific on a visit to the newly-discovered gold-fields of California. According to the popular novelist, Rolf Boldrewood, who was acquainted with Boyd and the 'Wanderer,' the latter belonged to the Royal Yacht Squadron, and was a handsome topsail schooner of two hundred and forty tons register, fitted up with great elegance, and well armed. 'She might have passed for the model of one of Tom Cringle's fascinating privateers.' It was on June 3, 1851, that the 'Wanderer' steamed through the Golden Gate of San Francisco on the return voyage to Australia. On October 14 she found herself becalmed off Guadalcanal, one of the Solomon Islands. A book that is now exceedingly rare, 'The Last Cruise of the Wanderer,' thus pictures the scene: 'How can I describe the beauty of the scene now presented to us? The lofty hills crowned with forest cast a deep shadow across the little bay. Canoes were skimming and glancing through the calm water. The wild natives shouted, whether in welcome or otherwise, we could not say. Mr Boyd never appeared in better spirits, walking up and down the deck exclaiming: "Is not this delightful?" Intending to have a day's shooting on the morrow, we had our guns cleaned in readiness for the morning's sport.' Then, under date October 15, the diarist of the cruise continues: 'Having been on watch during the night, I did not rise as early as I intended. On reaching deck I perceived that Mr Boyd had anticipated me, and was half-way between the schooner and the shore. I hailed him. He said he should be on board to breakfast, and bring off some game for dinner. These were the last recorded words ever uttered by him. He was accompanied by Kapartania, a native of Panapa, who sculled the boat. We saw them enter the creek and disappear round a bend of the stream. We heard two shots at intervals of a quarter of an hour, of which at the time we took no notice.' But suddenly a number of canoes filled with evidently hostile savages put off from the shore towards the yacht. What followed is thus described:

'Suddenly a cry arose from the water—a cry, which, once heard, could never be forgotten. It was as if a host of demons had suddenly been let loose. The air resounded with their yells and the sullen roaring of war-conches. A shower of spears and arrows with other missiles came hurtling among us. Sheltering ourselves behind the bulwark till the first storm passed, we fired into the canoes with deadly effect. Many were shot down before they were driven from the after-part of the vessel's side. On they came again, and were rapidly driving our crew aft, their boarding-pikes being opposed by the wicker-work shields with which the natives defended themselves. However, these proved of no avail against the white man's fire. Our crew made a charge and cleared the decks, despatching the

wounded and throwing them overboard. Then we brought a two-pounder swivel gun, loaded with grape, to bear upon the canoes. This decided the battle. Thoughts of poor Boyd crossed my mind often during the conflict. None of us now doubted but that he had been cruelly murdered, the last report of his gun probably preceding his death. The poor lad with him could offer no resistance, as he was unarmed. The defeated savages retreated about a hundred yards, huddled together in the greatest confusion. We ran out our deck guns and opened upon them with grape. We could hear the iron hail crashing through the canoes, when all made instant retreat for the shore. The majority of the canoes, in consequence of our continued fire, were left on the beach, the natives escaping to the woods, carrying their dead and wounded. One native was seen running along the beach with Mr Boyd's hat on.'

For several days in succession the officers and crew of the 'Wanderer' searched all over the island for traces of their unfortunate chief, but all in vain. They discovered nothing but the sword-belt which he had on when he left the vessel on the fatal morning. They found it amidst ominous surroundings—in a stranded canoe filled with water and blood. More than forty years have passed, and during all that time not the slightest scrap of evidence has been forthcoming as to the manner in which this bold, adventurous, and remarkable celebrity vanished beyond mortal ken. But as the Solomon Islanders were then, and to no small extent still are, amongst the most notorious cannibals of the Pacific, it is to be feared that the official placing of the group under the protection of Her Majesty will not appreciably contribute to the solution of the mystery.

By a sad and striking coincidence, the day on which Ben Boyd vanished into the unknown was actually the day preceding the first authoritative publication of the news of the gold discovery in Australia, a discovery that was destined to add immensely to the value of the vast areas he had acquired when he was the Napoleonic managing director of the Royal Banking Company. 'What an ironic stroke of fate,' exclaims Rolf Boldrewood, 'that the doomed "Wanderer" should be on her way to Australia in the month of the year 1851 when her owner would have heard of the wondrous gold discovery by which his vast properties, with his increasing flocks and herds, were quintupled, yea, advanced tenfold in value—that, while on his way to the golden land to hear of marvels worthy to be ranked with the tales of Scheherazade, with Sindbad and the valley of diamonds, he should have gone ashore at a fateful isle in the South Seas to shoot a few pigeons and return for breakfast, and—never to be seen again.'

There is a portrait of Boyd in the British Museum, taken in Sydney in 1848, when he was at the zenith of his Australian pride, power, and magnificence as the largest 'squatter' or pastoral prince in the southern hemisphere. Beyond a general suggestion of shrewdness and solidity, there is nothing strikingly Scotch in the face, which on the whole conveys an impression of kindness, thoughtfulness, and benevolence. The eyes are somewhat keen and penetrating—an

index, no doubt, to the character of the cool, far-seeing speculator. The forehead is high and massive, and the head is crowned with masses of curly hair. Altogether, the features are decidedly pleasing, and even prepossessing.

P O M O N A.*

CHAPTER VIII.

And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
Nor bid farewell, but sadly rode away.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

Tennyson.

It was very wet the following morning; the rain came down in torrents, swelling the brook that ran down the side of Scar Street, till it became quite an important-looking stream, and whirled away the cabbage stalks and lobster shells, as if it would not stand any nonsense or stick at trifles.

Nigel had a sore heel, contracted during some of his breakneck climbs on the Landalip; but this did not signify, as jam-making was the order of the day, and for that occupation you can shuffle about comfortably in one of Mrs Rockett's old slippers, and can cross the road when necessary on Dennis's back.

Sage did not mind the rain either; she would have been equally serenely happy if the sun had shone, which would have meant a long morning on the cliff or shore or in a boat on the shining blue sea, always in that company that made sunshine quite independent of the capricious luminary overhead. But as it rained, it would be almost more delightful to spend the time in the studio with the painter working at his canvas, so absorbed sometimes in his work that he was unconscious of the presence of others, who in their turn became unconscious of him, and wandered away into that solitude à deux which is so blissful.

'What are you smiling at?' Kitty asked suddenly, looking up from weighing the blackberries with much-stained fingers.

And Sage flushed up all over her face and delicate neck, for she was smiling at the anticipation of the brisk step that was sure to sound in a few minutes down the street, and the figure that would fill the low doorway, obstructing the light that found its way mainly into the room by the door; and the cheerful, pleasant voice that would convey a peremptory message from the painter to come and cheer his loneliness, as he was bored to death with Maurice's company.

Sage had helped Mrs Rockett to wash up the breakfast things, after which that lady had gone stumping across to the 'Black Dog,' with her skirts tucked up abnormally high, and children and blackberries following close at her heels; so Sage was left alone in the little kitchen with the big eight-day clock in the corner tick-tocking away, an hour and a half slow, and the drip-drip of the rain from the eaves.

Sage got out a little sketch and began touching

it up, not improving it very much, I fancy, for it was only done from the wish to appear occupied when that step should come down the street, so that she might not seem to be listening and expecting with every fibre of her body.

'I say, Sage,' cried Nigel, entering, 'haven't you any more jars or anything we can put the jam in? I wonder if Mrs Stock has a few jars she could lend us? She's awfully good-natured. It's not raining half as bad as it was' (just then a swirl of wind and rain blew in at the door and rattled the casement); 'don't you think you could just go up to the farm and ask? I'd go in a minute, if it wasn't for this jolly old foot; and I don't want Dennis and Will to meddle with my pots; they're a lot better than theirs.'

Sage got up with more alacrity than you would have expected from her listless attitude a minute before. Here was a plausible excuse for going up to the farm, an excuse she had been trying vainly to find for the last hour. A fortnight ago, no excuse would have been needed; but now Nigel's jam pots were hailed as an excellent reason for leaving the picturesque, little kitchen, where the silence had become almost intolerable, and for sallying forth into the stormy, gusty weather, to climb the windy, exposed path to the farm, and find out what had happened to alter the usual course of events in such an unaccountable way.

She reached the farm, all blown about, breathless, and dishevelled. Mrs Stock was shaking a duster at the door, and received her with loud exclamations at her venturing out on such a rough day.

'Come right away into the kitchen; and take off your cloak, and let me see if your petticoats is wet. Why ever didn't one of the chaps step up for the jars?—Bless you, I've a plenty. I'll send Bill down with a basketful on 'em.—And don't they want some apples to put along with the blackberries? It makes it a deal nicer, to my thinking, though I don't care much for it anyhow, with all them seeds getting into your teeth and teasing the very life out of you.—There; I'll just go up to the apple-room and look out a few, as I don't think Mrs Rockett had a-many on them trees of hers, and not good cookers, if she have.'

From the open kitchen door the studio door was plainly to be seen, and Sage felt sure that door would open directly Mrs Stock's very audible voice was heard; but this did not happen; and a little return of the chill of disappointment crept into her heart as she stood by the kitchen fire, while Mrs Stock went off to the apple-room with her mind absorbed in jam-pots and fruit.

The smell of tobacco smoke was reassuring, and with a sudden impulse she plucked up her courage and went across and knocked at the studio door.

'Come in,' sounded the painter's voice; and, with a very fluttering heart, she opened the door and went in.

Owen Ludlow was painting, with his back turned to the door, and an appearance of great application and absorption. There was no one else in the room.

'Is that you, Sage? Come in, my dear. What a miserable wet day for you to come out, child!

I am improving the shining hour—not very shining is it, though?—and am trying to finish off that little bit on the beach with old Lot in his boat.—Come and see what you think of it.’

Sage crossed the room, and stood behind the painter's chair with her eyes fixed on his canvas, but I do not think she could have told what was the subject there portrayed, for, mentally, she was examining the room, which with her bodily eyes she had taken in at a glance, for reassuring signs that Maurice's absence was only temporary, and that in another moment he might be there. It struck her with a little chill that the room looked neater than it had done of late; for Maurice was one of those men who make their presence evident by a newspaper left here, a pipe there, a glove dropped on the ground, and the chairs pushed about anyhow. To be sure, an open book lay face downwards on one of the chairs, and on this her mind fixed while she stood behind the painter, who talked away more volubly than was his wont about his work, a volubility that had a touch of feverishness about it, if Sage had been alive to peculiarities of manner just then.

But at last he stopped rather abruptly, perhaps aware of how little attention his silent auditor was paying to his somewhat pedantic harangue on tone and colour; and he bent more closely to his work on the toe of Lot's boot, as if his life depended on depicting the ravages of time and sea-water on that article; and he said in an artificially careless manner: ‘Moore had to be off sooner than he intended. He went up by the 6.30 this morning. He asked me to say good-bye for him.’

There was a murmur in response that might have meant surprise or regret or interest; and the painter went on with a few remarks on the train-service from Shingle and the advantage of being able to catch the express at the junction; and she answered ‘Yes’ and ‘No,’ not always quite appropriately; and presently she turned away with a little shiver and sat down in the arm-chair where the open book lay.

A fire had been lighted in the studio, as it was damp and chilly; and the painter, who felt that little shiver, and knew that it was mental chill which induced it, pretended to attribute it to her windy, wet walk, and pushed the chair close up in front of the fire, which he stirred to a cheery blaze, and bade her sit there and roast, as he had often nipped a cold in the bud by getting very hot.

He scrupulously avoided looking at her face as he did so; and during the silent hour that ensued, he only now and then stole a glance at the girlish figure, and the little, white face with the great eyes fixed on the blaze. Surely, it was a good thing there were no more sittings needed for the picture, or else that look might have crept into the picture unawares, as the look of recognition and the look of love had come—this new look, that was so pathetically like a broken heart.

They had often had such silent times before; when Ludlow was much absorbed in his work or his thoughts, he would not scruple to be silent, and leave Sage to her own devices; and so now the girl, with that instinct common to man and brutes to hide their hurts, comforted herself with the feeling that there was nothing

remarkable in the silence, and that it was an infinite relief that Mr Ludlow was so engrossed by his picture, though she could not quite remember which it was.

And so she spent all that September afternoon in profound quiet in the soft, rainy dullness, turning the leaves of the book that had lain open on the chair, hardly noticing what book it was, only feeling that it had been left there by the hand that had held hers the night before, and that most likely would never hold hers again.

If she had noticed where it lay open, it might have given her a clue to the reason of Maurice Moore's sudden departure; but I hardly think it would have occurred to her to connect herself in any way with ‘the lily maid of Astolat,’ however ready she might have been to compare Maurice Moore with Sir Lancelot.

It was Tennyson's ‘Idylls of the King,’ and, on the story of Lancelot and Elaine, Owen Ludlow had founded his lecture to Maurice the night before.

As has been said, Maurice came in from that lingering moonlight walk with Sage with an unaccountably apologetic feeling in his mind; and one glance at the painter's face told him he was in for it; and he sat down in the chair opposite his old friend with a look of comical concern that was not entirely a joke, and said: ‘Go it, old chap; but draw it mild, and let me light my pipe first.’

But he was not prepared for the way Ludlow began, and the somewhat forced merriment died away from his face.

‘I’ve told you about my wife; haven’t I, Moore?’

Maurice nodded.

‘But I don’t think I ever told you of her baby, a little girl who, if she—had been with me now would have been just the age of this little Sage Merridew, and I sometimes think might have been not unlike her.’

‘Ah!’ Maurice said sympathetically between the puffs of his pipe.

‘It is partly this that has made me take such an interest in the little girl, and— Maurice, old man, I think I feel as much about her happiness and peace of mind as I should about my own daughter’s.’

‘You don’t suppose?’—

‘No; I don’t; but I am pretty sure that what’s play to you is deadly earnest to that poor child.’

‘Do you think I have no gentlemanly feeling?’

‘I know you have, and that is why I am speaking to you to-night, for you have quite a right to say it is no concern of mine, and that I’m a meddling old fool.’

‘Ludlow! you of all people!’

‘Yes; all right. I know you think I have a right to interfere in your concerns, because I gave you a pill and draught years ago. I don’t think I have any right on that score; but never mind; if you think so, I’ll avail myself of it, and say: “Mind what you’re about with this little girl, as you don’t mean to marry her.”’

Maurice laughed; but it was an awkward, uncomfortable laugh.

‘Upon my word, Ludlow, this is the first time I have ever had my intentions asked. Nobody

cares what the intentions of an unlucky beggar like me may be. I'm what they call a detrimental; it's only elder sons and millionaires who are supposed or permitted to have matrimonial intentions.'

'That's just it. Your marrying Sage Merri-dew is out of the question.'

'Quite. Every one must know it.'

'No; she would not. Your income—what is it? two or three hundred a year—would sound like wealth to Dr Merri-dew's daughter, who could live pretty comfortably on what you spend in gloves and button-holes.—Oh no! I know well enough it's not wealth by any means. I know, quite as well as you do, that it would be sheer madness for you with your expensive tastes to marry on that, even—if you wished it.'

Maurice was silent, pulling at his moustache rather savagely, and letting his pipe go out. It was quite true; but it was not pleasant to hear Ludlow say it.

'It would not matter a bit with one of your society girls; they are made of sterner stuff than little Sage, and can give and take and be none the worse; but with Sage it's different—it's all give, and no take; and that's a terribly losing business.'

'Well,' Maurice said impatiently, getting up and walking up and down the room, 'anyhow, there's only one more day of it, and then I shall be off, and she will forget all about me.'

'If she can.'

Then there was silence for a bit, with Maurice pacing the room, and Ludlow lying back in his chair, puffing at his pipe; but at last he said—and Maurice thought at first that he was abruptly changing the subject and perhaps wishing to have done with it: 'Maurice, do you remember the story of Elaine, that poem of Tennyson's?—Yes; I expect you do, for I used to spout it to you often enough at the ranch. I was mad about it then, and knew every line.—Well, don't you remember the father's appeal to Lancelot, when he was leaving?

Too courteous are ye, fair Sir Lancelot.
I pray you use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion.

It has been running in my head while you have been wearing out Mrs Stock's carpet with your perambulations.'

Then further silence and more paces, and at last Maurice said: 'Ludlow, old fellow, I think I'll go up by the early train to-morrow. There's a fellow I want to see in London.' He said it in a hurried, shamefaced way, avoiding the painter's eye, and being very busy cleaning out the stem of his pipe with a straw. 'I'll just step over to Shingle; and you can send my traps after me later in the day. All the same, I think it's a great piece of nonsense. Girls' hearts are not so brittle as you seem to imagine. Little Miss Sage will forget all about your humble servant in a few days; and some smart, young medico will turn up far more to her taste.—Well,' he added, with a very evidently simulated yawn and stretch, 'I think I'll turn in, as I shall have to be such an early bird to-morrow to catch the train, instead of the worm. Good-night and good-bye, old man.—And I say, Ludlow'—he turned with his hand on the door, and there was a very

genuine, little shake in his voice—'I think you might spare a crumb of pity for me from all the big loaves you are lavishing on her, for, by Jove, I don't think the pain is all on her side.'

BEEHIVE HUTS.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

IN Dr Mitchell's *The Past in the Present*, one of the series of Rhind Lectures, the author describes his amazement on visiting the island of Lewis, in the Hebrides, to find there hovels inhabited by human beings that have been generally supposed to have belonged to a prehistoric savage period of our islands. He says: 'My first visit to one of these houses was paid in 1866 in the company of Captain Thomas. They are commonly spoken of as beehive houses, but their Gaelic name is "bo'h" or "bothan." They are now only used as temporary residences or sheilings by those who herd cattle at their summer pasturage; but at a time not very remote they are believed to have been the permanent dwelling of the people. I cannot suit my present purpose better than by telling what Captain Thomas and I saw on the occasion of the visit to which I have referred. At Larach Tigh Dhubhstail, the summer pasturage of the tenants of Crolisra, we found one of these beehive houses actually tenanted, and the family happened to be at home. It consisted of three young women. It was Sunday, and they had made their toilet with care at the burn, and had put on their printed calico gowns. None of them could speak English; but they were not illiterate, for one of them was reading a Gaelic Bible. They showed no alarm at our coming, but invited us into the "bo'h," and hospitably treated us to milk. They were courtously dignified, neither feeling nor affecting to feel embarrassment. There was no evidence of any understanding on their part that we should experience surprise at their surroundings. I confess, however, to having shown, as well as felt, the effects of the wine of astonishment. I do not know I ever came upon a scene which more surprised me, and I scarcely know where or how to begin my description of it.

'By the side of a burn we saw two small round hive-like hillocks, not much higher than a man, joined together and covered with grass and weeds. Out of the top of one of them a column of smoke slowly rose; and at its base there was a hole about three feet high and two feet wide, which seemed to lead into the interior of the hillock—its hollowness, and the possibility of its having a human creature within it, being thus suggested. The dwelling consisted of two apartments opening into each other. Though externally the two blocks looked round in their outline, and were in fact nearly so, internally the one apartment might be described as irregularly round, and the other as irregularly square. The rounder of the two was the larger, and was the dwelling-room; the squarish and smaller one was the storeroom for the milk and food. The floor-space of this last was about six feet each way. That of the other was about six feet in its shorter and nine feet in its longer diameter.

The greatest height of the living-room—in its centre, that is—was scarcely six feet. The door of communication between the two rooms was so small that we could get through it only by creeping. The creeping was only a little less real in getting through the equally tunnel-like, though somewhat wider and loftier passage, which led from the open air into the hut or dwelling-room. At the right-hand side on entering there was the fireplace. The smoke escaped at a small opening at the apex of the door. The floor was divided into two spaces by a row of curb-stones eight or more inches high. These served as seats, the only seats in the house; but they at the same time cut off the part of the floor on which the inmates slept, the bed, in short—the whole space behind the row of stones being covered with hay and rushes. In the part of the wall bounding the bed there were three niches or presses, in which, among other things, we observed a hair-comb and some newly-made cheeses.

The walls of these Beehive Huts are made of stone, undressed, laid in rude courses; and the dome is constructed by bringing the courses to overlap, till at length they are drawn together so closely all round as to leave nothing but a small hole, which may be closed at pleasure with a turf or a stone, or left open to admit light and allow the escape of smoke.

In some cases the houses are more extensive, with several chambers, all constructed in the same manner, and all domed in the same fashion, so as to resemble a series of conical hills united at their base.

But what is exceedingly interesting in the description of the Lewis houses in occupation is that they resemble precisely a number of ruined structures scattered over not Scotland only, but the moors of Devon and Cornwall as far as the Land's End, so that the description of the house in Lewis might be taken as that of one on the tract of moor that stretches from Bodmin to Camelford, or, indeed, of numerous ruined prehistoric settlements on Dartmoor. Not only so, but it inevitably reminds the reader of the internal structure of a great many cairns and tumuli for the dead. In fact, there can be very little doubt that the mansions of the dead were at one epoch made in very close resemblance to their habitations when alive, and that their habitations when alive were beehive huts.

The rude stone monuments in Scotland have been very carefully examined and planned, and among these are the sepulchral chambers in the cairns both circular and oblong. They present very much the same character, of passages leading into chambers, these chambers either roofed over by broad slabs of stone or domed by narrowing layers of stone. There are frequently small side compartments for the dead, very much as in life they may have had compartments in their beehive huts for their beds.

There are to be found in Cornwall some of these beehive huts almost as perfect as when first constructed. Originally, indeed, they were embedded in peat-banks, or walls of turf to the width of nine feet. This has in a great number of cases disappeared. It has been washed away by the rains, so that only the skeleton, so to speak, of the old house remains, the stonework

which was not originally exposed. There is, however, on the south flank of Dartmoor, on the side of the river Erme, a beehive hut that is still in great part buried in its turf case, now luxuriantly overgrown by heather. The entrance consists of two granite jambs about two feet six inches high with a granite lintel, still in place. On crawling within, the structure is seen to be precisely that of the Hebridean beehive houses. It is domed over by layers of overlapping stones.

It is the same with several under Brownwilly, the highest of the Cornish tors, and sufficiently remote from habitations not to have become a quarry for builders. The top of Brownwilly consists of a ridge with five peaks of granite; on two of these are great cairns, that have never been explored. A little way under the brow of the hill to the east, below the easternmost cairn, are two almost perfect beehive huts nestled like swallows' nests into the rocks. One joins on to the other very much like the structure in the Hebrides described by Dr Mitchell, only that the storeroom is but four feet six inches in diameter. Both are part domed and part roofed with covering slabs, and natural rocks have been utilised for one side of each.

Below Brownwilly is a solitary farm, and between the farm and the stream is a beehive hut quite perfect, even to the smoke-hole, with the stone at top covering it. This chamber is rudely square within. It is quite possible that this, like the Hebridean huts, may be of much more recent construction, may even conceivably not be more than a hundred years old. In which case in Cornwall, as in the Hebrides, the old mode of construction in use in primeval times has been blindly followed to a comparatively modern period. This is possible in Cornwall; in the Western Isles it is certain.

But not only does the description of the 'bo'h' still in use apply in its general features to the beehive huts of the west of England, but it does also in even minute particulars, such as the division of the main apartment by curbstones to form the bed. Even these stones are found—or one is much deceived in some of the remains of beehive huts on Dartmoor and in Cornwall, and without the light thrown on their significance from actual usage by Dr Mitchell, the antiquary exploring with the spade among the ruined hut circles in the west of England would be much puzzled to account for the divisions his spade encounters when making out the plan of the floor. The little lockers Dr Mitchell saw in use are also found in the prehistoric dwellings, though no longer containing cheeses and hair-combs.

These beehive huts are found in clusters, villages, almost towns of them, though rarely with their domes complete, for in probably the majority of cases they were not stone domed, but roofed over with logs or poles brought together in the centre, and covered with thatching of straw or ling.

Dr Mitchell informs us that many of the primitive cottages in the Hebrides have their roofs pulled off and renewed every year because of the value as manure of the thatching impregnated with peat-smoke and black with soot. It may have been the same with the prehistoric cottages; but certainly only here and there was one domed

over with stone, the majority were merely thatched.

That these habitations belonged originally to a people who erected megalithic monuments can hardly be questioned, as almost invariably a village of circular huts has on the hill above it cairns containing kistvaens, and very generally avenues or circles of upright stones in its neighbourhood. In many if not most cases in Devon and Cornwall, this people was a mining people and worked for tin. The settlements are generally associated with old tin stream-works. And the workings may be observed to turn round and avoid a spur of ground occupied by some of the huts. That the people were a flint-working race is also apparent from the numbers of flint weapons and chips found near these settlements. And the flint not being found near, had to be brought, and was an object of barter with the natives of the chalk and flint districts.

We do not know enough of the primitive population of the British Isles to say which was the beehive hut dwelling race. But it is certainly remarkable that in Devon and Cornwall, where not only the Cymric branch of the Celt came, but also the Gael, leaving traces in the forms of the names of places and people, that we should find houses of precisely similar construction to those still extant, and still used in the Gaelic islands in the west of Scotland.

At the same time it would be unsafe to rush to a conclusion from such coincidences. If we turn to Mr Hall's 'Life among the Esquimaux,' we find that this primitive people construct their igloos or snow-houses on a precisely similar pattern, even to the raised platform for the bed. Primitive man is much alike everywhere, and to whatever race he belongs, he seeks out the simplest form of habitation, and it is only as he advances in civilisation that he varies his type, and that he becomes impatient of the simplicity and rudeness of the habitations of his ancestors.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXIX.—OUT OF THE 'CORNER.'

WHILE Suffield pondered during the next day or two how it could be brought home to Gorgonio that the five hundred pound note which he had received from Tanderjee was his share of the Tanderjee cotton fraud—which Suffield did not for a moment doubt—a letter was on its way to him from Marseilles from his son concerning this very matter. George was returning home with both criminals; but they were all so worn with fatigue that they could not set out so soon or travel with such speed as the letter, which was mainly written to advise the arrest of Gorgonio (if possible): Tanderjee had denounced him as a participator not only in the cotton fraud, but also in the theft of the plans!

That letter reached him at a critical moment, and with it in his pocket he went to Liverpool to call on Gorgonio. It was only three days to the 31st of January, when all the cotton transactions in which Gorgonio and his son were involved must close, and when the

final reckoning must be made up according to the prices with which the month would close. He was therefore determined to make a final effort, by means of a threat, to encourage Gorgonio to get rid of most of the cotton promises at a tolerable price before the final, fatal day. When Suffield entered Gorgonio's office, the latter merely sat back in his chair and waited: their relations were too strained for the exchange of civilities.

'More than a month ago, Mr Gorgonio,' said Suffield, taking a seat, 'you received from Mr Tanderjee one of several notes for five hundred pounds, the which he had received from the bank in payment of a cheque which my son gave him: would you mind telling me why Tanderjee gave you that note?'

Gorgonio looked at his claws a moment and then at Suffield. 'Yes,' said he, 'I remember. Tanderjee gave it to me in way of business—yes; in payment of matter of business between myself and Tanderjee.'

'Will you swear, if required, that the matter of business for which Tanderjee paid was not the help you had given in his cotton fraud, and in another matter concerning my affairs which I will not name at present?'

'Who say that, Mr Suffield?' exclaimed Gorgonio, turning a very evil colour. 'Who, Mr Suffield, have the impudence to say such thing?'

'Tanderjee has,' answered Suffield calmly.

'Tanderjee?' Gorgonio looked about him in perplexity. 'When can Tanderjee have say that? Tanderjee is gone!'

'But he will come again!' said Suffield. 'He is on the way back now—under the charge of my son and a detective.'

'Ah—that, then, is the reason,' exclaimed Gorgonio in a burst of enlightenment, 'why Mr Suffield, younger, go away on voyage! That is so!'

'Well, then, Mr Gorgonio, is Tanderjee a liar?—or, has he told the truth?'

'Tanderjee is liar, certainly! I will tell him he is liar, to the face—when he come!'

'Will you be prepared, when Tanderjee and the other man stand their trial, to clear your character, and give the details of the business for which Tanderjee paid you five hundred pounds?'

'I will, Mr Suffield!—Pon my sacred word of honour, I will!'

'Mr Gorgonio,' Suffield broke forth at length, 'I believe you to be a creature without honour or honesty!—to be a liar and a thief! It would do me good to be able to kick you into the street, and down the street, and into the Mersey—and so out of England, which creatures like you pollute wi' your presence! But I can't afford to do that! It is my deplorable lot at present to be tied to you—sink or swim! You would be glad if I sunk, I know; but—please Providence!—I don't mean to sink if I can make use of a reptile like you!—you've done badly for me in this cotton business, for your own ends, as I believe, though—God help me!—I can't prove it! But now I give you one chance to do better! There are three days left! If by the end of that time you haven't unloaded at a fair price, at least three-fourths of these responsibilities that still remain—I can't

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in reason ask you to do more than that in the time, but you know how to manage it'—

'I cannot!—no man can!—do that—I have say again and again, Mr Suffield, that you cannot unload much and not send down the price! And it is not possible to unload so much as, you say in three days at any price!'

'Then,' said Suffield, 'I shall have you arrested to stand your trial with the two others! If you accomplish what I ask, I shall say no more about this!—That is my last word!'

Suffield rose to go; and there was about Gorgonio, as he leaned over the table, and, with a snarl on his lip, glared at the big Englishman over his hunched shoulder, something of the ugly, obscene suggestion of the hyena at bay in his cage—some hint of the brute's evil temper, evil colour, and bristling back.

'I will try to accomplish what you say. It is difficulty; but I will do it!'

'Very well,' said Suffield, and went.

It was a desperate task that Gorgonio had promised, under compulsion, to perform—so desperate, that he would seem to have soon determined to abandon it. For the past fortnight he had really sold much less than he had reported to Suffield that he had sold, holding on with the gambler's hope of emerging on the last day of the month in possession of a considerable 'corner,' and so of forcing up prices and reaping his profit in spite of Suffield, even if he also made—as he would make—a profit for Suffield too. But when the sturdy Suffield presented his ultimatum, he had a horrible vision of final ruin, of trial in a terrible English court, where a man cannot bribe, of imprisonment in an English jail, whence it is difficult for a man to escape: then panic seized him—as in an unforeseen emergency it often does seize the craftiest, coolest man and the most savage and courageous brute—his nerve went, and he could think of nothing but flight.

In the afternoon of the day before the last, Suffield received a telegram signed 'Gorgonio,' and demanding an immediate interview. Suffield went; but when he arrived at Gorgonio's office he found no Gorgonio. He was received by the confidential clerk of Gorgonio, who said that his master had not been in town all day, nor had sent any explanatory word; that he (the clerk) had first telegraphed to his home in the suburbs, and had then gone to it: the house was shut up, and no news of Gorgonio was to be had! The only possible conclusion was that Gorgonio had fled!

'And,' said Suffield, 'if I have driven him out of Lancashire, and perhaps out of England, I shall reckon I ha' deserved well o' my country! But he must ha' gone because this business is in a bad way.—You're an Englishman, I hope, my lad?'

'I'm a Welshman, Mr Suffield,' said the young man with a smile.

'That's the same thing, my lad. I can trust tha. Tha knows all Gorgonio's business, I suppose? Well, then, show me all this business, and help me to decide what's to be done, and thou shannot lose by it.'

So they sat down together and went through the records of all the transactions; and it became evident to Suffield that comparatively little had

been sold—that more than one hundred thousand bales of contracts still remained.

'Why, Mr Suffield,' said the young man, 'you command the market yet! If you don't sell to-morrow—if you decide to hold the corner—prices will go up, and you will make a big haul!'

For one hesitating moment a vision danced before Suffield of a profit, instead of a loss—his apparently prosperous position maintained and established instead of shrunk into something like poverty; his daughter's distinguished marriage coming to fruition instead of being perhaps blighted; and his wife's innocent ambitions fulfilled instead of thrust into the limbo of first-loves, broken promises, and wasted efforts. The dream lasted but a moment: the next he had recovered himself.

'No,' said he, 'I'll sell out! I'd rather lose half my capital than ha' it said of me I ever made a penny by cornering! Sell out, my lad; sell carefully and craftily, so as not to scare the prices—but sell!'

He decided, after a little hesitation, that there would be no advantage in his remaining in Liverpool for the last day, especially since he desired that he should not be openly identified with this business; and he left the confidential young man with the assurance that he trusted him, and the encouragement to do his best.

The record of the last day is common property: was it not written and published in all the newspapers of the principality, under the heading 'Final Collapse of the Corner?' Thus the leading Liverpool daily wrote of it: 'On the last day the opening quotation of the market was 6'15, and for the first hour it ran down and up with remarkable uncertainty till 6'10 was reached. It then became evident that many "bulls" had been riding on the back of the leading operator, in the hope that he would help the market at the close. It was remarked as strange that the leading operator, Gorgonio, had not been seen; but it was rumoured that he had been quietly selling through another. The rumour spread, and then others scrambled to get out; and the prices fell down, down till 5'16 was reached as twelve o'clock struck.'

All the while Suffield was in telegraphic communication with Liverpool. Messages came regularly, marking, as it were, the quarters of each hour, and chronicling in the most unfeeling way the fluctuation, and then the steady declension, of the prices; and at the same time a clerk was kept passing to and fro between the office and the Exchange to check the telegrams by the prices registered there. Thus the quarters passed rapidly away, until half-past eleven. At that hour Suffield left the office and went on 'Change to 'see the last of it,' as he said to himself. He walked up the noble crowded hall, and as he passed to his usual station the hubbub was hushed, and all eyes were turned on him, to observe how he was taking it. The anxiety of the past month had wrought a greater change on him than he was aware: the careless, boyish ruddiness of his cheek was gone, and his hair had become white. He was there to show that the worst would not break him, that he still meant to hold his head up among his fellows, and that if there was any man on 'Change had aught against him, he was ready to listen to his

demand; and there was more than one creditor there who had meant to descend upon him, but who, seeing him, held his hand: they were proud now to have so much personal interest in him as to have him in their debt.

About ten minutes to noon his clerk brought him a telegram reporting that the price was 5·16, and that there still remained so many bales.

'Thank God!' said he. 'It might be worse!'

He lingered a few minutes longer, chatting to old acquaintances about other things than cotton; and then, when the hour struck which closed the business of the last day of the month on the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, he left his place and walked out. He had sacrificed the corner, but he had saved his business; and they all guessed it! The throng, as if involuntarily, made an avenue for him and took off their hats as he passed—an action to which he responded by taking off his own—and as he went out at the wide portal, a ringing cheer broke forth: 'Bravo, George!'

Suffield's heart was stirred within him, and reinvigorated. 'I'm turned fifty,' he said to himself, 'but I'll make my business again!—And now I'll sleep to-night!'

JOTTINGS ABOUT BANK-NOTES.

IN the British Museum there is a very old and very rare Chinese Bank-note. It was issued in the reign of Hung-woo, the founder of the Ning dynasty, who died in 1398. The face-value of the note is about a dollar; but it is one of the only issue of paper currency ever guaranteed by the Chinese Government. (Only another similar note is said to be in existence, being in possession of the Oriental Society of St Petersburg.) Its value to native bankers and note-collectors all over China is well known. The late Governor of Hong-kong, Sir John Pope Hennessy, bought the note about twelve years ago at an auction of the effects of a deceased Captain of one of the Chinese Customs cruisers, who had amassed a large collection of Chinese coins and notes, amongst which was this Ning bank-note. The Captain had acquired it for a very considerable sum from the successors of a continental banker, who had been a collector of rare Chinese coins and bank-notes. Sir John was in the habit of leaving it for safe-keeping in the custody of the authorities of the British Museum. The note is said to answer the description of the paper which, according to Marco Polo, the Great Khan, six hundred years ago, caused 'to pass for money all over his country. What they take is a fine white bast, or skin, which lies between the wood of the trees and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black.'

Bank-notes were issued in China as early as the ninth century, when the art of printing was unknown in Europe. These notes have generally been redeemed, because in China, when a bank fails, all the clerks and managers have their heads chopped off and thrown in a heap along with the books of the firm. And so it has happened in these good old barbarous times that for the past

five hundred years not a single Chinese bank has suspended payment. Now that China is coming under the sway of Western civilisation, we have no doubt it will have the same financial troubles as its more civilised banking brethren.

Since the English one pound bank-note was abolished in 1821, a preference has arisen in England for the sovereign, although the value of the latter is often diminished by what is known as 'sweating,' by attrition, and by the tear and wear of daily use; whereas the one pound note suffers rather by violence, and its face-value, with ordinary usage, remains unimpaired. We are informed that Americans when they come to England are astonished at our use of specie in ordinary business, and express their surprise that we have not adopted the fractional currency which they find so convenient. An eminent banker remarked the other day: 'Payment in coin is, after all, the method of barbarous people; and the time may come when a man getting out of a hansom at his door will pay the driver with a small note like a postage stamp.'

Bank-notes have an individuality which gold lacks, and being easily identified when 'ear-marked,' serve often as links in the chain of criminal detection. This was illustrated a few years ago during what was known as the 'turf frauds.' The complicity of several detectives in that elaborate conspiracy was discovered through a bank-note of a large denomination being presented for payment. Because of a theft of notes of a certain bank, all the notes of that denomination had been recalled from circulation, with the view of isolating the stolen notes that were outstanding. One day, a note of this description was cashed to a respectable person at a branch of the bank that had issued the notes. The banker at once informed a police official of the transaction, and said it had the name of a leading detective officer on the back of the note. The police official obtained the name, and wrote up forthwith to the metropolitan authorities on the subject. No reply came. At the end of some days, business called him to London, and he asked the chief of the department to which he had written if his letter had been received. 'What letter?' was asked. None had reached him, as it had been destroyed, to avert suspicion. A duplicate of it was at once wired for; a clue was established to the crime; and in the end a gigantic conspiracy of detectives and criminals was unravelled and exposed.

Bank-notes have curious histories attached to them in the way of human comedy, tragedy, and melodrama. A collector at Paris of such curiosities got hold, some years ago, of a five-pound Bank of England note which had somewhat of a tragic interest connected with it. Some sixty odd years ago the cashier of a Liverpool merchant had received in tender for a business payment a Bank of England note which he held up to the scrutiny of the light, so as to make sure of its genuineness. He observed some partially indistinct red marks of words traced out on the front of the note beside the lettering and on the margin. Curiosity tempted him to try to decipher the words so inscribed. With great difficulty, so faintly written were they and so much obliterated, the words were found to form the following sentence: 'If this note should fall into the hands of John Dean,

of Longhill, near Carlisle, he will learn hereby that his brother is languishing a prisoner in Algiers.' Mr Dean, on being shown the note, lost no time in asking the Government of the day to make intercession for his brother's freedom. It appeared that for eleven long years the latter had been a slave to the Dey of Algiers, and that his family and relatives believed him to be dead. With a piece of wood he had traced in his own blood on the bank-note the message which was to procure his release. The Government aided the efforts of his brother to set him free, this being accomplished on payment of a ransom to the Dey. Unfortunately, the captive did not long enjoy his liberty, his bodily sufferings while working as a slave in Algiers having undermined his constitution.

A famous historical inscription is that which Lord Cochrane, the great seaman, penned on a one thousand pound Bank of England note which he tendered in payment of what was afterwards pronounced to be an unjust fine. He had been debarred, during his period of imprisonment, of the common privilege of taking open-air exercise in the prison-yard, to the detriment of his health. There was no alternative left him but to pay. He thus expressed himself on the back of the note: 'Grated chamber, King's Bench Prison, July 3d 1815.—My health having suffered by long and close confinement, and my oppressors being resolved to deprive me of property or life, I submit to Robbery to protect myself from Murder, in the hope that I shall live to bring the delinquents to justice.'—(Signed) COCHRANE.

On the 6th of August of the same year, a collection was made in the parish church of Sorn, Ayrshire, in aid of the Waterloo Fund, when thirteen guineas were received. On one of the notes then put into the box the following lines were written:

FOR THE SUFFERERS AT WATERLOO.

Yes! there were deeds of wonder done
Round Britain's flag, to death unfurl'd:
The chaplet torn, the laurels won,
From bands who conquer'd half the world.

Another contribution to bank-note literature is found in Lockhart's 'Life of Scott.' Lady Louisa Stuart sent the great novelist a copy of some lines which were also written on a guinea note, then in possession of Lady Douglas. They were as follows:

Farewell! my note, and wheresoe'er ye wend,
Shun gaudy scenes, and be the poor man's friend.
You've left a poor man; go to one as poor,
And drive despair and hunger from his door.

Sir Walter expressed himself as very much pleased with these lines. Their sentiment seems to have struck a congenial chord in his benevolent breast, for he added: 'I think it will give the author great delight to know that his lines had attracted attention, and had sent the paper on which they were recorded, heaven-directed to the poor.'

Robert Burns knew the value of Scotch notes. In a letter to Mr M'Murdo, dated December 1793, he says: 'But for these dirty dog-eared little pages,' &c. This, unfortunately indicated what was the poet's normal pecuniary condition. When thinking to leave for Jamaica in 1780, he penned the following lines on the back of a

guinea note of the Bank of Scotland, which had then as now a branch in Dumfries:

Wae worth thy power, thou cursed leaf!
Fell source o' a' my woe and grief!

For lack o' thee I leave this much-loved shore,
Never perhaps to greet old Scotland more.

Happily for Scotch poesy, Burns did not go to the West Indies, but remained at home to pour out the treasures of his muse.

The 'leaf' on which Burns wrote this inscription was a one pound note of the Bank of Scotland issue of 1st March 1780, as Scott Douglas states in his edition of the poet's works. The lines are believed from their internal marks to have been written about August 1786, and they appear to have been first printed in the 'Morning Chronicle' of 27th May 1814, being subsequently transferred to the 'Scots Magazine' in the following September.

There is a great deal of writing on bank-notes which is mainly the product of the love of scribbling possessed by a good many persons. Much of it is ridiculous rhyme unworthy of repetition; but occasionally it is smart and apposite to the purpose of bank-notes. A sample or two of such writings may be given. On a pound note appeared the following:

Ye ugly, dirty, little scrap!
To look at, hardly worth a rap;
And yet I'll give my hearty vote
None can produce a sweeter note.

Another inscription is:

It's odd that any man should wish
A dirty, scabbit rag like this;
Yet mony a ane would cut a caper
To get a wheen sic bits o' paper.

This other quotation contains a blend of sentiment and pessimistic reflection:

Ye're my ain, ye're my ain,
And to keep ye, I'd be fain;
But the poor man can never keep his cash;
For 'twill gang, quickly gang,
Like an easy-goin' sang,
Let ye be however carefu' or rash.

Oh! money's no the thing for the poor man to keep;
Oh! little's the interest that the poor man's cash can reap;
It maun gang to fill the coffers o' the rich and the great;
And I, like a' the rest, must quietly bow to fate.

When bank-notes are presented for payment in a defective condition, from whatever cause, it is the practice of some banks to pay according to the proportion of the note which is presented. Thus, if four-fifths of a one-pound note were tendered to a bank, it would pay sixteen shillings to the owner; and if two-thirds of a five-pound note were offered, the bank would give the owner three pounds six shillings and eightpence only. Other banks are in the habit of paying the amount claimed, or nothing at all. In every case, an affidavit must be subscribed before a justice of the peace in support of each claim, which must contain a narrative of the circumstances attending the partial or, as sometimes happens, the complete destruction of the note. In the latter case, the bank when it makes payment always insists on a guarantee.

As may be supposed, the greatest amount of

claims in connection with the destruction of notes arises in Scotland after the New-year's holidays and convivial seasons generally. Pipe-lighting is the commonest form of destruction, notes especially for one pound being stowed away in any pocket handy and used as if they were mere match-paper. These notes get torn in domestic brawls, are snatched at by thieves, and occasionally thrown into the fire, to be hurriedly extricated from the flames. Dogs, cattle, sheep, and cats chew them. Landladies have been known to wash their lodger's garments containing notes, reducing them in the process to a sad state of pulp. Hens have pecked at them, pigs have gulped them, mice have nibbled them, and even jackdaws have stolen them to coat their nests. Notes indeed are liable to many vicissitudes, being wholly at the mercy of their owners. In the north of Scotland, most claims arise from fishermen, whose bank-notes suffer from the varied incidents which take place in the pursuit of so perilous a calling.

Bank-notes have not now so long an existence as formerly. When Bank of England notes re-enter the portals of the Bank of England, they never return into circulation, it not being the practice of the Bank of England to issue them a second time. If notes are stopped payment at the Bank of England, it must be done under a guarantee, which usually takes the form of an assignment of Government stock in security to the Bank of England, and is of the value of the notes stopped. There is a story which goes so far back as the year 1740, and it is to the effect that a director of the Bank of England of that day lost a bank-note for thirty thousand pounds. It was said to have been carried by a draught of air up the chimney, where it lodged in an out-of-the-way crevice. Its fate was not known at the time to the director, who supposed it destroyed, for he made a successful claim on the Bank for the amount. Years afterwards, when the building was being dismantled, the masons engaged in taking to pieces the chimney discovered the note in question. The Bank had to pay the value of the note again on its presentation by the heirs of the deceased director, for the latter had come under no obligation to indemnify the bank in the event of the missing bank-note making its appearance.

The Scotch bank-notes in circulation are not nearly so dirty as they used to be. The great majority of the notes have an existence of from one to two years, and many of them much less. They are withdrawn from circulation whenever their external appearance is unsatisfactory, and are consigned to the flames, the close retort being most commonly used in their destruction. Several banks have big occasional burnings; while others have numerous burnings for smaller amounts.

The life of a Bank of France note is about two years, it being issued so long as it is usable. In the matter of destroying their notes set apart for cancellation, a new departure has been made by the Bank of France. The former practice was to incarcerate their doomed notes for three years in a large oak chest before submitting them to conflagration. Thereupon, a huge fire was set aflame in an open court; the notes were thrown into a sort of revolving wire-cage, which was kept rotating over the fire; and the minute

particles of note-ash escaped into the air through the meshes of the cage and darkened the atmosphere all around. The burnings took place daily, and were of a certain amount. Now, the practice is to have about twenty cancellations of notes each year, at uncertain times, and as the needs of the service determine. A hole is punched in each of the notes, which are also stamped as follows: 'Cancelled the _____ by the branch at _____, or the Head Office of the Bank of France.' The notes are then marked off in the registers of Bank Notes Issued, according to their numbers and descriptions. A Committee of the Bank directors are present at their destruction. The cancelled notes are no longer burned, but are now reduced into pulp by means of chemical agents. Each destruction of notes averages about six hundred thousand of all kinds; and about twelve million notes are annually destroyed. The Bank of France has been little troubled of late with forgeries. The greatest forger it ever had was deported to Cayenne, and in attempting to escape, got stuck in a swamp, and was eaten to death by crabs.

Like the Bank of France, the Imperial Bank of Germany has no set time for destroying its notes. It only does so when a stock of cancelled notes has accumulated in its hands. These notes have a hole punched out of them. The agency employed in their destruction is fire, a close furnace being used, so that the possibility of any particles of burnt notes making their escape therefrom may be put beyond a doubt. The notes are placed in this furnace beside some lighted straw, which sets the notes aflame. No fuel, whether of coal or wood, is used, the notes, fanned by a current of air, maintaining their own fire, and burning until they are wholly consumed. The economy of this arrangement may be noted. The Imperial Bank of Germany has burned 10,355,364 notes within the last ten years, and of the following denominations: 686,460 notes of one thousand marks (£50); 517,030 notes of five hundred marks (£25); and 9,151,874 notes of one hundred marks (£5).

With the Bank of England, the destruction of its notes takes place about once a week and at seven P.M. It used to be done in the daytime, but made such a smell that the neighbouring stockbrokers petitioned the Governors to do it in the evening. The notes are previously cancelled by punching a hole through the amount (in figures) and tearing off the signature of the chief cashier. The notes are burned in a closed furnace, and the only agency employed is shavings and bundles of wood. They used to be burnt in a cage, the result of which was that once a week the City was darkened with burnt fragments of notes. For future purposes of reference, the notes are left for five years before being burned.

The number of notes coming in to the Bank of England every day is about fifty thousand; and three hundred and fifty thousand are destroyed every week, or something like eighteen millions every year.

The stock of paid notes for five years is about 77,745,000 in number, and they fill 13,400 boxes, which, if placed side by side, would reach two and one-third miles. If the notes were placed in a pile, they would reach to a height of five and two-third miles; or if joined end to end,

would form a ribbon 12,455 miles long. Their superficial extent is rather less than that of Hyde Park; their original value was over £1,750,626,600; and their weight over ninety and two-third tons.

THE CAMERA-OBSCURA.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

I LEFT the little wooden house wondering what was best to be done. Should I go straight to Helston or Falmouth for help, and bring a strong body of men direct to the underground cave? Or should I arrange matters so that the Nanjulians might be caught in the midst of their spoil? The latter course seemed most desirable to me. I remembered the sneers and sly laughter which had so often greeted my approach when they thought I had been engaged in watching their movements. I had gone home with tingling ears many a time when they had laughed at me in this way, and had comforted myself at such times by thinking that I should ultimately have the laugh at them. That time was come at last. Was it likely I would let the opportunity slip?

I made a hasty adieu to Bertha and her father, and went along the cliffs in the direction of Porthlock. My first intention was to proceed to Falmouth and get sufficient help for that night's work; but, as I thought the matter over, I decided not to do anything hasty. I wanted to win as much glory and credit by the affair as I possibly could, and it seemed to me that I had better exercise some ingenuity. For example, I was not yet certain that I had hit upon the right track. The cavern under the rock might not conceal the contraband goods of the Nanjulian tribe. To be sure I had no doubt about it in my own mind; but it would be as well to make the certainty absolute. If only I could get inside that cave and see for myself what its contents were, my doubts would be set at rest. But how to do it?

I went along the cliffs until I was exactly above the Six Sisters. There was not a soul in sight just there. Far away, nearly at Porthlock, I saw a black speck going along the level sands, which I believed to be the Nanjulian who had spread the sand over the trap-door after his brothers had gone into the cave. That seemed to indicate a long stay in the cavern. It would perhaps be advisable for me to hide myself, and watch for some one coming to release the men. Sooner or later, they would have to come out. When they were once away, I might find a chance of investigating their hiding-place.

I always carried food in my pocket, never knowing how long I might be kept out of the reach of my usual meals. I was therefore prepared to spend a long day watching the rock below. I went cautiously down the face of the cliff, and found a hiding-place where it was impossible for any one to see me, either from the cliffs above or from the sands beneath. Into this I crept, and fortified my mind for a long vigil by thinking what a fine thing this capture would turn out for me.

The day passed on slowly, more slowly, I think, than any day I ever remember. Morning

went, afternoon passed, and the winter evening soon came. I began to feel cold and numbed, though I had my thickest clothing on. I could now only just see the rock. The tide was nearly at its height, and four of the Six Sisters were almost submerged. Then, with an anathema on my own stupidity, I saw that it was impossible for any one to reach the fifth and sixth rocks by way of the shore. The tide made that impracticable. The men in the cave, then, would have to remain there until low tide, unless they had some means of letting themselves out. I hardly saw how they could do that, however. It did not seem possible for them to raise the trap-door from below. I left my hiding-place and went up the cliffs again. The moon had come out, and as the night was sharp and clear, there was a good view of any object on the headlands. At a little distance stood old Mother Trethewy's cottage, a solitary ramshackle old hut, in which no one but herself would have lived. She, however, being half-witch, half-ghoul, liked it probably from kindred feeling for aught that was weird and eerie.

There was a bright light in Mother Trethewy's window, which suggested heat, and consequent warmth. I thought it would do me no harm to spend a few minutes before the old woman's fire, and I went up to the door and knocked. She came to answer the summons with alacrity, and I fancied that she was rather disappointed on seeing my face.

'Let me come in and warm myself a moment, Mother,' I said, stepping across the threshold. 'It's terribly cold to-night on the headlands.' 'You're welcome,' she croaked, eyeing me, however, with anything but welcoming glances. —'Aw, 'tis terrible weather for a poor old woman like me.'

'Well, you've got a grand fire anyway, Mother.'

'It be driftwood, driftwood, just driftwood. A weary climb I do have many a day in summer to bring un up from the beach below.'

I sat down on a stool in front of the fire and spread out my hands to the blaze. The ancient crone sat down in her chair by the hearthstone and watched me. I tried to make her talk; but she was evidently not inclined to hold conversation with me. She kept glancing at me out of her wicked old eyes, as if I disturbed her.

'You've a nice quiet place here, Mother,' I said. 'No disturbing voices or anything to bother you. You'—

Just then a strange sound seemed to come from beneath my very feet. It was like somebody striking two or three blows with a heavy hammer under the floor of the cottage. I looked at the old woman in astonishment. She was obviously very ill at ease.

'What's that?' I said. 'I heard a sound.'

'A deal o' quare sounds there is here,' she croaked. 'They do say the place be haunted; but ne'er a sperrit have I seen. What wi' sounds and cockroaches, I do be pestered a'most to death. They cockroaches—there, that's the sixth I ha' killed to-night.'

She caught up a heavy poker and brought the point down with considerable force on a black speck on the hearthstone which might have been either a cockroach or a cinder. She was evidently

not satisfied with one blow, for she delivered one, two, three on the unfortunate object of her resentment, each resounding sharply from the hard stone. This done, she poked the ashes over the crushed speck.

'Well, I'm pretty warm now, Mother Trethewy,' I said; and bidding her good-night, left the cottage and went away along the cliff. Turning round, I saw her watching me from the doorway. I kept on my path.

But I did not intend to go far. Two matters had set me thinking. What did that dull knocking under my feet mean, and why did Mother Trethewy answer it as she did with three hard taps of her poker? Did it not mean that there was some one under the cottage who wanted to get out, and that Mother Trethewy had signalled to him, or them, that the coast was not clear? A third matter seemed to hold some relation to the other two. In one corner of the cottage stood a strong crowbar. What did an old woman like that want with a crowbar? It might have been left there by her dead husband—true! but it had been recently and constantly used, for the point was bright.

I went along the cliffs until a turn hid me from the cottage, and then I doubled, and went back to a point from which I commanded Mother Trethewy's door. I waited there, secured from observation, for nearly half an hour. At last the door opened and four men came out. They passed close by me, going towards Porthlock, and I recognised them as Matthew, Simon, Cleophas, and Pharaoh Nanjulian.

So at last, thanks to chance, I had come across the Nanjulians' secret. Underneath my feet lay their cave, with its sea-entrance at the Six Sisters, and its land exit in Mother Trethewy's cottage. I went homewards in good spirits. I would find my way into that cave and examine its contents for myself. That done, a raid should be made on the whole gang.

I occupied myself for hours that night in wondering how I could get into the cave. If I had not been so young and hasty, I should have sought superior counsel. As it was, I wanted to keep the matter all to myself, so that I might have all the glory and credit. My feeling was that I would not share the honour with a second party. It did not strike me that two heads are always better than one.

How to get into the cave unaided?—that was the question. I went to sleep thinking about it, and fell to thinking again as soon as I woke in the morning. Standing on the quay-side during the forenoon, I saw the Nanjulians, one and all, man their boats and go out to sea with several other Porthlock craft in company. I knew then that they would be away all day, and made up my mind to enter the cave in their absence.

At last a thought struck me: I must trick old Mother Trethewy. I must get her out of her cottage for some hours, and make use of the entrance, which I had no doubt I should find in the floor. A capital ruse soon occurred to me. The old woman sometimes went out nursing or laying-out dead bodies. I would send her a message telling her to go over to St Mirions, a village three miles inland, there to lay-out a fictitious person. She would go quickly enough, I knew, if there was promise of money.

There was a lad in Porthlock who had taken a great fancy to me, a lad who was somewhat of a harum-scarum type, and never up to anything but lurking and loafing round the quay-pool. I resolved to press young Nick Perran into my service. It was rather a scurvy trick to play on the old woman, but in dealing with rogues it is sometimes unavoidable to destroy them with their own weapons.

I found Nick Perran readily enough, and was soon walking with him in the direction of Mother Trethewy's cottage. He was delighted at the prospect of doing anything for me, and I had soon instructed him in his part. He was to knock at the door and tell Mrs Trethewy that she was wanted at the 'King George' inn at St Mirions to lay-out the body of a traveller who had died there suddenly. He was to give her five shillings, and say that fifteen more would be paid her when the work was done. When he had delivered his message, he was to go straight home to Porthlock.

I hid myself behind a conveniently placed rock while Nick advanced to Mother Trethewy's door. She soon answered Nick's summons, received message and money, and, judging from her nods and motions, promised him to go at once. The lad set off again in the direction of Porthlock; and within ten minutes more the old woman came out of her cottage carrying her basket. She locked the door behind her and set off over the headlands towards St Mirions.

I watched Mother Trethewy safely away. When she was a small speck in the distance, I went round to the rear of her cottage and looked about me for some easy entrance. There was a small window there, which I easily unfastened. In another minute I was inside the little living-room, looking round for a likely spot on the floor. I went into a tiny shed opening out of the house and found there a collection of ropes and pulleys. These were doubtless used for hauling goods out of the cave below. Two or three lanterns hung on the wall near, and these I found on inspection to be newly trimmed. I had brought one of my own with me, however, and with it a revolver, which I thought might prove equally useful.

A careful inspection of the floor showed me a mark on the stones close to the earth where a crowbar had been used. Mother Trethewy's crowbar still stood in its corner. I laid hold of it and inserted the point at the spot indicated. The flag came up easily enough, revealing a dark cavern underneath. Turning the light of my lantern over this, I saw a flight of steps, apparently cut out of the rock, leading downwards. The air came up through the cavity, cold and damp.

I was fairly in for it now, and I dropped through the hatchway and went cautiously down the steps. The lantern, strapped to my waist, threw its dim light on shiny, damp walls, through which the brine was oozing. I counted the steps until they numbered fifty-two. Then came a passage, the floor of which sloped away at a rather quick rate. This, too, had been excavated through a soft bed of rock. It continued for nearly twenty yards, and then opened into a cave which I at once saw to be of natural formation. Standing in the middle of this, I tried in

vain to get an idea of its height. It towered above my head so much that I could not see the roof. The floor at my feet, however, seemed trodden into a path, and following this, I came to another passage, some fifteen yards in length, which finally emerged in a second cave, evidently of greater extent than the first. As I stepped into this, the faint booming of the sea met my ears. It was into this cave, then, that the entrance from the beach must lead.

I freshened the wick of my lantern and began to examine the cave carefully. I had been right in my conjecture—the Nanjulians' stores were accumulated here. The nooks and crannies were packed with them. Casks, bales, tubs, boxes, were piled one on another, carefully assorted and arranged. One corner sent forth a smell of spirits, another of tobacco. There must have been many a boat-load in that cave. Here and there I found goods literally rotting with old age and mould. Bales of foreign goods, silks, cloths, the contents green with mould, lay thrown about in prodigal confusion. I noticed, however, that in the dryer part of the cave, where the spirits and tobacco were stowed, there had been good care taken to preserve the stock.

Round and round and in and about that cave I went for nearly an hour examining and calculating. There would be a rich haul for us when we made the seizure. I should certainly get promoted and rewarded too. I began to build castles in the air. I would marry Bertha Penraddock, and live in a little house which I had taken a great fancy for. We—

'Stand!' cried a voice, so close to me that I felt the man's hot breath on my cheek. I paused on the instant, and looking through the gloom, saw right before me the evil face of Pharaoh Nanjulian. He stood immediately opposite me, not two yards away, his right hand raised, and pointing a revolver full at my head. There was murder in his eyes; and a great wave came up in my heart as I realised how entirely I was at his mercy.

'If so be as you move a finger, co'sguard, I fire,' said Pharaoh Nanjulian. 'Move you back agin that wall.'

I obeyed, hardly knowing what I did. He followed me, keeping the pistol upon me, until he could touch me. 'Give me the lantern.' He took it out of my hand, and set it on the floor at his side, never turning eye or hand as he did so. The barrel of the pistol looked straight into my face, and the hand that held it never trembled or flinched.

'Now,' said Pharaoh, 'I'll make so bold as to tell 'ee, Master Walsh, what I think. You're acquainted with our little hiding-place, it seems. But wun't go out of un; no, not unless I like. What say 'ee to a bargain, co'sguard? Do you promise faithful to gi' up courtin' my girl and not to say nothing about the cave, and you shall have your life? Don't waste no time in thinking 'bout it, co'sguard. If you say "No," then I shoots, and your brains goes spatter agin the rock.'

Staring straight beyond him, my eyes saw a strange sight. A face, white, startled, full of excitement, came out of the gloom—the face of the boy, Nick Perran. He stole softly up behind Pharaoh Nanjulian, his naked feet making no

sound on the dry sand. His eyes stared straight at Pharaoh's head; his hands clutched Mother Trethewy's crowbar. He swung it up noiselessly for the blow—one, two, three—

'Don't waste no time, co'sguard,' said Pharaoh.

Crash! Bang! The great crowbar came down, and at the same instant the pistol exploded with a voice that woke a thousand horrible echoes. The bullet whizzed past my ear and flattened itself against the rock behind.

'Ah! ah! ah!' screamed Nick Perran, almost frantic in his excitement. 'Quick, Master Walsh, and bind him up. Quick, before he comes to his senses.'

But there was small fear of Pharaoh Nanjulian coming to his senses just then. The crowbar had knocked all his wits out of him. Nevertheless, we secured his hands and feet, and having made his head comfortable, hastened out of the cave as fast as possible. On the way to Porthlock, Nick told me how he chanced to come up at the nick of time. Going along the headlands close to the town, he met Pharaoh, and seeing that he was making for the cottage, followed him at a safe distance. Looking in at the window, he saw Pharaoh descend into the cave. Then Nick saw possible danger for me, and made after the smuggler.

Well, I got a big force together that day and made a seizure, Pharaoh Nanjulian included. The other Nanjulians got wind of what had happened as they came in at night, and made off, nor were they seen at Porthlock again for many a day. I got my promotion, and married Bertha; and we both attributed our great happiness, first, to the camera-obscura, from which I got the important clue; and second, to Nick Perran, who saved my life.

SENTRY-GO!

THE foregoing is the cry that authoritatively rings out every two hours from the sentry's post on all military guards, informing the occupants of the guardroom and vicinity in general, and the next man for sentry in particular, that the hour has arrived for relieving sentries.

Military guards are of twenty-four hours' duration, the men mounting guard at ten A.M., and remaining on till relieved at the same hour on the next day. Guards relieve each other thus: on the approach of the new guard, the sentry outside the guardroom door calls, 'Guard, turn out!' at which summons the old guard hurry out and fall in, with shouldered arms. The new guard is formed up facing them, and compliments are exchanged by the guards presenting arms to each other. The new guard is then numbered and told off by its commander, three men being allowed for each post of sentry duty, and numbered one, two, and three, in which order they are taken for duty. This allows each man four hours between every two hours on sentry.

When all the sentries are changed, and the guard premises duly handed over to the new commander, the old guard march away to their quarters, receiving the parting compliment of a 'present' from their comrades in arms; and the latter are then dismissed to the guardroom. When off sentry, the men sit about in the guard-

house—or outside, if the weather be fine—smoking, reading, or spinning yarns to each other.

During the time they are on duty, guards are visited by officers of different standing, termed 'Grand rounds' and 'Visiting rounds.' The latter is a duty performed by a regimental officer, whose instructions are, to visit the barrack guard once by day and once by night. At his approach, the sentry turns the guard out, and the men stand with shouldered arms for inspection, the commander of the guard reporting if correct or otherwise, after which the men are dismissed. The officer also examines the sentries, to see if they are well informed as to the orders of their posts.

'Grand rounds' is a duty performed by field-officers, taken in turn from the majors and lieutenant-colonels of the garrison. A little more ceremony appertains to these visits, the guard presenting arms on the approach of the officer. At night, there is usually a countersign, which has to be correctly given before the officer is permitted to approach the guard; and ludicrous scenes occur sometimes in consequence of the visiting officer having allowed the countersign to slip his memory.

On some guards—at large convict establishments, for example—the orders for sentries in reference to the countersign are very strict. They are to allow no one to come within a certain distance, unless the countersign is given up; and if it cannot be elicited who the wanderer may be, the guard is to be at once alarmed. On these duties, each sentry is furnished with ball-ammunition, in case of emergency. There is a chain of sentries around such buildings as convict prisons, magazines, &c., and during the night the word is passed from one to the other, in a loud voice, 'Twelve o'clock, and all's well;' and so on at the expiration of every hour.

All sentries challenge persons approaching their posts after ten p.m., the ordinary form, when there is no countersign, being, 'Halt! who comes there?' to which the individual challenged replies, or should reply, 'Friend.' The sentry then says, 'Pass, friend;' and when he sees that everything is correct, 'All's well.'

Certain compliments have to be paid by guards and sentries, in accordance with regulation. When any officer below the rank of major—or the corresponding rank in the navy—passes his post, the sentry stands at 'attention,' with shouldered arms; to majors and officers of higher rank, he will present arms. To the officer commanding a regiment or detachment, the barrack guard is turned out once a day, and all guards turn out to general officers in uniform. On the approach of an armed party, the sentry turns out the guard, who stand at the 'present' if it is a battalion of infantry or similar body of troops; with shouldered arms to companies and other small parties.

To all members of the royal family, arms are presented, much amusement and wonder often being caused to the uninitiated by the sight of a sentry performing some mystic evolution of his rifle to a child in a perambulator or go-cart.

Officers of any recognised foreign service are paid the compliments prescribed for those of the British services. No compliments are paid after 'retreat' has sounded—at sunset—except that the guard turns out to armed parties and to visiting officers.

Prisoners are confined in guardrooms when drunk or riotous, awaiting trial, &c., the commander of the guard and the sentry on the guardroom door being responsible for their safe custody. In the event of a prisoner making his escape, the non-commissioned officer and men responsible are tried by court-martial, and severely punished for the neglect of duty.

In addition to the greatcoat and cape which are issued to every soldier, and invariably taken on guard, 'watchcoats' are provided for the use of sentries during the cold season. The sentry-box is for the shelter of the sentry during inclement weather, but often proves a poor protection in a violent storm, especially if it be beating in the direction of the opening. In thunder-storms, sentries may remove their bayonets, or other parts of their arms and equipment likely to attract the lightning.

To sleep on his post is a serious offence for a sentry, and when men are detected in this irregularity, they are usually severely punished.

Guard-mounting parade is the strictest inspection parade of the day. The dress worn is generally 'marching-order;' and the guards are inspected by the adjutant and sergeant-major, who minutely examine every detail of the clothing and equipment of the men going on guard.

Guard-duty is done in turn, by a roster—that is, a military register—throughout each regiment, and, to encourage cleanliness, it is customary in many corps to detail one man more than is required. When the inspection is taking place, the adjutant notices the man whose general turn-out is the cleanest, and this man does not go on guard, but returns to his quarters, gets rid of his rifle and equipment, and is employed at one of the regimental offices as an orderly, till guard-mounting hour on the following day. Instead of patrolling a sentry's post, he gets his 'night-in-bed,' and a guard is marked to him as though he had actually performed it. Tommy Atkins terms this 'getting the stick,' as the orderlies are equipped with a stick or cane in place of a rifle.

On the day of dismounting guard, the men perform no further parade or duty, finding for a few hours plenty of occupation in thoroughly cleaning straps and accoutrements, especially if they have been favoured with wet weather.

P E A C E.

THE wandering winds are silent on the sea,
That sleeps in sunlight, smiling in its sleep:
No wavelet stirs the bosom of the Deep:
No cloudlet mars the blue immensity;
And yet anon the storm will hither haste,
And lash to wrath with mighty arm the main,
And dash the azure black with wintry rain,
And wildly rave across the watery waste.
There is no staying peace in outward things,
Yet through them ever moves the moulding Will,
From silence into silence touching still
The lyre of Nature with its twanging strings.
Thou art a part of the eternal whole;
Live thou true life in restfulness of soul.

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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IN WILD SPAIN.

THE epithet in the above title bears no reflection upon human nature in the Iberian Peninsula, but refers solely to the uncultivated as distinct from the cultivated portions of its territory—what Shakespeare calls the ‘high wild hills and rough uneven ways.’ The joint authors of the book which suggests this paper (*Wild Spain*, by Messrs Chapman and Buck. London: Gurney and Jackson) have for more than twenty years undertaken numerous sporting expeditions into various parts of Spain—chiefly in Andalucia. They are naturalists as well as sportsmen; and the long experience they have had of España Agreste gives that touch of verisimilitude to their word-pictures which nothing but long and skilful personal observation can secure.

It is not every one who could afford to follow after wild sport in Spain, as Messrs Chapman and Buck have done. It requires so much that only a comparatively few people have; especially a long purse, and almost unlimited leisure. To visit Andalucia, for instance, for purposes of sport, horses are required, as in the wild land of that district there are no roads, no rails, no bridges, and riding is the sportsman's only available means of locomotion. The occasional village inn is his only place of shelter, and these are sometimes few and far between. A ride through the wilder regions, we are told, and especially among the sierras, involves an amount of forethought and provision that are well-nigh incredible. ‘In the open country no one lives, and nothing can be obtained; or, at least, it is unsafe to rely on it for anything. Thus one is obliged to carry from the town all the necessaries of life. . . . First there is provend for the beasts; heavy sacks of grain, straw, &c., necessitating mules to carry them, and this, in turn, nearly doubling the quantity. Thus an expedition of a fortnight or so signifies nothing less than the transport of huge mule-loads of impedimenta, the most bulky of which are for the use of the beasts themselves; though the indispensables for

the riders are considerable—bread, meat, eggs and oranges, skins of wine, and, in most cases, tents with all the paraphernalia of camp-outfit, cooking apparatus, and the rest.’

All this of course means the employment of a small army of attendants, mule-drivers, and the like. And even then, progress is sometimes slow and not very certain; the pocket compass, or instinct, or a doubtful guide, being in general the only means of finding one's way to where sport is expected. And seldom, moreover, does a ride through the wilder portions of Spain pass without incident. Thus, once our two sportsmen were carried off as prisoners by the Civil Guard, and taken forty miles for the purpose of identification. Sometimes, also, they have to do with the fraternity who live by robbery and spoliation. At another time it may be a wild bull that disputes the way, when a well-directed bullet or two generally ends the strife; or, as a warning of what may be in store for himself, the sportsman may come upon the body of a murdered man. ‘On all the by-ways of Spain, and along the bridle-paths of the sierras, one sees little memorial tablets or rude wooden crosses, bearing silent witness to such deeds of violence.’ All this, however, is not without its humorous side, for our two sportsmen and their long cavalcade were occasionally themselves taken to be a gang of brigands, their sudden ‘appearance striking dire dismay in the breasts of peaceful peasants and muleteers; and on two occasions, again, on entering villages, they were hailed as a strolling company of acrobats. “Here come the mountebanks!” sung out the ragged urchins of the plaza, as our cavalcade with its tent-poles, camp-gear, and, to them, foreign-looking baggage, filed up the narrow street.’

But towns and even villages are seldom met with in the sierras, and scattered cottages hardly ever. The herdsmen and other peasantry gather together, as a rule, into villages, as it would not be regarded safe to have their houses in lonely and distant places, as our shepherds have in this country. Many of the poorer classes, however,

live by charcoal burning, and the blue smoke curling upwards is always to the traveller a sure landmark of human existence. These have perforce to live in the woods; as also do those who are in charge of the herds of cattle which are pastured in the more distant forests; their poor huts consisting of walls of undressed stones, thatched with reeds. 'By day and night the herdsman guards his cattle or goats, often having to sleep on the hill, or under the scant shelter of a lentisco, for which he receives about eightpence a day, with an allowance of bread, oil, salt, and vinegar. His wife and children of course share his lonely lot, their only touch with the outer world being a chance visit, once or twice a year, to their native village.'

To sportsmen or naturalists out all day among the dry scrubby wastes of the sierras, one pleasant hour to them is their arrival in the evening at some *posada*, or village inn, where, after supper, comes the song and the dance, and all the gaiety so characteristic of the Spanish peasant. Here is a pretty little episode. Our two sportsmen had been living above the snow-line of the mountains, for ten days, hunting the ibex, and had returned at length to the comparative comforts of the *posada*. Supper over: 'Now all we need is a song from the Murillo-faced little girl who is fanning the charcoal embers. "Sing us a couplet, Dolores, to welcome us back from the snows of Alpujarras!"

'*Dolores*: With the greatest pleasure, Caballero, if José will play the guitar. No one plays like José, but he is tired, having travelled all day with his mules from Lanjaron.

'*José*: No, señor, not tired, but I have no soul to-night to play. This morning they asked me to bring medicine from the town for Carmen; but when I reached the house she was dead. I find myself very sad.

'*Dolores*: But as she already has her palm and her crown?

'*José*: That is true! Bring the guitar, and I will see if it will quit me of this melancholy.'

We pass over boar-hunting and trouting, as not conveying much that is either striking or new; as also the shooting of the Great Bustard, by driving or stalking. But the manner in which, in winter, the peasantry capture the Great Bustard for food, though not sportsman-like, is picturesque. Two men are required, one of whom carries a gun, the other a *cencerro*, or cattle-bell, and a dark-lantern. 'The pack of bustards will be carefully watched during the afternoon, and not lost sight of when night comes until their sleeping-quarters are ascertained. When quite dark, the tinkling of the *cencerro* will be heard, and a ray of light will surround the devoted bustards, charming or frightening them—whichever it may be—into still-life. 'As the familiar sound of the cattle-bell becomes louder and nearer, the ray of light brighter and brighter, and the surrounding darkness more intense, the bustards are too charmed, or too dazed, to fly. Then comes the report, and a charge of heavy shot works havoc among them. As bands of bustards are numerous, this poaching plan might be carried out night after night; but, luckily, the bustards will not stand the same experience twice. On a second attempt being made, they are off as soon as they see the light approaching.'

These bustards are very large and heavy birds, three of them, which on one occasion fell to the gun of one of our sportsmen, weighing together ninety-three pounds.

To naturalists, even more than to sportsmen, the chapters descriptive of the animal life of the marisma, and of the wonderful swamps which compose that immense marshland, will appeal strongly. The marisma is the name given to the great level delta of the Guadalquivir, covering some hundreds of square miles. This huge triangular area is described as, in fact, a wilderness, the greater part of which in winter is a dismal waste of waters. 'For league after league, as one advances into that forbidding desolation, the eye rests on nothing but water—tawny waters meeting the sky all round the horizon.' The marisma is intersected by the Guadalquivir and its various branches and channels. In winter these marshy plains are the haunts of abundant wild-fowl—ducks, geese, and water-birds of various kinds; but it is the spring months that are of most interest to the naturalist. 'Imagination can hardly picture, nor Nature provide, a region more congenial to the tastes of wild aquatic birds than these huge savannahs, cane-brake and stagnant waters, and their profusion of plant and insect-life. Here, in spring, is an ornithological Eden.'

'One cannot go far into the marisma without seeing that extraordinary fowl the Flamingo, certainly the most characteristic denizen of the wilderness. In herds of three to five hundred, several of which herds are often in sight at once, they stand like regiments, feeding in the open water, all heads under, greedily tearing up the grasses and water-plants that grow beneath the surface. On approaching them, which can only be done with extreme caution, their silence is first broken by the sentries, which commence walking away with low croaks; then the whole five hundred necks rise at once to full stretch, every bird gagging his loudest as they walk obliquely away, looking back over their shoulders as though to take stock of the extent of the danger. Shoving the punt a few yards forward, up they all rise, and a more beautiful sight cannot be imagined than the simultaneous spreading of their thousand crimson wings, flashing against the sky like a gleam of rosy light. Then one descends to the practical, and a volley of slugs cuts a line through their phalanx.' Some of these beautiful birds, with their very long legs and long necks, stand as high as six and a half and seven feet.

Equally graphic and interesting are the descriptions we have of other birds that haunt the marisma, the lake and lagoon—Avocets and Stilts, Storks and Herons, Egrets and Spoonbills, and scores of others—but these we must pass over. One very remarkable fact, however, and one we should think very little known, is, that there are actually a herd of wild Camels existing in the marisma. The statement that there are wild camels in Europe does at first hearing sound strange; but such is the fact, and this is how it came about, as is explained in a book published at Seville in 1869:

About the year 1830, a number of camels were brought to the south of Spain from the Canary Islands, and in a few years increased to a herd

of about eighty. In 1833 they were used as beasts of burden and transport in the province of Cadiz, employed in the carriage of materials used in making the high-road from Port St Mary to San Lucar de Barrameda, and also in conveyances to Arcos, Jerez, Chichlana, and other towns. But horses were frightened at the strange animals, and could on no account be got to work with them, or even live in the same yard with them; and so the camels fell into disuse as beasts of burden and carriage. They were then tried in agricultural work, but with no better success. The result, in short, was that they were allowed to occupy the marisma, and have wandered there for nearly a quarter of a century. It is difficult, however, getting nearer to them on these level marshes than within a mile or so, as they are extremely wild and shy, and fly off at the first suspicion of the approach of a human being.

When first Mr Chapman, about nine years ago, announced through the press his having seen these wild camels, it was in some quarters promptly questioned. But time has proved the fact. And our two sportsmen have fallen in with them on several subsequent occasions. On January 6th, 1888, they descried a herd of nineteen, of various sizes, all dreamily ruminating, knee-deep in the marisma, each form reflected in the still water beneath. The herd remained for half an hour in sight, and by the help of field-glasses were brought very close and well seen. 'Presently they moved on to a rushy islet, some three miles from shore; hard by stood a rosy troop of flamingoes, and the intervening waters were dotted with numberless flocks of ducks and geese. It was a unique spectacle, one that could hardly be matched outside this out-of-the-world corner of Europe.'

With regard to another animal closely associated with Spain—namely, the Bull—we have here also some characteristically fresh information. Most people in this country no doubt will fancy that any sort of bull is good enough to put in the arena, to be teased into rage, and then killed. This, however, is not so. The bulls used for fighting purposes are a specially selected and specially cared-for class. They are all pedigreed. Andalusia is especially the district of the bull. Here, at the age of one year, the young bulls are separated from the heifers, branded with the owner's mark, and turned out loose on the plains to graze with others of their own age and sex. When a year older, the young bulls are gathered together, in order that their mettle and fighting qualities may be tested. One of them is separated from the herd, and chased by a man on horseback, who, by the skillful use of a blunted lance, overthrows the escaping bull, whereupon another rider comes in front of the animal with a sharper lance, to withstand the expected attack. If the bull on regaining its feet attacks the rider twice, it is passed as a fighting animal; but if it turns tail and runs off, then it is set aside to be killed, or to be used in agricultural work. And so with each animal until the whole herd of two-year-olds have been tested. Each bull that has stood the test successfully is then entered in the herd-book, with a description of its appearance, and receives a name—such as *Espartero*, *Hamenco*, and the like. This process of careful selection goes on from year to

year till the bull is five years old, when, should its mettle still prove true, it is ready for the arena, and flaming posters appear on the walls of Madrid or Seville announcing that *Espartero* (or whatever its name is) will on such and such a date make its first and final appearance. A good 'warrantable' five-year-old bull for the fighting ring costs from seventy to eighty pounds sterling.

This book is a specially attractive one, and it would be easy to dwell much longer over its pages. The stories of the haunts and habits of eagles and vultures, of the lammergeyer, of the ibex, the lynx, the wild-cat, the red deer—all these are tempting; but we can only commend the reader curious on these subjects to survey the pages for himself.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER IX.

When to the sessions of sweet, silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste.

SHAKESPEARE.

CHRISTMAS Eve, with nature trying its hardest to chill and discourage the cheerfulness and good feeling that, even in these cynical days, bubble up in the very midst of poverty and sickness and want of employment. A frosty fog brooded over London, through which the gas lamps winked dejectedly at mid-day without doing anything but make the darkness surrounding them more apparent.

In Dr Merridew's house the Egyptian darkness that could be felt would not have checked the Christmas rejoicings and preparations. There is such a lot to be done on Christmas Eve: such doing-up of parcels, such directing of Christmas cards, such dashing out into the fog to get sealing-wax or string or a card for some one forgotten in the first reckoning; such elaborate decorations of the shabby, little dining-room with lop-sided wreaths and garlands, that came floundering down if the door were shut forcibly, which occurred once in ten minutes.

It was also necessary to make constant visits of inspection into the kitchen, where a goose, which had arrived from Scar the day before, was being picked and prepared for next day's dinner. Such a splendid goose, too, which the children tried hard to identify with one of the stately flocks on the pond at the farm, who, when they happened to be on land, filled Kitty's soul with fear, as she passed, with their long necks and loud hissing.

It had come in a big basket, with apples and a jar of cream and a couple of lobsters and some walnuts and a cake—just what a Christmas hamper should be, they all agreed.

Sage was not so demonstrative in her pleasure at its arrival. She was a little bit dull altogether that Christmas Eve; the boys more than once suspected her of being cross, only she was more open to what they considered reason than usual, and gave in to sudden demands for advances of pocket-money with an amiability that was above suspicion.

Father pretended to suspect biliousness, and really watched her surreptitiously, as he had done a good many times since her return from Scar. Fathers are not generally very observant about daughters' feelings; but Dr Merridew was fidgeted by the feeling that there was a change in Sage which he could not account for. The two months at Scar seemed to have been all that was delightful—the whole party agreed in that; and Sage was up in arms if anything was said against the place. Dr Merridew, in that unreasonable way parents have, regarded Sage as still quite a little girl in respect to love affairs; but it did at last dawn on him that this might be a possible explanation of the change in her.

Could it be this artist fellow, of whom all the boys and Kitty were so full? He paid more attention than was usually his habit to the children's descriptions, but could not gather much information, so he tried to sound Kitty on the subject.

'Kit.'

'Yes, father.'

'What was that Mr What's-his-name like, down at Scar?'

'Who?'

'Why, the artist who painted you. Queer sort of artist he must have been to paint my ugly duck!—Now, Kitty, if you behave so disrespectfully to your paternal relative, I shall order a dose of Gregory's powder every night for a week.'

'If you mean Mr Ludlow,' Kitty said disdainfully, 'I can tell you that he is the greatest painter in England by far, and his picture will be the best in the Academy.'

'Number 269,' murmured Dr Merridew—'An ugly Duck.—Kitty, leave my whiskers alone.—Well? What was this Mr Ludlow like? Was he old?'

'Yes.'

'Very old?'

'Yes.'

'As old as me?'

'Nearly, I should say.'

'Thank you, Kitty. Was he as decrepit as your aged parent?'

'Oh no; of course he was not so very old as that, only pretty oldish.'

'Was he good-looking?'

'Oh no; he had gray hair.'

'Bald?'

'No.'

'Stout?'

'No. Oh, I don't know what he was like exactly—just like most oldish people. You know what I mean.'

'Did Sage like him?'

'Oh yes; awfully.'

'Did he like her?'

'Oh, I suppose so; he liked us all.—But I'll tell you who *did* like Sage awfully.' Kitty's voice sank to a mysterious whisper, and Dr Merridew pricked up his ears, thinking, 'Oho! now we're coming to it.'

'And who was that?'

Kitty held father's head firmly with her two hands, and put her lips close to his ear, breathing into it with the usual tickling sensation, 'Maurice Moore.'

'Oh-h-h!' a long whistle of disappointment

from Dr Merridew. 'Is that all? Why, he was the one-eyed man who took you out lobster-catching.' Which shows the chaotic effect produced by the very partial attention Dr Merridew bestowed on the children's narrations.

'Father!'—reproachfully—'I've told you hundreds of times that was Lot. And he wasn't one-eyed either, only one eye was always rather screwed up.'

But just then the surgery bell rang, and Dr Merridew never got any further, being left with the prevailing idea that this Maurice Moore, who liked Sage awfully, was one of the Scar fishermen, even though he might not be the one-eyed lobster catcher.

'I am not ungrateful,' Sage was telling herself; 'I don't mean to be ungrateful; but I don't think Christmas is merry after one is grown up. Of course, one can be happy and quite contented and grateful, but not merry. I don't think one need feel one is wicked because one can't be merry.'

And then she watched with wonder—and perhaps a very slight mixture of contempt was in the wonder, but very little, for she loved and honoured him, and made a hero of him still—father romping with Kitty as if he had not known years of trouble and wearing anxiety, and had not buried his love years ago.

She had painted a little Christmas card to send to Mr Ludlow, taken from a small sketch of hers of Scar Head with a sunset sky behind it; and when it was done, something she had meant for a bush thrown up against the orange sky, took so curious a likeness to a human figure coming, as some one had seemed to come one September evening, straight out of the sunset, that she could not bring herself to part with it, partly on her own account, and partly because she feared that Mr Ludlow might see the resemblance, and remember that evening.

She went up now and then, when the merriness of Christmas became too oppressive, to have a look at the little picture, which she had put inside the cover of her Bible. She was afraid Owen Ludlow might think it unkind of his friend to send no greeting to him at Christmas. Kitty and the boys, with much discussion and consideration, had chosen cards which they considered appropriate for the painter; but Sage could not make up her mind to send him anything but the sketch of Scar Head, and that she could not bring herself to part with, even though by so doing she might appear neglectful of her friend.

Ludlow had written to her several times; and Dr Merridew, with his suspicions not quite allayed by Kitty's assurances of the age and uninterestingness of the painter, had read the letters with interest and a little wonder. Not being himself a man who could make a friend of a girl, and having a constant tendency to depreciate his own belongings, he found it hard to believe that his little girl, Sage, could inspire such a dignified emotion as friendship.

Sage had answered the letter; but I do not think quite so satisfactorily as she might have done but for that final fortnight at Scar. I do not fancy friendship and love can reign side by side in one heart unless it be a very large one.

Dr Merridew was late in coming in to supper

that Christmas Eve; and as the usual hours of going to bed were set aside to-night, the children were all waiting for him with much impatience. I firmly believe that Kitty had gone to sleep on the hearthrug with her head resting against Sage's knee, or else why should the goose prepared for to-morrow's dinner have suddenly joined the party by the fire and spread out a webbed foot to the blaze; but it was prevented from further demonstrations by unmistakable sounds of Dr Merridew's return, and discreetly retired to its place in the larder, while Kitty jumped up, tossing the hair out of her eyes, and forgetting all about the strange incident that had just occurred.

'Here he is! Hooray!'

'Tell Sarah to hurry up the pie.'

'Don't let him go up to wash his hands, Kitty. Make him come straight in. Hands always are dirty at Christmas. Just look at mine, they're beastly; but'—

A silence of consternation fell on the family, for further delay seemed impending. A haughty rattled up to the door, and pulled up noisily at the curb; and they heard the doors flung open and a man's voice talking to Dr Merridew on the doorstep. Cabs were not frequent at the doctor's door, and when they came, they invariably meant a patient in a desperate hurry who had sent to fetch the doctor.

'It really is too bad,' they all agreed; and then they gave a sigh of relief, for they heard father's latchkey in the door, and the cab drive off; so they knew that Dr Merridew had not been carried off from his anxious and hungry family and from that much-enduring steak pie.

Kitty was starting to meet him, and prevent any unnecessary ablutions, when voices in the passage made her pause again.

'There's some one come in with him, and they'll go into the surgery and stop hours and hours!'

But again they were wrong in their dark forebodings, for Dr Merridew did not pass on to the surgery, but stopped at the dining-room door; and, as he turned the handle, they heard him say, 'Come in, come in; you'll find all the youngsters here.' And then the door opened, and father came in, ushering in Owen Ludlow.

CHAPTER X.

Why else was the pause prolonged, but that singing might issue thence?

Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?

BROWNING.

'You see,' Mr Ludlow said, with a helping of the steak pie before him, 'my old friend Collins—you know who I mean?—the man I was with so long out in California—has gone off for the winter to Italy. He wanted me to go with him; but I've grown old and lazy, and not to be roused up to go a-gadding even to Italy. So, when he found I wouldn't come, he said I could have the use of his house while he was away, free, gratis, for nothing, a jolly little house up in Regent's Park, with a studio fit for a king. I didn't think much of his offer at first; but a day or two ago it dawned on my mind that it would be pleasant to come up and see my friends for a bit at Christmas.'

'Very pleased to see you,' Dr Merridew said. 'I've had it on my mind ever since the children came home, that I've never thanked you for your kindness to them at Scar.'

'Oh, I assure you it was no kindness on my part.—We had a jolly good time, didn't we, boys? and Sage and Kitty were the most long-suffering of models. You know that I painted them into my picture, didn't you, sir? You must come and have a look at them and my Pomona. Yes; I brought her up with me, and endured mental torments all the way, from the conviction that she was ruined and done for through the outrageous violence of the porters. But there was not a scratch or a rub on her when I unpacked her; indeed, I think she had improved during the two days she was shut away from my sight. You must give me your opinion of her. I've got her in exactly right light. She won't look half so well in the Academy.'

Dr Merridew and Mr Ludlow got on famously, much to Sage's relief. Sage herself was very quiet, and the painter fancied she was a little pale, and that there were some patient lines about her mouth that were not there when he painted her at Scar. The beauty that had flashed out so untimely when Maurice was present had died away again, he noticed; but he had never cared for it or dwelt on it with satisfaction, and he was glad to find his quiet, little friend again with her only charm, the soft, sympathetic eyes, that seemed so transparent you could almost see the pure young soul within.

Before Mr Ludlow went, he made Sage and the children promise to come up and see him to-morrow, or rather to-day, for it was Christmas morning by that time. He wanted them to come and dine; but when he heard of the Scar goose, he understood the impossibility of such a proceeding; and so it was arranged that he should come and have a share of that wonderful bird, and afterwards conduct the whole party up to Regent's Park to spend the rest of the day.

This being settled, Ludlow took his departure, and the children went up to bed, and Sage sat down with her father in the little sitting-room.

The appearance of the painter had rather shaken Dr Merridew's faith in Sage's feelings of friendship. Owen Ludlow was a decidedly younger-looking man than the one Dr Merridew saw in the glass when he shaved; but then he had not had the cares of a family and a very uphill practice to take the youthfulness out of him. It was difficult to realise that to Kitty's eyes Owen Ludlow looked an old man, and even to Sage decidedly middle-aged; and though women are generally supposed to be more impressed by dress than men, Dr Merridew was much more carried away by Mr Ludlow's splendid fur-lined coat than either Sage or Kitty.

But his doubts were reassured by Sage's undisguised pleasure and entire want of embarrassment; and also he noticed that even when Mr Ludlow was present, and the children were chattering, and Owen taking his full share in the fun and nonsense, Sage still had that plaintive, little, far-away look, as if her thoughts were not always occupied with what was going on before her.

'It must be the one-eyed man who caught

lobsters, after all,' was the only conclusion Dr Merridew could arrive at.

Next day was all that Christmas Day should be—frosty and bright, without any of the fog that in these degenerate days so often accompanies frost. The goose for dinner began to emit savoury odours at an abnormally early hour, and yet was only just done to a turn when dinner-time came, and Owen Ludlow with it.

He had brought a present for Dr Merridew; but he said the others must wait for theirs till after Christmas, as he had not had time to get them; and he was not sure what they would like; so they must come out with him one day and choose for themselves.

'But I have something for you at home, Sage,' he said, with a strange look at her, which made the blood rush up into her pale, little face, and her heart flutter in an odd, tiresome way.

'No; I'm not going to say what it is,' he said in answer to Kitty's whispered inquiry as to whether it was a picture; and Sage felt sure it was one of the many sketches of Maurice Moore that lay about in the studio at Scar—Maurice in all sorts of easy, out-of-the-way, graceful attitudes. She resolved instantaneously in what place of honour it should hang, where she could see it from her bed, where the morning sun would fall full on it, over the chest of drawers, on the top of which were her few books and treasured little nicknacks. How good of Mr Ludlow to think of giving her that, and how strange that it should have occurred to him when, of course, he could not have the least idea that it was the one thing in the world she would value most!

His present to Dr Merridew was that picture of Kitty of which mention has been made, sitting on the boat with a group of the men on the shingle below; and it was 'framed beautiful,' the servants said, when they were brought in to look at it, evidently considering the frame the principal part of it.

Dr Merridew was very much pleased with it, and so was Kitty, who had always rather resented the fact that a photograph of Sage was the only picture in his room; and a very ugly photograph, too, with very staring eyes and large hands and hair done in a pigtail.

The goose, they all agreed, was perfection; and so was the plum-pudding; and though an ominous little tinkle from the surgery bell caused anger and consternation to appear on most of the countenances round the table, it turned out to be only a young woman with the toothache, which was dealt with summarily; and Dr Merridew came back, with a whiff of creosote hanging about him, to finish his pudding.

And then, without paying half the usual and proper attention to the oranges and chestnuts which usually occupied all Christmas afternoon till the tea-tray appeared, Owen Ludlow carried them off, one and all, for the rest of the day to Regent's Park. I am ashamed to say I do not know what is the best way from Dalston to Regent's Park; but my better-informed reader will be sure to know, and will be able to trace the party by omnibus, train, or underground railway, as they wended their way to Mr Ludlow's quarters.

Christmas daylight is short; and by the time they reached Regent's Park, darkness had come,

with great frosty stars up above, and twinkling rows of gas-lights below.

'Here we are!' said the painter, as they stopped at a gate leading into a garden surrounding a detached white house. The hall was lighted by a hanging lantern brought from Damascus, of softly tinted glass; and at the foot of the staircase was waiting a kindly old housekeeper to show the two girls up-stairs to take off their hats. There were such lovely thick carpets on the broad shallow stairs that Kitty could not resist treading it as a cat does in moments of great content with a movement of the paws as if she were kneading.

Kitty was impatient to join the rest of the party down-stairs, being afraid that father would be shown the picture of Pomona without her being there to point out the chief points of interest; so she left Sage, who was more leisurely in her movements, and ran down without her; and when Sage was ready, she found that the attendant housekeeper had also disappeared, and she must find her way down by herself. From the hall a passage led off to what she concluded was the studio; but on either side were other doors, and one of these stood a little open, and showed a light within; and Sage, with a sudden hope that perhaps her picture might be there, and that she might get a sight of it without others standing by, went in.

Some one was standing by the fire, and, seeing this, Sage would have withdrawn, had not that some one turned with an exclamation of great pleasure, and come towards her with both hands outstretched in eager welcome.

He had held her hand last in the moonlight on Scar Cliff. It was Maurice Moore.

(To be continued.)

THE SILVER QUESTION.

A SPECIAL session of the Congress of the United States has been summoned to consider a subject which is agitating all the civilised nations of the world, and which is generally called the Silver Question. With the deliberations and contentions of the American legislature we shall not concern ourselves here; but we propose to explain briefly, and as simply as the complexities of the matter will allow, how it is that the Silver Question has reached a crisis in the great Western Republic, and has produced a continuous crop of commercial disasters, almost unprecedented in number and extent, in the course of the present year.

In former articles,* we have explained the theory of Bimetallism and the origin and meaning of the Pound Sterling, and we will assume our readers, therefore, to be in possession of the elementary facts. The agitation for Bimetallism, it may be recalled, arose chiefly in consequence of Germany having demonetised silver, after the close of the Franco-German war, and of the United States having resumed specie payments in 1879.

We must, however, go back to the year 1878 in order to trace the economic development of the

* 'What is Bimetallism?' April 17, 1886. 'The Pound Sterling,' December 10, 1887.

question. The silver dollar was restored by an Act of Congress of that year, now commonly referred to as the Bland Act, taking its name from the introducer of the Bill. The silver dollar had been the usual currency before the civil war; but the exigencies of that period of storm and stress required the creation of a vast paper currency—greenbacks—which it was the object of the Bland Act to replace by metal. This Act provided that the Government should purchase every month not less than two million dollars' worth (£400,000), and not more than four million dollars' worth (£800,000) of silver bullion, to be coined into dollars.

Now, while this Act compelled the purchase of at least £400,000 worth of silver per month, it did not as is commonly supposed, involve the issue of silver dollars to the same amount. The price of silver varies, and the amount of bullion purchasable for two million dollars was not always the same. Thus, at the time the Bland Act was passed, a paper dollar or greenback (then inconvertible), was not worth its face-value in gold; and therefore the amount of silver purchasable by greenbacks depended both on the gold-price of silver bullion, and on the gold-value of the paper. But when specie payments were resumed at the beginning of 1879, then the Government greenbacks, being redeemable in gold, became the measure of gold-values, and could be used to purchase the silver at the current price of that metal in gold.

Did all the silver coin go into circulation month by month? There was just the difficulty. The Act provided for the issue of silver-certificates against a deposit of silver dollars—in amounts of ten dollars and upwards—and in practice these certificates were found much more convenient than the coins. They were not, like the old greenbacks and the silver dollar itself, absolute legal tender; but as they were receivable in payment of taxes, of customs duties, and of all public dues, they circulated freely. These certificates and the coined dollars formed the silver currency of the Bland Act.

The passing of the Bland Act was in part the result of the commercial depression which followed upon the inflation of 1871-73—in which the low prices were ascribed to the contracted currency—and in part the result of the efforts of the Silver States to find a larger outlet for the product of their mines. It did not establish Bimetallism, and it was a compromise intended to appease all parties, but which ended in satisfying none. It was a novel experiment in economics—to introduce a regular monthly addition to the currency without regard to the quantity of coins already in circulation, or the need of the community for more—and it endured for twelve years, with curious results.

In the first place, the banks did not care for the new silver money, and would not allow it to accumulate in their vaults, for gold

remained, as ever, the basis of credit and of foreign trade. For several years they prohibited the settlement of balances at the Clearing House in New York, and in some other cities, either in silver certificates or in silver dollars. They were obliged, of course, to receive the silver currency when tendered on deposit, or in payment of debts; but they paid it out again as quickly as possible, and turned over both dollars and certificates to the Treasury through brokers and others who had heavy payments to make to the Custom-house and other public departments.

Thus, as fast as the Government coined the silver, it came back again to the Treasury vaults—all but a small proportion retained in circulation for purposes of small change. Professor Taussig of Harvard, an acknowledged authority on American economics, thus describes the operation: 'The employees to whom the silver dollars are paid, get rid of them as fast as they make purchases: the shopkeepers in whose tills they accumulate, finding their customers averse from taking them in change, turn them into the banks on deposit, and the banks finally turn them into the nearest sub-treasury in payment of public dues. The round trip from Treasury back to Treasury is easily made, in some districts in the course of a single week. The degree of favour which they meet of course affects this movement, and varies in different parts of the country, apparently reflecting in a curious way the popular feeling as to the desirability of having silver currency at all. They circulate very little east of the Alleghanies, but are used more freely and permanently in the Mississippi Valley. Among the negroes of the South, big pieces are said to be favourites, and find a permanent lodgment. Their greatest circulation was reached in 1886.'

Coinage under the Bland Act began in March 1878, and practically not one-fifth of the coins went, and remained, among the people. Meanwhile, 'dead' silver was rapidly accumulating in the vaults. In 1880, however, the Treasury stimulated the circulation of certificates by offering to give, in exchange for gold deposited at New York, drafts on the Government offices in the South and West, payable in these certificates. It was an easy and cheap way of remitting for those who had to send money thither, and by the end of 1881 some sixty-two million dollars' worth of silver certificates were in circulation. The abundant crops of 1880-82, the demand for them from Europe, and the subsequent extension of railways, &c., greatly facilitated the operation by causing a greater demand for currency. Thus it was that, down to the end of 1883 or so, the silver trouble was not much felt in America.

With 1884, however, came a reaction, and many disastrous failures of large firms, banks, and railways. The railroad-building mania ceased, loans were called in, credit was shaken, and the circulation of the silver currency shrank rapidly. Once more 'dead' silver accumulated in the Treasury; and by the middle of 1886 some ninety-four millions of dollars were held in the vaults, with no use and no demand for it. As fast as silver was paid into the banks, on deposit

or in the ordinary way of business, it was turned over by them to the Treasury, in the same way as before.

A curious thing in connection with American currency now comes into view. Between 1880 and 1890 there was a considerable increase in the number of silver coins—not certificates—retained in the hands of the public, and yet there was no apparent increase in the circulation of them. How was this? Simply because a large part of the silver coinage is not used as money at all, but is melted down by the jewellers and others. The coined silver is, no doubt, a great deal dearer than bullion silver; but people who want only a small quantity of the metal at a time, in order to produce something the value of which will depend more on the workmanship than on the metal contained in the articles, find it more convenient to melt down the dollars than to buy silver bullion. It is estimated that between fifty and sixty millions of the silver dollars issued have been thus used up in the arts.

We must now pass more rapidly on to 1890, when, by the joint influence of the Bimetallists and the Silver-producing States, was passed what is known as the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This repealed the Bland Act of 1878, and decreed that the Secretary of the Treasury should every month purchase, at the market-price, four and a half million ounces of silver, paying for it in Treasury notes of from one to one thousand dollars each. These notes are what the old silver certificates were not—except for public dues—direct legal tender for all debts, unless an express contract is made to the contrary. They are also redeemable either in gold or silver, at the option of the Treasury. It was provided that the coinage of silver ordered under the Bland Act should cease on the 1st of July 1891, and that thereafter only as many silver dollars should be coined as might be needed for the redemption of the Treasury notes—which means none, for redemption is always wanted in gold, and has never so far been refused. The Treasury notes issued monthly vary in value according to the market-price of the four and a half million ounces of silver for which they are given. Now, for a short time after the passing of the Sherman Act, silver advanced, and went pretty rapidly up to about 1·20 dollars per ounce. But then came a reaction; and ever since, there has been a steady fall, which has brought about the present crisis. At the close of 1892 the price was only eighty-five cents, and it has since gone much lower.

The tremendous fall in the gold-price of silver, notwithstanding the large monthly purchase of the United States Government, has been puzzling alike to Bimetallists and Monometallists. It seems to be due to the very large increase in the output of the silver mines of the world, not only in America but elsewhere, and to a greater demand for gold for the settlement of international balances. Whether or not the Sherman Act would have succeeded in its purpose of preserving a permanent ratio between gold and silver, had it not been for the great and unexpected decline in silver, need not be here discussed. It has failed, and failed dismally; but it has also served to demonstrate the futility of any nation attempting to establish Bimetallism for itself and without regard to the other nations.

In the first year of the operation of the Sherman Act, there was a considerable addition to the volume of silver currency, due to special causes relating to the Tariff and Treasury disbursements, and this addition was mainly in the form of Treasury notes for the smaller amounts. What helped this circulation was an agreement among the banks to regard these notes as ordinary money, receivable for all purposes, as having a legal-tender quality and a gold basis. But in 1891 was experienced the great depression following upon what is known as the Baring crisis, with a consequent arrest of circulation, and accumulation of paper and silver in the hands of the banks. They resorted to the old practice of sending silver back to the Treasury through the Custom-house, &c.; while every month the Treasury was adding to the stock of notes in want of circulation. The silver purchases must go on, whatever the price, and so, month by month, the trade and commerce of the United States became crushed under the weight of redundant money.

It seems an odd thing to say, that a country can have too much money; but everything depends on the quality of the money. Of small-money, till-money, change-money, for the smaller purposes of daily life, a community needs only a limited supply, and any excess over actual needs must fall into the vaults of the banks or of the Government. Now, money is of no use when buried; it must circulate to be fruitful, and the more the volume of unproductive money increases the greater becomes the burden on the people. In active times of business, more change-money, or let us say pocket-money, is needed; and in dull times less; but the experience of America has proved that you cannot increase the demand for such money by merely increasing the supply.

We have said that the Sherman Act permits the redemption of the Treasury notes—paid for silver—in either gold or silver at the discretion of the Secretary; and we have also referred to these notes as resting on a gold basis. This apparent inconsistency requires explanation. While the Act allows this discretion, it also declares the policy of the United States to be to maintain the two metals on a parity with each other, at such ratio as may be provided by law. This declaration neutralises the discretion, for a refusal of the Treasury to pay any of the notes in gold when demanded, would have the immediate effect of depreciating the notes, and of thereby disturbing the parity between gold and silver. They would, in short, become mere silver certificates negotiable at fluctuating exchanges as the price of silver in terms of gold varied.

At the end of the third year of the operation of the Sherman Act—namely, in July 1893—there had been issued 147,000,000 dollars of these Treasury notes in payment of the purchases of silver bullion which the Act decreed should be made monthly. Only a small fraction of the bullion was actually turned into coin, and while the bulk remained unminted, the most of the Treasury notes given in payment had been presented for payment in gold and had been so paid. In the last year, for instance, 54,000,000 dollars of notes were paid for silver, and 49,000,000 dollars of these notes were redeemed in gold within the year. The Treasury

dare not, for the reasons explained, fall back on its option of paying them in silver; and in consequence the gold reserve which the Government is bound to keep for the redemption of other national obligations, was seriously reduced.

Silver continued to fall until in the present year it reached the lowest point on record. This continuous and serious decline was so menacing to the silver currency of India, and to the industries of the country, that the Indian Government declared they must either adopt Bimetallism—the remedial properties of which are, of course, denied by those who believe only in a single standard—or stop what is called the 'free coinage' of silver, that is, the issue at the mints of rupees for silver bullion, at a fixed rate, in any quantity to any person. Thereupon was appointed a Parliamentary Committee, under the presidency of Lord Herschell, to inquire into the whole circumstances, and to report to Parliament on the plans of the Indian Government. That Committee practically declared in favour of the suspension of free coinage, by admitting their inability to advise the Government to overrule the proposal. Immediately on the publication of the report, the Indian Government closed their mints against further receipts of silver—except in special circumstances, and for the necessary upkeep of the currency—and offered to supply rupees in exchange for gold (not silver) at the rate of one shilling and fourpence per rupee—that is, one-third less than its nominal value in India (two shillings).

We do not propose to deal just now with the tragic story of the 'demoralised rupee,' but return to the dollar. The effect of the decision of the Indian Government was to give a shock to metallic currency all over the world, to send down the price of silver still further—only temporarily, it is contended, as the supply will soon be brought into nicer relations to demand by the closing of unremunerative mines—and to produce a financial panic of an acute and far-reaching kind in the United States. As President Cleveland stated the position in his Message to Congress: 'The knowledge in business circles among our own people, that our Government cannot make its fiat equivalent to intrinsic value, nor keep inferior money on a parity with superior money by its own independent efforts, has resulted in such a lack of confidence at home and instability of currency values, that capital refuses its aid to new enterprises, while millions are actually withdrawn from the channels of trade and commerce, to become idle and unproductive in the hands of timid owners. Foreign investors are equally alert, and not only decline to purchase American securities, but make haste to sacrifice those which they already have.'

Not only was the situation serious, but it was becoming every month more grave, because the supply of silver is increasing, with no present prospect of the maximum of production having been reached. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the economic evils of a depreciated currency; but if these evils press more heavily on one class than on another, it is upon those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow at labour provided by capital. It is upon the masses of the people of the United States, therefore, that the burden of the 'dead' silver of the Sherman Act

falls, and it is to devise means for lightening or removing the burden that Congress was summoned to a special session after the Indian Government closed their mints—the first design being the repeal of that Act.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XL.—IN THE BOSOM OF THE FAMILY.

EARLY that morning, Mr Suffield had received a brief telegram from his wife: 'George back. Broken down.' Suffield at once arranged to go to London; and he arrived there in the evening, travelling third-class; for he accepted his poorer position at once without demur. 'And really,' he said to himself, 'I believe I prefer third—unless I should want to sleep.' When he entered the house at Rutland Gate he went first to the library; and as he glanced round upon the serried portraits of the Lords of Padliham, it was with an absolute sense of relief that he thought he would soon see them no more: he would no longer be afflicted with the sense of their superciliousness. He would go back to his own people, with his own people, and live and die among his own people, performing the duties he had foolishly laid down to take up others for which he had little taste and indifferent aptitude. He was thinking thus hopefully, when his wife entered behind him.

'I have been looking for you, my dear,' said she, approaching to greet him with a kiss. 'Oh my poor, dear George!' she cried. 'My owl lad! What has come to you? You've no colour in your poor cheek, and your hair's as white as it should be at eighty! Oh, my husband! My dear! And has it all worked this change upon you, my poor lad! My poor George! Oh, my dear! And you never told me!'

She kissed him, and wept over him, as a girl might over her soldier-lover, from whom she has long been parted, and who returns wounded and worn. And he stroked her dark hair in silence, and kept as firm a mouth as he could.

'You got my letters, of course?' said Suffield, who had written—with some reserve—to his wife daily during his absence in Lancashire.

'I did.—But what about yesterday, George, my dear? What's the end of it all?' she asked.

'It's all over, my lass,' he answered.

'You mean,' she exclaimed, clasping her hands tightly before her, 'that we are completely ruined?'

'Not altogether that, Joan, my dear,' said he. 'But we must leave this house, and sell or let th' Hall and Park, and we must let Parliament alone, and go back to work.'

'You have not made much of Parliament, have you, my dear owl lad?—so that need not distress us,' she observed with a smile.

'No, lass,' said he; 'I have not. I haven't spoken, I admit. But I've given a good many

votes, and I've set a good example. There's too much talk there already, and too little work.'

'And it's all,' said she, taking little note of what he had said, but sitting down, glancing this way and that, as if to review the whole situation, 'through the recklessness of that boy!'

'Nay, lass; it's our own fault,' said Suffield. 'Don't be too hard on th' lad. He's our own son, Joan: carried away wi' his own plans for getting on. He meant no harm—I ha' thought it all out—the thing is he shouldna ha' had th' whole machine trusted to him at his age.'

'And is it really so bad, George, as that we must go back to Lancashire and live in a small house?'

'It is, my lass,' said he, turning away and sitting down, saddened by the distress written on her face. 'There's about a hundred thousand gone, more or less!'

She followed him to his seat. The full light of the lamp now fell on him, and she again noted the worn and aged look he wore. The change in him smote her anew to the heart, and set free again her native founts of tenderness and generosity.

'Oh, my poor owd lad!' she cried, throwing her arms about his neck. 'How terrible it must have been for you to bear! I had hardly thought of that! I believe I've grown a selfish woman, my poor dear! My George! My husband!' She laid her head upon his breast and wept.

'There, my dear lass!' said he, soothing her. 'There! My dear wife! My owd sweetheart! My bonny bride!'

'Don't say these things to me now, George!' she murmured. 'I must think about all this, and see where we are. Have patience with me, won't you?'

'Patience, Joan, my dear!' said he. 'Of course, I'll have patience! And if this business makes us pull well together again, I shall thank God for it from th' bottom of my heart.—Do you know what we shall do, my lass? We'll go away back, out of the hurry and scurry of this London; when all is said and done, it's not very filling or satisfying!—away back to our ain countree! You remember, Joan, how we used to sing, "O the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birken tree!—They all are growing green in my ain countree!" We'll go back, my dear, to our ain folk, and we'll be as happy as ever we were—happier than we ha' been this twelvemonth! I ha' got my eye on that nice little house—for a year or two, at least—wi' th' creeper and the jasmine on the walls, and the evening primroses in the side-garden! And thou shalt be my own brave manager again!—mother o' th' house, and queen o' th' whole place!'

'You are very, very good to me, my dear!' said she.

Truly, 'sweet are the uses of adversity!' This worthy couple were beginning to discover—as

many have discovered before them—that worldly success—the gawds and superfluities of life, are only won by the sacrifice of much of life's essence. The cares of this world and of a family, and the deceitfulness of wealth and ambition, had choked the tender shoots of sentiment and driven love into abeyance, and, therefore, demonstrations of love into desuetude. It was only now, when they were awaked by the shock of their calamity, that they perceived how far apart they had drifted, and then they came together again, provoked by something of the warmth of a new affection!

'And now you will see George—won't you?' asked his wife.—'And about Lord Clitheroe!' she said suddenly. 'He's with George. I suppose he must be told?'

'Of course, he must!' said Suffield. 'Mustn't he? Are you afraid he'll want to cry off with Phemy?'

'He may,' said his wife, 'though not of himself, I think—but he may, under family pressure.'

The discussion of that matter, and of other matters in their mind, was interrupted by the announcement of the servant that Miss Raynor had called and was in the drawing-room.

'I wanted to speak to you about Bell, by the way,' said Mrs Suffield. 'She has called here every day almost since you have been gone, asking how things were going and if you were back yet. I can't make her out. She's so unlike herself—so subdued, so afraid of something, as it were. She hasn't been the same person, it seems to me, since Christmas.'

'Sayst tha?' exclaimed Suffield. 'Dost think she may repent o' her engagement to George? I always thought, tha knows, lass, that Ainsworth was th' man. Poor Bell! It won't do to let her make a mistake! We've had enow o' mistakes in th' family! I must talk to her.'

So they parted then, he to talk to Isabel, and she to make a preliminary statement to Lord Clitheroe, who was sitting by George.

'Well, Bell,' said Suffield, as he entered the drawing-room, 'what's this I hear about tha?'

Isabel turned palpably pale. 'What, uncle?' she asked. Then she exclaimed: 'Oh, how changed you are! My poor uncle!'

'Thou'rt changed, too, I hear. Looking ill and worried, I'm told. Let me look at tha?'

She submitted to his inspection, and blushed under it.

'What dost blush for?' he said kindly. 'I believe thou'rt turning more of a silly girl than thou ever wert! But tha doesn't look well. Tell me: what's th' matter?'

'I'm really very well, uncle,' said she. 'But I have been troubled about you. How has this business turned out with you, uncle? Aunt has told me something of it.'

He was silent, as if considering what he should say.

'Won't you tell me?' she said.

'Well,' said he, 'things have turned out what would be called "bad;" but somehow their "badness" makes me happier than if they had

turned out better. We'll ha' to give up this house at once, and sell or let the Hall and all about it; we shall be just able to keep the works going, and so we'll ha' to live in a very economical way in a small house for some years.'

'My poor dear uncle!' exclaimed Isabel.

'Law bless thy heart and soul!' said he. 'I like to think of it! I shall be out of this blessed Parliament business; and I'll go back to real work!—And,' he added in a lower tone, as if to himself, 'the wife and I'll be together again!'

'Uncle,' said Isabel, 'I have a request—a petition—to make of you.'

'Say on, my lass,' said Suffield. 'Thou shalt ha' 't, though 'twere th' half o' my poor kingdom.'

'It's a favour I failed to get from you, uncle,' said Isabel, 'a little while ago.'

'What's that?'

'Take this money now! You need it now, if you didn't before! Don't—please, don't!—refuse me again! Dear uncle, you don't know how much you will oblige me, how happy you will make me, by doing as I ask you!'

'Bell, my dear, let's ha' no more o' that! That money's thine, and 'twill be settled upon thee at thy marriage!—Hast seen George, by the way?'

'Yes,' said she with a blush; 'I have seen him. He is changed too.'

'There's a small favour I ha' to ask o' thee, Bell, my dear,' said her uncle, taking her hand. 'I ha' been a kind o' father to you, lass—ha'n't I?'

'Dear uncle, you have been more than a father!—you've been the dearest friend as well!'

'Now I claim th' privilege o' a father and friend. Answer me a question, like a good, honest girl, as yo' are: Art quite happy in thy engagement to George? Don't be afraid to answer me, my dear!'

Isabel was taken unawares, and was painfully moved; but she kept her self-possession.

'That is a question, uncle!' said she. 'But I will not answer it until you have granted me the favour I ask, and accepted my money.'

Her uncle shook his head, dropped her hand, and turned away. That had barely happened, when Mrs Suffield entered to say that George wished to see his father. Isabel said she could not stay longer that night; so she went, and her uncle and aunt went up to George, who was in bed.

Father and son gripped each other's hand and looked into each other's eyes, with perfect understanding of sincere repentance on the one side, and complete forgiveness on the other.

'It has taken it out of you, dad,' said George.

Then his father, having described his difficulties with Gorgonio and the cotton, demanded an account of his son's—and his prospective son-in-law's—adventures.

'Thou'rt more reduced than me, my lad,' said he.

'I'm all right, dad,' answered George. 'I'll be up to-morrow.'

'No, you won't,' said Clitheroe, stroking his big red beard.—'He caught low fever in Spain,' he observed to Suffield: 'the floods were out.'

'You had rather a bad time of it, then?' said Suffield.

'Very bad,' answered Clitheroe, looking at his hairy hands.

'And where are your prisoners?—I suppose you brought them safe?'

'And now,' said Clitheroe, 'they're in safe keeping!—the brutes!'

'Hain't yo' better tell me all about it?' said Suffield.

'Let me ask you this, father,' said George with a smile, 'before Clitheroe begins his story: Can you understand anybody being afraid of your Tame Philosopher and Secretary?—mortally, supernaturally afraid?'

'No,' said Suffield decidedly; 'I certainly cannot.'

'Well, I have found there is such a man; and his name is Daniel Trichinopoly! M'Fie is the one man in England that Daniel fears, or, for the matter of that, I believe, respects. He has a dread of his tremendous speeches, which he can't understand any more than I can, and he thinks him learned enough to be a wizard or something of that kind. I've told you that, father, because, if it hadn't been for Daniel's fear of the Philosopher, we should never have caught him or the other! He and Tanderjee would have got away a week sooner, and have reached Port Said—where they meant to leave the ship—if Daniel had not been afraid to stir while the Philosopher was weltering in that opium den: he was afraid the spells of the Philosopher would blight his life, if he did not himself release him from that horrible place! And Daniel insisted, in spite of all Tanderjee could say—insisted on staying to release him! So your Philosopher has been of more use than I ever thought he would be!'

'It is certainly most astonishing,' said Suffield.

'But let me hear the whole story.'

Clitheroe then, aided by George at intervals, related their adventures.

They reached Marseilles at midnight of the day after they left London. No regular steamer could possibly reach Gibraltar in time to intercept the *Travancore*; and both floods and bandits were said to be out in Spain, so that the train did not seem hopeful either. They therefore resolved to try to hire a fast steam-vessel, and that without delay, or else they would not reach Gibraltar in time. By exceeding good luck—so good that George called it providential—they met on the quay a yachting acquaintance of Clitheroe's, who was waiting for his belated boat to take him on board his steam-yacht outside. To him Clitheroe told their urgent need, and he at once responded by offering to take them to Gibraltar. Therefore, when the boat came, all four entered it: the owner, Clitheroe and George, and the detective. The weather was foul, and they reckoned it would take them all their time to reach Gibraltar by Tuesday, the *Travancore's* day of call. It was then George showed his prowess and skill as a stoker. He stripped to feed the furnace himself, on a method he had developed for keeping the fire always bright, and forcing the pace without waste of fuel.

'If everything else failed him,' said Clitheroe, 'he would soon get a place as chief-stoker.' (That was his only allusion to their losses.)

They reached Gibraltar in good time, and had everything in order for the arrest of the fugitives. When the *Travancore* came in, they boarded her without ostentation. Daniel was nicely caught as he appeared from below to take the air; and Tanderjee had a hand laid on his shoulder as he stood contemplating the great fortified rock: neither, it was clear, had in the least expected that they might be pursued and arrested. Daniel set his arrest down to the evil divinations of the Tame Philosopher. Daniel wished to throw his turban overboard; but George caught it, and found the plans concealed in its folds. The bank draft on Bombay for the six thousand pounds was found on Tanderjee's person, and in his baggage a considerable number of sovereigns.

'You did very well then, my lad,' said Suffield. 'I was afraid to ask you what success you'd had.'

So they brought their prisoners away in the yacht, without mishap. Daniel's behaviour was singular. He laboured to propitiate George; he was submissive, sweet-tempered, and affable; and he begged that his hands might be left free, even if his legs were tied, so that he might stoke the furnace in place of 'the respectable Sahib George.' But George answered him: 'There is a saying, Daniel, in your own India: "If a man deceives me once, shame on him; if he deceives me twice, shame on me!"' With which words of wisdom Daniel seemed so subdued and humbled that he urged his request no more.

They steamed on for about three days, making but poor progress because of a head-wind. But on the third day a gale arose and grew to a hurricane. They panted and bored through a complete welter and bewilderment of mingled sea and sky. Never, George declared, had he been in such weather, nor had he ever conceived the Mediterranean capable of it. They had been somewhat hugging the Spanish shore, and in their attempt to weather the projecting land between Alicante and Valencia they were driven ashore; but fortunately they drove into a fairly sheltered cove. They passed a terrible night on land, even though after an hour the storm sank almost as suddenly as it had arisen, and though they were able to bring some means of shelter ashore from the yacht. Then they had experience how little Daniel's professions were to be trusted. He and Tanderjee were caught in the night in an attempt on the persons and purses of George and Clitheroe. (The detective had been left on guard over them, but had succumbed to sleep.) In the morning they found a fishing village; but by then George was alternately shivering and burning with fever. By the close of that first day on land he was helpless and delirious, and they had perforce to remain in such poor accommodation as they could find.

'It was a terrible time,' said George. 'But the Spanish folk were very kind; and I should like to go and see them again some day.'

Meantime the owner of the yacht and his small crew took the vessel back to Alicante for such repairs as she demanded. Those left behind resolved to remain until the return of the yacht; for they were in a wild country, far from a railway—and the safety of railway travelling was still uncertain at best—and George was and would be for days unequal to the fatigues of a

rough journey. At length the yacht returned, and so—and so they returned to Marseilles, and home.

'And all's well that ends well,' said Suffield. —'And now, my dear,' said he to his wife, 'would you and our good friend, Clitheroe, mind leaving George and me together? I have one or two things I should like to talk to him about.' When the two had withdrawn. 'You've seen Isabel, I suppose, my lad?' said he.

'Yes, father, I've seen her.'

'And what dost think o' her?—her looks, I mean?—Dostna think she looks ill?'

'She doesn't look well, certainly. I suppose she has been worried like the rest of us. Poor Bell! I don't know why our worry should wear her.'

'That's just it,' said his father. 'I don't think "worry" accounts for it. Hast ever noticed anything in her way wi' yo' that might make yo' think, when yo' consider, that she's not just over head and ears in love wi' yo', my lad?'

'I don't think, dad, she *is* over head and ears: she is very nice and affectionate: I think—I believe—she likes me very much. What more would you have? I don't think Bell is a girl to be over head and ears in love: she is too sensible and wise.'

'That's where, in my opinion,' said his father, 'most o' us are wrong about that girl.—Now, my dear lad, I should be sorry to upset you about nothing; but I think it's best to be frank about this matter I ha' in my mind. Bell is a girl that don't make much fuss about her feelings, but she's got them stronger than most girls. One o' her strongest feelings—I know it: I understand her—is enormous, absurd gratitude to this miserable family for the little we've done for her. It has always troubled her that she had no great chance to show it. A chance came. Dost know, lad, that twice over she's begged and prayed me to take her money—all o't!—to help us in this business?'

'She pressed it—pressed it hard!—on me that afternoon I went away.'

'There yo' are!—Now I ha' it borne in on me—I may be wrong; I hope, my lad, for your sake, I am—that her promise to marry you, lad, is part o' that same absurd gratitude! She knew you wanted her; she knew I'd like it; and she saw latterly your mother was not against it! And so, to please us all, thinking little o' herself, she engages herself to marry you, my lad! And now, when she thinks o' th' thing, it looks a more serious business to give herself away like that than she imagined. I'm sure she's got stronger feelings in her than she ever seems to ha' shown to you, lad. I hope to goodness, my dear lad, I'm wrong. But tha dostna want to mak' another mistake, and tha dostna want, I'm sure, to tak' Bell to wife on those terms. Think it over quietly, lad—speak to Bell about it to-morrow—she'll be here, no doubt—and according as tha finds her, do th' right thing by her and by thyself!'

George was pale and agitated. 'All right, father. I'll think it over.—You'd better leave me alone now, dad.'

'God bless tha, lad,' said his father, with a quiver of the lip, 'and gi'e thee a brave heart!'

George lay still—wretchedly still!—for a little

while; and then suddenly he jumped from bed and hurriedly dressed, weak and trembling though he was. In a few minutes he slipped down-stairs, passed from the house, and called a cab. He must see Bell! He could not wait!

(To be continued.)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE question has been mooted whether it is possible to raise the wreck of the ill-fated 'Victoria' from her watery grave of eighty fathoms (four hundred and eighty feet). It is reported that a firm has already offered to undertake the work of salvage; but it is improbable that there is any possibility of floating the vessel. The greatest impediment is that of depth, for even with improved apparatus the diver—whose help in stopping leaks is imperatively demanded, as the prelude to such operations—is limited in his excursions from the surface of the water. The greatest recorded depth to which any diver has penetrated is claimed for Captain Christiansen, who recently, at Elliott Bay, Washington Territory, remained for twenty minutes at a depth of one hundred and ninety-six feet from the surface. It may be mentioned here, that, according to the calculation of an officer of the United States navy, the blow which sent the 'Victoria' to the bottom of the sea had a force equivalent to that of a railway train of six large Pullman cars drawn by the heaviest locomotive and running at a speed of fifty miles per hour.

A most magnificent specimen of a sixteenth-century Persian carpet has just been acquired by the South Kensington Museum. It has come from the Mosque of Ardabil, where it has been well known and much coveted for some time past. The sum required for its purchase was so great that had it not been for the generosity of several English gentlemen, the nation would not have been able to secure this carpet, which is quite the finest of its kind in Europe. The groundwork is of dark blue, ornamented with a floral design; the centre consists of a large medallion worked in pale yellow, with various coloured cartouches disposed round it. Each corner of the carpet contains a section of the same pattern as the centre medallion, with cartouches surrounding it. The border is very beautiful, and is formed of alternate long and circular panels, around which—on a brown ground covered with a floral pattern—is a lobed outline. A panel bearing the following inscription makes a heading to the carpet: 'I have no refuge in the world other than thy threshold. My head has no protection other than this porchway. The work of the slave of the Holy Place, Maksoud of Kushan, in the year 942 (1535 A.D.).' 'The work of the slave' Maksoud is thirty-four feet six inches by seventeen feet six inches, and so finely is it woven, that there are three hundred and eighty knots, all hand-tied, in a square inch. There are thirty-three million hand-tied knots in the whole carpet. As a work of art this carpet is most remarkable, on account of its beautiful colouring, grand design, great size, and extreme fineness of texture. The fact also of the date and place of manufacture being inscribed upon it, acts

as a guide in trying to fix the date and locality of certain textures of Persian carpets.

The extent to which the flowers of the 'Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium' are cultivated in Dalmatia in order to supply the world with so-called insect powder is little known. The plant can be cultivated in almost any kind of soil, and it is a matter for some surprise that it should hitherto have been confined to the Austrian province of Dalmatia and the neighbouring Montenegro. The flowers find a market at Trieste, where the annual value of the trade amounts to as much as fifty thousand pounds. But it would seem that there will shortly be competitors to deal with, for the plant has recently been introduced into South Africa, California, and Australia. It is said that the plantations in Dalmatia have suffered much from the severity of the past winter, and the result of the recently gathered harvest is therefore awaited with some anxiety.

The question has often been asked, whether any meaning is to be attached to the song of birds, and some doubt has been thrown on the supposition that joy or sorrow is thus expressed by the fact that birds have been known to break into apparently happy melody when flames have been threatening their cages. Dr Morris Gibbs, an American naturalist, has been making observations in this direction by robbing the nests of song-birds and then listening for the result, allowing in every case ample time for the more gifted male to hear of the burglary. In no case was it possible to say that the song which ensued expressed sorrow or complaint; and Dr Gibbs says that he could never distinguish any difference between it and the warbling he was accustomed to hear. While expressing a hope that the burglar duly restored the stolen property after he had satisfied his curiosity, we may venture to remark that as there are sounds beyond the limit of the human ear to appreciate, so there may be others the meaning of which the ear can never fathom.

The *Journal des Mines* in a recent issue states that the trade of the island of Madagascar in 1892 received a decided stimulus by the discovery of a new india-rubber tree. The discovery of this tree came very fortunately to relieve the Madagascar market, which was at such a low ebb that the Tamatave houses were closing their agencies on the north-east coast, and the Americans suppressed their Majunga houses. The discovery is of very great importance, and almost constitutes a commercial revolution. The trade formerly carried on between Farafangana and Fort Dauphin was confined to a few products, which were obtained only in small quantities. Merchants were almost completely disheartened, and had abandoned the market to small traders. As long as the working of the new rubber tree lasts, things will go well; but unfortunately the probable duration of this working is estimated at only two years.

A firm of manufacturers in Chemnitz has patented a new material which is said to be admirably adapted for curtains. In composition it consists of seventy-five per cent. of india-rubber, three per cent. wool-dust, five per cent. pulverised fruit-stones, ten per cent. amber varnish, and five per cent. leather waste, to which infusorial earth

can be added if convenient. This compound, after being tempered with carbon bisulphide, is kneaded into a thick mass, which is afterwards rolled into leaves and decorated as fancy may dictate.

Mr W. S. B. Woolhouse, a distinguished mathematician, who died in London recently at the age of eighty-four, had at one time a curious problem to solve. This was in connection with the Ten Hours' Bill, and the question to be determined was the distance daily walked by a factory girl in attending the 'mules'—running backwards and forwards and tying the threads. The late Lord Shaftesbury commissioned the mathematician to go down to Manchester and obtain the necessary data; and the journey was made, the calculations done, and the report of the result sent off the same evening. It was found that each girl made a journey of upwards of thirty miles daily—a record which would put to the blush many strong men who regard themselves as able pedestrians.

A new method of preserving timber is by the use of naphthaline. The timber to be treated is placed in a tank of the liquid, which, by means of steam-pipes, is maintained at a temperature of about two hundred degrees Fahrenheit. According to the size of the timber, it is subjected to immersion in this heated liquid for from two to twelve hours, during which time the sap is expelled and the naphthaline takes its place. It is said that the system gives excellent results, and that wood treated in the way described is so susceptible of polishing that the mere rub with a rag will make its surface shine.

The unveiling of a granite memorial, and the presentation of congratulatory addresses to Sir J. B. Lawes and Dr Gilbert at Rothamsted, is an event that must not be passed over in silence, for the occasion is unique. For fifty years past have these two industrious workers been solving problems and making careful experiments in order to place agriculture on a more scientific basis. Both in the field and in the handsome laboratory which they have equipped, has this work gone on continuously for the past half-century, and this at the expense of Sir J. B. Lawes. Not only this; but the work is not to cease although the original labourers must at some time rest. The experimental ground and the laboratory, together with a sum of one hundred thousand pounds, are vested in trustees, and the future guidance of the magnificent enterprise will be under a Committee. It is seldom that a great work like this which might well be expected from a Government department, is undertaken by individual and unselfish effort.

The gradual development of the railroad is well illustrated in the 'Transportation Building' of the Chicago Exhibition. First, there is part of the plank road laid by the Romans across a moor near Osnabrueck, which was unearthed last year from the six feet of moss, &c., which had covered it, and probably preserved it. The wooden planks are of course much decayed; but the method of fastening down by long wooden pins is quite apparent. Another type of tramway is illustrated by a thirty-inch gauge road dating from the sixteenth century, and still in use in many parts of Hungary. Next is shown a piece

of the rough road with its cast-iron rails which was in use in Wales more than a hundred years ago. It was upon this railway that Trevethick tried in 1804 to run an engine driven by steam. These old methods of laying railroads are contrasted with great effect with the ponderous steel railroads of to-day.

A curious reversion to an old photographic process is seen in the productions of the recently established Birmingham Dry Collodion Plate and Film Company. The dry collodion plate dates from 1856, and at one time it was largely used, especially by landscape photographers. It was so slow in action that it was not adapted for portraiture, and we need hardly say that such, so-called, instantaneous pictures as are now possible with gelatine plates were quite beyond its ken. But about three years ago it was announced that Dr Hill Norris, who was one of the pioneers of the process, had solved the problem of producing a dry collodion plate which was equal in rapidity to gelatine, and the company above mentioned was formed to work the process. It remains to be seen whether these anticipations will be realised. If, happily, they should be, photographers will have at their disposal a plate combining more advantages than any light-sensitive surface yet discovered.

The electric current as now 'laid on' in so many Metropolitan thoroughfares is likely to prove an immense boon to manufacturers requiring motive-power at a cheap rate. The current can be switched on or off as required, and the consumer pays only for what he uses. We recently saw in a workshop in London an automatic shaping-machine worked by the electric current from the street main. In this case the motor was doing all the work of a gas engine which it had replaced, and although it was kept constantly at work during the daylight hours, the cost of current was less than two shillings per week.

The operation of building a boat is always a pleasant one to watch, for from the time when the keel is laid it seems to gradually grow under the workman's hands as he adds plank to plank and secures each by copper nails. But this mode of construction is now giving way to a very different one. Boats are now being made of mild steel in two halves, which are pressed into shape by hydraulic power. The two parts are riveted to a metal bar which is bent up to form stem, keel, and sternpost all in one. Buoyancy chambers are then added, the usual fittings put in place, and the thing is complete. Such a boat, it is found by experience, is far more efficient than a wooden one; it offers so little friction to the water, that it will sail faster and pull easier than a boat of the old kind; and it will never leak, although it may be kept out of the water for months at a time.

According to the 'Newcastle Chronicle,' the police of that place are provided with a telephonic apparatus, which by means of an affixing pin and small key will enable them to communicate with the fire brigade through the medium of the street fire alarms placed in various parts of the city. In the case of a fire occurring on his beat, the policeman would open the glass door of the fire alarm, affix his telephone to the apparatus and would then be in direct communication with the brigade, so as to give them the

exact locality of the fire, and thus save those first precious minutes which often decide the fate of a burning building.

Five years ago, a Commission was appointed to inquire into the action of light upon water-colours; and as a result, certain pigments were found to be most fugitive, and therefore not fit for use by the painter. But it was found that all pigments preserved their tints if deprived of air. Acting upon this hint, Mr W. S. Simpson has devised a means of keeping water-colour drawings 'in vacuo,' and therefore quite protected from both air and damp. The plan is a simple one, the drawing being laid face down in a tray having a glass bottom, and being then covered in at the back; by means of a Sprengel pump the air is then exhausted from the little chamber formed by the tray, and the picture is subsequently sealed up. By means of a small instrument attached, it can be seen if any leakage occurs; but if the seal remain intact, the picture may be regarded as absolutely safe from any chance of fading.

The 'Primula obconica,' a very beautiful and favourite plant, has been charged again and again with very mischievous effects upon the skin of those who handle it; while others who are well acquainted with plants have found it to be quite innocuous. It would seem, however, that certain persons are affected by it. A doctor, writing to the 'Lancet,' describes how a lady patient of his, in order to test the question, lightly brushed a bundle of leaves of the suspected plant across her forearm, with the result that twelve hours afterwards an eruption appeared, accompanied by an almost intolerable itching. She also found that the fingers after touching the plant would communicate the eruption to the face. Before this test, the patient in question had suffered much from skin irritation, but with the banishment of the cause the malady ceased altogether.

The plague of wasps which this exceptionally dry summer has brought upon us has caused many suggestions to be made as to the best way of destroying these destructive insects in their nests. The killing of a few stray wasps has little effect in diminishing their numbers, and they must be attacked *en masse*. A spoonful of powdered potassium cyanide dropped into the entrance of a nest at night-time is said to be effective in destroying all the inmates; but the risks attaching to the handling of such a deadly poison are far more serious than any connected with wasps. Coal-tar mixed with paraffin to render it more fluid, is a good and cheap nest destroyer, and we have used a small quantity of strong ammonia with effective results. The correspondent of a contemporary asserts that a pledget of tow dipped in coal-tar and thrust into the entry to the nest will effectually dispose of the inmates. They do not store food, as bees do, and are dependent upon a daily supply; and as they will not, or cannot, get through the tarry obstruction, they quickly die by starvation. It is certain that all nests discovered should be destroyed, or the prospects for next season will be alarming.

Experiments have recently been made by Rigler with a view to determine the value of ammonia vapour as a disinfectant, when various organisms were subjected to treatment, including Koch's cholera bacillus, the typhoid

bacillus, and the bacilli associated with diphtheria and anthrax. These organisms were exposed in a room filled with ammonia vapour, while at the same time others were exposed to air. In every case the ammonia vapour killed the organisms in from two to four hours. It is therefore indicated that ammonia vapour is a valuable means of disinfection; and its cheapness, cleanliness, and harmless character as regards furniture and clothing should further recommend it. It would be interesting to know whether a room charged with ammonia vapour to such a degree as not to impede a person's breathing would have a beneficial effect upon a patient suffering from any one of the diseases which the bacilli experimented upon represent.

A statement was recently made to the effect that the eucalyptus takes six months to sprout, and that sixty years must elapse before it grows into a tree of respectable proportions. Lieutenant Sclater, who has had much experience of the tree in Africa, says that this is a mistake. At Blantyre there is a fine avenue of these trees, which were planted by the Church of Scotland Mission only sixteen years ago, and now they are sixty feet high and from two to three feet in diameter. Other trees had grown to twenty feet high in as many months. The two statements possibly refer to eucalyptus trees of different varieties.

ON EXTINCTION.

THE passing away of ineffective things, the entire rejection by Nature of the plans of life, is the essence of tragedy. In the world of animals, that runs so curiously parallel with the world of men, we can see and trace only too often the analogies of our grimmer human experiences; we can find the equivalents to the sharp tragic force of Shakespeare, the majestic inevitableness of Sophocles, and the sordid dreary tale, the middle-class misery, of Ibsen. The life that has schemed and struggled and committed itself, the life that has played and lost, comes at last to the pitiless judgment of time, and is slowly and remorselessly annihilated. This is the saddest chapter of biological science—the tragedy of Extinction.

In the long galleries of the geological museum are the records of judgments that have been passed graven upon the rocks. Here, for instance, are the huge bones of the 'Atlantosaurus,' one of the mightiest land animals that this planet has ever seen. A huge terrestrial reptile this, that crushed the forest trees as it browsed upon their foliage, and before which the pigmy ancestors of our present denizens of the land must have fled in abject terror of its mere might of weight. It had the length of four elephants, and its head towered thirty feet—higher, that is, than any giraffe—above the world it dominated. And yet this giant has passed away, and left no children to inherit the earth. No living thing can be traced back to these monsters; they are at an end among the branchings of the tree of life. Whether it was through some change of climate, some subtle disease, or some subtle enemy, these titanic reptiles dwindled in numbers, and faded at last altogether among things mundane. Save for the riddle of their scattered bones, it is as if they had never been.

Beside them are the pterodactyls, the first of vertebrated animals to spread a wing to the wind, and follow the hunted insects to their last refuge of the air. How triumphantly and gloriously these winged lizards, these original dragons, must have floated through their new empire of the atmosphere! If their narrow brains could have entertained the thought, they would have congratulated themselves upon having gained a great and inalienable heritage for themselves and their children for ever. And now we cleave a rock and find their bones, and speculate doubtfully what their outer shape may have been. No descendants are left to us. The birds are no offspring of theirs, but lighter children of some clumsy 'dinosaurs.' The pterodactyls also have heard the judgment of extinction, and are gone altogether from the world.

The long roll of palæontology is half filled with the records of extermination; whole orders, families, groups, and classes have passed away and left no mark and no tradition upon the living fauna of the world. Many fossils of the older rocks are labelled in our museums, 'of doubtful affinity.' Nothing living has any part like them, and the baffled zoologist regretfully puts them aside. What they mean, he cannot tell. They hint merely at shadowy dead subkingdoms, of which the form eludes him. Index fingers are they, pointing into unfathomable darkness, and saying only one thing clearly, the word 'Extinction.'

In the living world of to-day the same forces are at work as in the past. One Fate still spins, and the gleaming scissors cut. In the last hundred years the swift change of condition throughout the world, due to the invention of new means of transit, geographical discovery, and the consequent 'swarming' of the whole globe by civilised men, has pushed many an animal to the very verge of destruction. It is not only the dodo that has gone; for dozens of genera and hundreds of species, this century has witnessed the writing on the wall.

In the fate of the bison extinction has been exceptionally swift and striking. In the 'forties' so vast were their multitudes that sometimes, 'as far as the eye could reach,' the plains would be covered by a galloping herd. Thousands of hunters, tribes of Indians, lived upon them. And now! It is improbable that one specimen in an altogether wild state survives. If it were not for the merciful curiosity of men, the few hundred that still live would also have passed into the darkness of non-existence. Following the same grim path are the seals, the Greenland whale, many Australian and New Zealand animals and birds ousted by more vigorous imported competitors, the black rat, endless wild birds. The list of destruction has yet to be made in its completeness. But the grand bison is the statuesque type and example of the doomed races.

Can any of these fated creatures count? Does any suspicion of their dwindling numbers dawn upon them? Do they, like the Red Indian, perceive the end to which they are coming? For most of them, unlike the Red Indian, there is no alternative of escape by interbreeding with their supplanters. Simply and unconditionally, there is written across their future, plainly for any reader, the one word 'Death.'

Surely a chill of solitude must strike to the heart of the last stragglers in the rout, the last survivors of the defeated and vanishing species. The last shaggy bison, looking with dull eyes from some western bluff across the broad prairies, must feel some dim sense that those wide rolling seas of grass were once the home of myriads of his race, and are now his no longer. The sunniest day must shine with a cold and desert light on the eyes of the condemned. For them the future is blotted out, and hope is vanity.

These days are the days of man's triumph. The awful solitude of such a position is almost beyond the imagination. The earth is warm with men. We think always with reference to men. The future is full of men to our preconceptions, whatever it may be in scientific truth. In the loneliest position in human possibility, humanity supports us. But Hood, who sometimes rose abruptly out of the most mechanical punning to sublime heights, wrote a travesty, grotesquely fearful, of Campbell's 'The Last Man.' In this he probably hit upon the most terrible thing that man can conceive as happening to man: the earth desert through a pestilence, and two men, and then one man, looking extinction in the face.

S H E C O M E S.

I.

I sit beside the stream; and all the air
Is full of insect life. A heron dips
And flaps away. The noon-day's welcome glare
Brings drowsiness to every bee that sips.

II.

I hear Her coming! Hear her soft-shod feet
Along the dun dust road their owner bear.
Anon the winding lane will hide my sweet,
But my warm fancy pictures her still there.

III.

I feel Her coming! Glancing swallows bring
The news in flights; and each bird will rejoice
With gentle flutter, and prepare to sing
Some strains to suit the music of her voice.

IV.

I see Her coming! Fairer than before
She seems to me in grace, in every part.
Will her repose some calm to me restore? . . .
Oh! may my eyes not show her all my heart.

DELINE PAYN.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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OLD SONGS AND NEW SAWS.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

A VOLUME of old sea-songs makes interesting reading. It is all so archaic, so old-fashioned, yet fresh withal. The days are so far off when sailors were crimped and their Susans waved lily hands while their Annas died—when Neptune and Freedom claimed equal parts in the 'snug little island,' and the sea existed chiefly for the benefit of Britannia and her ships—when one Englishman could lick three Frenchmen, and the cry that Britons never shall be slaves went up to heaven in one of the proudest shouts the world has ever heard—when the defeat of the Invincible Armada was still a living fact in the hearts and minds of our brave, bluff, grog-drinking blue-jackets, inspiring them with confidence and honouring themselves in their predecessors—those days are all so far off now as to almost belong to another era and another race; for that sentiment of national glory and honour which they embodied has become as an idle dream. If Dibdin were to write in the same spirit to-day, he would be assailed by the press as a brutal and unimaginative Jingo; and it would be incontestably shown how far out he was in his calculations, and how, instead of success commercial, military, or naval, we Britons are doomed to failure all round—instead of victory, it is we who shall have to bite the dust, and submit to defeat in any European war that may come.

Perhaps it is so. With our 'hearts of oak' may have gone the gallant tars who manned them. Under present conditions the fighting force of a ship is greater, but the fighting value of the men is less than in the olden time. It is not men so much as machinery—not fighters so much as scientific mechanicians who crowd that huge floating workshop. Valour is at a discount, but a good eye is as priceless as was once a stout heart; and the stoker and engineer in their stifling dogholes are of infinitely more importance than the blue-jackets on deck—pic-

turesque, breezy, well-disciplined, but more automatic than in the old boarding and individual times. This change of function may have really touched the temper of the service. Undoubtedly it is less rough than in the old grog-loving days. Not even Rudyard Kipling, the most masculine of our modern writers, would put out songs such as 'Nothing like Grog,' 'The Flowing Can,' 'The Sailor's Sheet-anchor'—said sheet-anchor being 'Grog, smiling Grog'—with others of like character. In a day when great lords forbid the sale of so much as a glass of beer on their estates, and force all their hotels and wayside inns to be teetotal, the praises of 'Grog' would not be well received, and the 'can of flip' is out of date. All other things have undergone this law of change. The dainty tastes and philanthropic softness by which this generation is distinguished, have robbed the navy of its former discomforts; and the danger now is, not of unnecessary hardship but of undue coddling, by which our sailors, like our soldiers, will be rendered less fit for the rough work of war than were their less delicately handled and more Spartan-bred predecessors. Be that as it may, the sea-songs of nigh a hundred years ago breathe a spirit for which one may look in vain among our modern utterances, and we have instead a string of sayings—a set of principles utterly at variance with all we have as yet ever known or honoured.

For the old war-cry embodied in our patriotism we have substituted a something we call cosmopolitanism, which we make synonymous with civilisation, while patriotism or love of one's country is dismissed as Jingoism, the which is as a word accursed. We are told that monopoly is base, mean, selfish—the very antipodes of that altruism which as Christians it is our bounden duty to practise, which as civilised men is the sign and seal of our moral and intellectual culture. We are to have no monopoly, neither of country nor family. A very charming writer has told us so, and has shown—to his own satisfaction, at all events—what a sadly selfish and immoral

thing patriotism is. No more sea-songs glorying in our own prowess and the defeat of our foes. Instead of these, pretty little piping pæans, lauding universal peace, which we are somehow to inaugurate by giving up all pretensions to superiority everywhere, by generously opening the gates whereby our enemies may come to afternoon tea in our citadel, and our rivers may be made available for their ships of war to fraternise with our house-boats. It is a lovely picture. A doubt may arise in the minds of the sceptical whether it be possible or no. But then the sceptical, like the Cassandras, are nuisances. When they fall into the midst of the believers, the chances are they will be put out like non-paying tenants, deficient as they are in their tithe of faith in a new human nature and a new cosmopolitan policy.

One of the modern phrases which covers a great deal of ground is that well-worked 'fin-de-siècle.' Now nothing is so arbitrary as well as conditional as time. Beginning with the rotation of the earth, which of itself is not absolutely unchangeable, man goes on to the self-made and arbitrary numeration of hundreds and thousands of years. Our day and night, seasons and the years can be accounted for, and their influence on nature, and on man with the rest of nature, is a physical fact. But when we come to the end of one conventional batch of years, how in the name of fortune should there be any valid change in the condition of things human and historic? Why should the end of the century excuse—still less explain—the sudden outbursts of feminine eccentricity and of unpatriotic impulse, for both of which their apologists think they have said all that need be said when they murmur 'fin-de-siècle?' What has this 'fin-de-siècle' to do with the queer state of mind which makes certain men laugh to scorn the idea of fighting for their country should it be invaded? 'Invaders should just once bite of the dust, and not a bit more of the island,' sounds to them sheer nonsense. What does it matter under whose régime we live? 'Give me forty pounds a year, and let me live in the sun in Italy, and I would not care who governed in England,' said one of our modern patriots. 'I should prefer Frenchmen to my own countrymen,' said another of the same school. 'The French are artists, and we are not.' 'It would be a good thing,' said a third, 'if we were conquered and ruled by a foreign power; it would make a better amalgam.' That was his translation of the modern idea of a universal brotherhood. But these same impartial cosmopolitans all demand that Britain should give up India, Burma, Egypt, come out of Mashonaland, cease to share in the partition of Africa, and should bring the Empire down to the nice manageable little dimensions of Holland or Belgium, with Scotland for our summer quarters and England for our winter, and the Continent to remain as now, the waste vat wherein to pour our superfluous margin.

'The union of hearts' is another phrase which has travelled beyond its original application. It is a phrase full of beautiful suggestions, far more beautiful than those rough old injunctions to 'stand to their guns' and 'conquer again and again,' which the sea-songs of a former time insisted on. This union is always to be accomplished by the strong giving the weak the power of damaging and annoying. Set that weaker creature on horseback and then make sure that he will meekly trot at the heels of a pedestrian leader. Put the whip into his hands and the raw places well within sight and touch, and then make just as sure that he will not flick the lash when his own good is to be got out of that other's pain. This may be sublime philosophy, but somehow it does not quite smack of an unregenerate human nature; and the experiment would be hazardous, all things considered. 'Put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry,' has a better ring and seems more likely to scan right.

Again, no modern word has done so much harm as that tip-tilted sneer of 'gush.' It bans all honest enthusiasm and casts the cold shadow of contempt on the rose-coloured energies of praise. It reduces the expression of patriotism to bunkum, and that of personal affection to the silliness of sentimentality. Over whatever it passes it leaves the traces of blight, and the mildew of its poison mars the fairest thought and the sweetest emotion. But those old sea-songs are full of what the modern 'fin-de-siècle' school would call 'gush.' They are all the lovelier on that account, and have all the firmer hold on the natural and sincere. When they aver that no spot on the globe is so perfect, so beautiful, or so happy as England, we may smile; but we think that 'better form' than the lavish abuse of our own country which it is the fashion of the day to pour out. When they celebrate our victories and talk of our flag as a sacred emblem which a man would rather die than desert, that comes home to our heart more than the cynical sneer of the most un-English of Englishmen when he affirms that he does not even know our flag—would not be able to tell it from the German, the French, the Italian, and would not care a button for it if he did. Black-eyed Susan is somehow a more sympathetic figure than the future Mrs 'Awkins. 'My old Dutch' will never put the extinguisher on 'John Anderson my Jo'; nor does the hero of 'You can't 'elp likin' 'im' come within hailing distance of 'Tom Bowling.' Say what we will, there is a spirit in these old songs which preserves them alive, for all the old-fashioned garb in which they are clothed. And between jolly tars and costers we should imagine that even the music-hall masher would not hesitate as to which make the most picturesque figures, and which lend themselves most easily to song. The coster's dialect and the seaman's quaint expletives settle the philological point between them—but not in favour of the *h-less* 'Energ.

What a difference, too, there is between the cheery optimism of those old sea-songs and the pessimism so fashionable at this present time! Nowadays, every one talks bewailingly of his luck, and falls foul of the times or Fate, should he but get his finger pinched by his own careless-

ness, or catch an influenza cold after sitting in a draught. But the ideal tars whom Dibdin immortalised found time to praise God, and could be cheery and merry with half their members shot away, and even snuff and a quid rendered impossible. There were no lugubrious prophecies then of the time when the black and yellow races shall be stronger than the white—when all the possessions now held by Britain will have to be given up because taken from her—when the life of man shall be nothing but a dull gray monotonous interlude between two blanks—when even family affection and natural instincts shall have died out like patriotism and nationality. Man was not proved then to be steadily degrading—we English shown by that sapient German to be the head and front of the decadence. We held our own, resisted interference, took with a high hand what we wanted, and defied 'Devil or Don' to do his worst. The former we flouted by the grace of God still believed to be working in us and for us; the latter we mentally mauled on the grand old plea of our general superiority to the whole family of Mounseers—otherwise, the Latin races. And the sentiment justified itself, as it was justified by fact. The bewailers over life's iniquities, and the prophesiers of evil days to come, as well as the assertors of our national decadence, do not seem to remember that they help to bring about the things they assert will come. Things cannot 'be in the air' unless they are put there by the voices of the crowd; and when an evil prophecy has been shouted out loud enough and often enough, it will surely come to pass. Prophecy a man's death but long enough and your prophecy will be fulfilled. And what is true of individual deaths, is true of national decadence and national disaster—to which these Jeremiahs themselves contribute.

POMONA.*

By the Author of 'Laddie,' 'Tip Cat,' 'Lil,' &c.

CHAPTER XI.

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure.

SHAKESPEARE.

It can easily be imagined what a bewildering effect the appearance of Maurice Moore produced on Dr Merridew, all the more so as he was conscious of having heard the name; but, having always connected it in his mind with a one-eyed fisherman catching lobsters, it required a thorough readjustment of all his previous ideas to realise that Maurice Moore had all along been this tall, handsome, young fellow of distinguished appearance.

And Sage's radiant face was a revelation too; it was this that first attracted his attention when she came into his studio. It was something more than a restoration of the peaceful, placid, little girl that he knew before she went to Scar; it was a new little daughter, perfectly happy, standing in the full sunshine of content.

He could not take his eyes off her for a minute, and so he did not notice her companion till Sage's voice, with a new ripple of music in it, said: 'Father, this is Mr Maurice Moore;' and he turned round to find that Maurice Moore was not, as he had understood, a one-eyed fisherman. It took him all tea-time and the consumption of a good many muffins to get used to the idea; and he kept stealing furtive little glances at Sage, to assure himself that this little daughter of his—a dear little girl, no doubt, and, for the matter of that, a good deal better than most people's daughters, but still only little, every-day Sage, whom he laughed at and teased, whose ear he pulled, and whose opinions he pooh-poohed—had it in her to secure the friendship of such a man as Owen Ludlow; and, apparently, the love of such a young Apollo as this Mr Maurice Moore. He always felt that apologetic feeling about his children that Touchstone had for Audrey, 'An ill-favoured thing, but mine own'—a feeling quite compatible with the greatest love and admiration. It is quite comical, sometimes, to see the difficulty parents have in recognising that their offspring are full-grown men and women, standing on their own merits before the eyes of the world; they are still 'my son' and 'my daughter,' and, as such, to be modestly depreciated, as one would one's features or the colour of one's hair, though he may be a hero of world-wide renown, and she a beauty reigning over the hearts of men.

'Come and have a pipe in the next room,' the painter said to Dr Merridew, when tea was over and the children were arranging '*abiaux vivants*' with the vast assistance of Mr Collins's beautiful Oriental costumes, which Warren, the old butler, put at their disposal; and Sage and Maurice were examining a portfolio of sketches with long, long pauses between each, and low-toned criticisms, with heads bent close together over those artistic treasures. 'Come and have a pipe. I think you have a right to demand some explanation of this'—with a meaning glance to where Sage and Maurice sat in blissful unconsciousness of the world outside Eden.

'I think I have,' the doctor replied rather dryly.

'It was not of *malice prepense*,' the painter went on. 'I had no more notion last night of Maurice being here to-day than the man in the moon. But when I got back from your place, I found him established here. You know he was at Scar last September; and I warned him off then, for I saw he was getting too fond of your little girl, and I knew it was out of the question.'

'Out of the question?' interrogatively from the doctor.

'Well, you see he is a poor man.'

Dr Merridew's eyes, that had been fixed on his own shabby coat-sleeve and his cuff, somewhat fringed at the edge, raised themselves reflectively to the well-dressed, nicely-turned-out figure he could see through the half-open door by Sage's side; and Mr Ludlow replied to that glance, though the feeling it expressed was not put into words: 'You understand as well as I do that

riches and poverty are merely comparative terms ; and a man is rich or poor exactly in the same proportion as his expenses correspond with his income. A man with expensive tastes is poor, whatever his income may be ; and Maurice Moore has such tastes.'

'And how has the situation altered since last September?'

The painter stammered, and got rather red. Just then, he felt that he did not much like Dr Merridew ; there was a certain blunt directness about him that was tiresome, and bordered on the brutal.

'Well, it appears that the lad was rather harder hit than I supposed ; and he can't get Sage out of his head. I've a liking for the boy ; there's a lot of good stuff in him ; and when he came in last night and said, "I can't get on without her ; and I've made up my mind, if she'll have me, to chuck this diplomatic business, and settle down to some quieter way of earning my bread and butter, which won't make it necessary to spend two guineas while I'm earning one."'

'And how about the expensive tastes which made it out of the question in September?'

'Come, Dr Merridew, we're both of us getting old fellows now ; but from what Sage tells me, there was a time when you were not more worldly-wise than I was, when, with no prospects worth speaking of, I married a penniless girl because I loved her.'

The doctor grunted moodily : 'I don't quite see, Mr Ludlow, because one man or even two have done a foolish thing, that it is any reason for another doing it.'

'Do you know—did Sage tell you?' the painter said, ignoring the doctor's last very sensible remark—'how curiously alike our experience of life has been in some ways?' And then he told the doctor, as he had told Sage, of his marriage and his loss, and of the baby girl, who would have been the very same age as Sage if—And the doctor stretched out his hand and wrung Ludlow's with hearty sympathy and tears in his shrewd, sensible eyes.

There was no reason why this curious similarity in their past histories should have made any difference about Sage and Maurice ; but men are so very illogical when their affections are concerned, that Ludlow felt as if he had brought the most conclusive arguments to bear on the subject ; and Dr Merridew felt more than half-convinced by them, though he still tried to keep up an appearance of disapproval.

'Well, you must hear what the lad has to say about it himself to-morrow. He has all sorts of notions of what he can do ; and I have always felt that he was worth something better than the idle society life which does not seem likely to lead to anything better. I don't know what his people will say to his change of programme ; they are smart sort of people.'

The doctor's face clouded. 'I won't have that,' he said. 'I won't have my girl marry into a family that looks down on her, and thinks she's not a match for their son. I don't mind their being poor, but'—And then he gave a little laugh. 'I'm a nice person, though, to talk in this way, when my wife's family wouldn't look at me, and I married her in spite of it. I don't know if Sage told you that part of the story that

my wife had to choose between me and her family—between poverty and wealth—between Dalston and Park Lane ; and she chose me with all my drawbacks, and never regretted it. But I won't say that it didn't give me a bad half-hour now and then, when I thought of all she had given up ; and all the more, perhaps, because she never seemed to feel it a bit. And sometimes now I get a pang on Sage's account, when I think of the difference it might have made in her life if her mother's people would have looked her up a bit.—By Jove, now ! I daresay Moore's fine folk would think the better of her if they knew that her grandfather was a baronet, and her first-cousin one of the richest heiresses in England.—But no ; thank you. I won't be indebted to them even as far as that ; so we'll keep it to ourselves, if you please.'

And then the children came in to fetch them to see the tableaux, and any further revelations about Sage's aristocratic relations were put an end to.

That was the very jolliest Christmas-day there ever had been, the boys declared, only the evening passed much too quickly. The tableaux were awful fun, especially when father and Mr Ludlow came and arranged them, and took part in them too ; and some of them were capital. They must have been good, for Sage and Mr Moore were never tired of looking at them. And then came a splendid snapdragon, and they all burned their fingers in fishing out highly spirituous plums ; and then there were games. Mr Ludlow seemed to have a never-ending variety to suggest ; and in one of these games, in which it was necessary for two of the company to go outside the room while the others were making mysterious arrangements within, these two happened to be Dr Merridew and Kitty.

'Why did you never tell me about Maurice Moore, Kit, you base deceiver?'

'I've told you heaps and heaps about him ; but you never would pay any attention. Isn't he awfully handsome and nice?'

'Then why did you lead me to suppose he had only one eye?'

'Come in ! We're quite ready.'

This summons saved Dr Merridew from con-dign punishment at the hands of his youngest daughter.

Supper, though the boys emphatically described it as 'ripping,' came all too soon, and though it was prolonged by crackers to an almost indefinite extent, it came to an end at last ; and then Dr Merridew declared they must go home immediately, if not sooner ; and the girls went to put on their hats, with much open reluctance on Kitty's part, and perhaps even greater reluctance concealed on the part of Sage.

As Dr Merridew and the boys were putting on their greatcoats in the hall, the doctor found Maurice Moore by his side. The doctor felt as shy as a girl at this interview with a son-in-law presumptive, and he had not spoken two words to him all the evening ; and now he did his very best to avoid it by sudden officiousness in the matter of helping Nigel on with his coat ; but that impracticable youngster wriggled out of the paternal clutches to pull a final cracker that had just turned up on the supper table intact, and left his father to his fate.

It is a great mistake in interviews of this description to ascribe all the painful feelings to the young suitor. The stern parent, who is supposed to inspire such awe and trepidation, generally endures quite as much himself, and is as heartily glad when it is over as the most bashful and palpitating youth.

'Dr Merridew, what time shall I be most likely to find you disengaged to-morrow? I hope to do myself the pleasure of calling.'

A very ungracious grumble about being very busy, and its being impossible for a doctor to say when he would be disengaged, rose to Dr Merridew's lips; but he contrived to swallow it, and to return a decently civil answer that he would probably be at home about three, and would be pleased to see Mr Moore, if he was kind enough to call. 'Confound the fellow!' he added internally—'a stuck-up Jack-a-dandy. I can't think what Sage can see to like in him; and if she says anything to me about him, I'll just tell her so.'

These were his sentiments going down the steps from the house into the street; and then Sage slipped her hand under his arm, while the others ran on in front, and he pressed the little hand tenderly against his side and said: 'Why didn't you tell me about it, little Sage?'

And she answered: 'I've wanted to ever so often; only, you know he went away without saying good-bye; and I did not know he cared; and I thought I should never see him any more.—Father, do you like him?'

'Well, my dear— Oh yes—of course, very much. You see, I've hardly had any opportunity'—

'Oh, father!'—reproachfully—'and he likes you so very much.'

'He likes you very much, Sage.'

'Do you think he does? Do you think he really can? It seems so impossible.'

'I can't say I see it in that light myself.' An ecstatic little squeeze of his arm. 'Are you happy, little Sage?'

'Happy? Father, I'm awfully happy—not just in the boys' slang; but really there's something quite awful in being so happy. It almost frightens one.'

'God bless you, little Sage.' And there being no one in sight along the street, he kissed her.

JOHORE TEA.

'WHERE is Johore?' we can imagine many people asking, who may have come across mention of the Sultan during his recent visit to Europe and America. Little as he may be known to Mr Morley's 'plain man,' the Sultan of Johore is recognised in official circles as one of the most enlightened and progressive of Oriental potentates, and as actively engaged in developing the resources of his little kingdom in quite a remarkable manner.

Johore is on those Straits of Malacca of which the late Lord Beaconsfield once uttered a mysterious foreboding on a memorable occasion; and it is now the only independent kingdom in the Malay Peninsula. In area it covers about fifteen thousand square miles, and its population is probably about two hundred thousand; and, roughly speaking, its borders are within about

fourteen miles of the British colony of Singapore, one of the Straits Settlements. It is bounded on one side by the other British settlement of Malacca, and on three sides by the sea. Yet small as it is, Johore is reputedly one of the richest native States in Asia, a fact in no way due to the circumstance that within its borders is a mountain supposed by some to be the Mount Ophir of the Bible, but which in modern times has not yielded much of either gold or tin, although both have been found at its base. Johore is particularly rich in its deposits of tin and of iron, and in its virgin forests of valuable tropical trees.

Since the Sultan Abu Bakar came to the throne, he has displayed great energy in experimenting on the productivity of the soil. What may be called the native products are tapioca, cocoa, sago, gambier, and various spices and gums, the gambier industry being chiefly in the hands of the Chinese, who now outnumber the aboriginal Malays. To encourage the industry, the Sultan has allowed the Chinese gambier-cultivators to have land rent free and untaxed so long as they cultivate it properly; and charges only a small export tax on the gambier and other products of their holdings. This is why the Chinese have settled in such numbers and have prospered so remarkably.

Not content with the native products, however, the Sultan has introduced the cultivation of tea, coffee, and pepper, with such success that they now form the chief products of the kingdom, and exceed in value the indigenous products. It is to the new Tea industry that we propose to devote a few words, because Johore tea is now being declared by experts to be superior in bouquet and flavour to the best qualities of Assam, and even Ceylon tea.

It is only within the last twelve years that tea-planting has commenced, the original plants having been hybrid Assam and China plants imported from India. At first it was extremely difficult to get suitable labour, and labour is an important item in a tea-garden, for the whole ground has to be dug over three times a year; and the bushes need constant tending. But coolies are now plentiful, and work cheerfully and well for about the equivalent of sixpence a day. The skilled labour is performed by Chinese, who, of course, are paid better.

The tea-plant needs a moist heat, and this the climate of Johore affords so abundantly that the plants flush, or throw out fresh shoots, all the year round. It is these young leaves that are plucked to make the tea of commerce. The bushes are planted in rows about five feet apart, with a space of about five feet between each bush. Each bush flushes about three times a month; and once a year it flowers, and is then pruned.

The work on the Johore gardens begins at daybreak, when at the sound of a horn, men, women, and children turn out of their homes to pluck the young leaves. The plucking is suspended at eleven o'clock, when a horn summons the pickers to the 'go-down,' to have their morning's work weighed. Payment is by results—so much per pound of leaf plucked—and each picker receives a ticket for the weight of his basket, less the weight of the basket itself. Then

at one o'clock the horn sounds again ; and plucking is resumed until five P.M., when comes another summons to the go-down, and another weighing with a fresh issue of tickets.

An industrious picker can, when the flush is good, pluck as much as sixty pounds' weight of green leaf in a day, and the best baskets are usually made by the women and children.

In the factory the green leaf is handed over to experienced Chinese operators, who first sprinkle the leaves over bamboo trays placed on elevated stands. This is to allow the leaf to wither, and during this process it is to be handled as little as possible. The process of withering is much affected by the condition of the weather, and it needs long experience to determine when it is sufficiently complete. The test is touch and colour rather than time, and this is where experience is valuable, for an inexperienced tea-maker may spoil much good leaf by premature or over-frequent handling.

When the leaves are sufficiently withered, they are placed in a box which holds about fifty pounds, to be rolled either with a hand-roller, or in large factories with a roller worked by steam. The box is given a sort of sliding motion, so that the leaf besides being pressed, gets twisted and rolled without losing its juice.

The rolling process occupies an hour ; and the next stage is fermentation. The mass of rolled leaf is taken out of the box and placed in heaps upon a bench, where it is turned over and over again by hand, until it gradually loses its original green colour and becomes copper in hue. This also occupies about an hour ; and then the coppery, fermented rolls are spread on trays of wire-gauze, and placed in a large drying chest—called a 'sirocco'—filled with air heated up to two hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit. Each sirocco will hold four trays, and these are placed at different levels. The first batch of leaf is placed on the top tray, and after a few minutes, is withdrawn, turned over by hand for a while, and then placed on the second tray, while the first tray is filled with a new lot. The operation is repeated until each lot has had four treatments, and is thus 'made.'

Of course this method is only adapted to the comparatively small gardens of Johore, and would be laughed to scorn in the great tea-factories of India.

After the tea is 'made,' it has to be sorted, and here again experience is everything. The crisp leaves are turned into cylinders made of wire mesh of different degrees of fineness. As the cylinders revolve, the tea in the top one works through the meshes, according to size, into the lower cylinder, and so gradually out of that. The meshes determine the grades, which are known as broken orange-pekoe, orange-pekoe, broken-pekoe, pekoe, pekoe-souchong, and souchong, the order of merit being in the order named. Rather more than one-half, probably about sixty per cent. of a making, will be souchongs.

Now comes the last stage, the weighing and packing. If properly made, one pound of 'made' tea ought to be yielded by four and a quarter pounds of green leaf, and this is the basis upon which the coolies are paid. After the weighing test, the tea has to be carefully tasted, to detect any signs of burning, bad rolling, or imperfect fermentation.

When it passes this ordeal, it is filled into wooden boxes of fifty pounds each, lined with lead, and soldered down ; but before this is done, the tea is passed rapidly through the sirocco again, in order to expel any superfluous moisture.

As quickly as the chests are closed they are branded with the mark of the garden, the description of tea, the number, and the weight. In due time they are sent to Singapore for shipment in 'breaks,' which is the equivalent of the Chinese 'chops'—parcels of given quality and brand.

Such is tea-making in Johore as at present conducted. The quality of the tea, as we have said, is being recognised as highly superior, especially for mixing with China teas. The Johore tea is remarkable for its strength, and is thus better for blending with more delicate teas than for drinking alone ; yet, when freshly and carefully infused, it is delicious.

The Sultan is doing everything to encourage this new industry in his dominion, and it promises to become a very important one, for the soil and climate seem eminently adapted to the cultivation of the tea-plant. By-and-by Johore will make more out of its tea than out of its tin, hitherto the chief source of wealth.

It was from a Sultan of Johore that we, some seventy years ago, received the island of Singapore ; and the present Sultan is well versed in English literature and has more than once visited Europe. He wears the Grand Cross of St Michael and St George, the Star of India, and several German and Chinese Orders. He has the reputation of being humane, enlightened, and refined, as well as progressive. His capital city, Johore Bharu, across the Straits of Malacca from Singapore, contains some twenty-five thousand inhabitants. He has a palace in Singapore, besides a couple of palaces in his own territory. He is a great lover of horses, is generous and hospitable, has a magnificent service of gold-plate, and is the proud possessor of diamonds valued at two millions sterling.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN CORBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman ; &c.

CHAPTER XL.—THE BURDEN ROLLS AWAY.

THAT evening Isabel had accorded Alan Ainsworth an interview, with the resolution to see him no more again for a long time ; they were in an *impasse*, she urged ; nothing could be done at present ; George was in a condition in which it would be mean and cruel to trouble him ; therefore, she pleaded that Alan should seek no more to see her until the situation was much more propitious.

'But, you see, dear heart,' said Alan, 'that our difficulty must remain locked so long as we keep back the key of it.'

'I know, Alan, I know !' said she. 'But, when I saw George looking so broken down with his journey, and so ashamed of his mistakes, how

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could I say what I had meant to say? To beat down an already bruised spirit!—to add a crueler stroke, perhaps, than any he had yet endured!—no, I could not do that! And then to have it thought that I had said what I had said because he is a ruined man!

'No one who knows you, Isabel,' said he, 'would ever think that! The fear of that may be dismissed. No doubt, it will be painful to Suffield to hear what must be said. But after all, my own dear, it *must* be said—must it not?—and every day's delay makes the saying only harder. And there are critical operations which it is kinder to perform at once, however ill able a man may seem to bear them.'

'I suppose there are,' said she. 'I know it is said there are.—But it seems to me, Alan, that you have not much pity for George.'

'Don't say that, Isabel. If he loves you at all as I do, I know how terribly he will feel when he is told he must give you up. It will be like the very prospect—the pang!—of death! The world will seem to end!—the whole universe to rush to chaos!'

'Do you love me so much, then?'

'I love you,' said he, 'as I love my life.'

'But,' said she, with a spark of her old spirit, 'does not a true lover say to his mistress that he loves her better than life?'

'That, my sweetheart,' said he, 'is the nonsense, the hyperbole, of love. I wish you to live, and myself to live also, that we may live together; therefore, I love you as my life.'

'Yes,' said she. 'Give me your hand, that I may feel strong. Poor George!—I am a foolish, weak woman! I never thought I was!—Did you ever think I was?'

'You are not, my love!' said he. 'This is a very difficult and trying time for you!—it would be for the strongest woman! It is your strength—your true strength—that makes you feel and behave as if you were weak!—the strength of your affections, the strength of your pity for George, and the strength of your regard for your uncle and aunt!—Another woman without your strength of tenderness would disregard or sweep away these feelings, and, in her absolutely selfish weakness, appear strong.'

'Yes,' said she, 'I think you are right!—I hope you are!—Tell me, love, I am not weak, and then I shall be strong!'

'Let me help you in this,' said he. 'Let me go to George and ask him to release you. It is only right that I should do that, since it is I who have put you in the wrong with him!—with my obstinate folly in trying to make a position before I spoke to you!'

'It seems to me very mean,' said she, 'to put you as a kind of buffer between him and myself. I don't think I can do that, Alan. At any rate let me go to my aunt first and tell her all. Don't you think that will be best?'

'I think that will be a good thing to do,' he answered.

'She may be harder than my uncle would have been,' said Isabel; 'but she is a woman, and she may better understand—especially since she was not at all anxious, a year ago, that I should marry George. I will go to her to-morrow, then.'

'And you will tell her all that *must* be told—won't you?'

'I will.'

At that moment the maid-servant announced 'Mr Suffield,' and turning their heads, they saw George standing in the doorway. They held each other's hand. Isabel's impulse was to snatch her hand away; but Alan held it, and still held it tight as they rose together to receive George. The meaning of the situation was so unmistakable, that none of the three said a word for an instant. At length George spoke. 'May I ask you, Mr Ainsworth, to leave my cousin and me alone a little while?'

'I should like to have a word with you before you go, Mr Suffield,' said Ainsworth. 'I shall be in the dining-room.'

'May I sit down, Bell?' said George, when Ainsworth had gone.

'Sit, George! sit!' she exclaimed. 'Oh, why have you come out, weak and ill as you are?'

'My father told me,' said he, 'something under which I couldn't rest: I had to get up and come to you, Bell! He suspects I have made another mistake!—that I have got you to promise to be my wife, without getting your proper love! Is that true, Bell? Answer me, dear!'

'I have done you a great wrong,' said she. 'I have committed a blunder—a shameful blunder—for which I ought to be punished. I am ashamed of myself, George, and—I have to ask your forgiveness!'

He looked on her with uncontrollable longing and pain; but he said nothing.

'I have led you to believe,' she continued, 'that I loved you enough to marry you!—I love you, George; but not enough!—not in that way!—not as you ought to be loved by a wife!—But if you wish me to keep my promise, I will keep it!'

He still had his eyes fixed on her: but he said nothing. She slipped to her knees by him and hid her face on his knee, while she took his hand. He drew his hand quickly away—it was the only sign he gave of resentment—and they remained thus silent for some moments.

'It is Ainsworth?' said he, at length.

'Yes,' she answered.

There was another pause; and then he put his hand in Isabel's: she kissed it.

'You forgive me, then?' said she, raising her eyes to meet his.

'Forgive you, Bell?' said he quietly, though there was a fevered light in his eye. 'We won't use that word. I am sure you meant me only kindness!'

'I did, George!—I did!'

'It has been all a mistake, I can see,' he continued. 'It is a good thing that this has happened now. If it had happened a month ago, I don't know how I would have taken it! I take it now quietly, you see,' he said with a wry smile.

'Oh, don't, George!' she exclaimed. 'Don't talk so bitterly!'

'It is bitter to lose you, Bell,' said he—'but, no; I won't complain! I had no business to think of marrying!—I was no more than a conceited boy fresh from school!—I have discovered I am only a boy!—not fit to be trusted with anything!—And when I am well, I am going to make a new start!—as you will, Bell!'

'And you will let me be good to you, my poor George!' said Isabel.

'For Heaven's sake, don't pity me, Bell!' he exclaimed. 'I can't stand it!—Give me one kiss, Bell!' She kissed him: now that she felt the close bond that had bound them was dissolved, she could do that without reluctance. 'It is over!' said he.—'But, Bell, you mustn't ask me to see him yet awhile!—Tell him I understand what he would say!—I don't blame him!—but I can't see him!'

And so in haste he took his hat and went away. Isabel turned to find Ainsworth in the dining-room.

'It is over, Alan,' said she, when she had delivered George's message. 'And I feel mean and ashamed. Please leave me, dear. I cannot bear to talk now!'

And he also went away, and left Isabel alone.

Next day she went again to Rutland Gate, desperately resolved to have her way with her uncle in the matter of the money. He was out—gone to see the Padiham agent about the surrender of the house—but her aunt was in her room, and sent word that she wished to see her. Isabel found her emptying boxes and wardrobes preparatory to the migration to Lancashire. She blamed Isabel for having almost frightened the life out of her, when she had found her son had gone out the previous night; and was in a generally resentful mood.

'It is strange, Bell,' said she, 'that you should not have known your own mind when you gave George your promise!'

'It was my own heart I did not know, aunt.'

'Mind or heart, it comes to the same thing.'

'I deceived myself. I thought I could marry George without the complete love you should have for the man you will spend your life with.'

'Fiddle-de-dee!' said her aunt impatiently. 'What should a girl know of the complete love you talk about?'

'The nature God has given you,' replied Isabel, 'will tell you that, if you are not too foolish to understand it.'

'No, it won't, Bell,' said her aunt—'however hard you listen. Only being in love can teach you that—if not with one man, then with another. And you have known Alan Ainsworth long enough, and surely you have known him well enough, to have understood all about the necessity of your complete love before you gave your promise to George?'

'I did understand,' said she humbly. 'But I thought he did not care for me. He was only holding back because of my wretched money, and because he wanted to make a position of his own first!—Why are you so hard, aunt? Why do you make it so difficult for me to tell you about it?'

'Hard, Bell? You talk like a silly girl! If I am hard, it is because I am a woman and can understand! I do not blame you for having fallen in love with Mr Ainsworth; I blame you for getting yourself engaged to my son, while you were really in love with the other man! It is for that I blame you!'

'I am to blame. I do not seek to excuse myself. But I cannot help thinking, aunt, that if George and I had got engaged to each other a year ago, you would have been very glad to hear we had broken the engagement off as quickly as now!'

Her aunt looked at her angrily; but Isabel endured the look, and it fell.

'You are a wicked girl to think so!—much more, to say so!' said her aunt.

'And why, aunt,' said Isabel, 'is it wicked to speak the truth? It is not always kind or right to speak the truth, but you have driven me now to speak it!'

'Driven you? Because I have said you were to blame for engaging yourself to my son when you cared for another man? Because I feel for my son when you have bruised him when he's already crushed?'

'No, aunt! It is not that!—it is not that!—It is none of these things! You know it is not! It is that you are hard and unsympathetic! You are a woman, and a mother; you feel for your son, but you feel nothing for me!—you do not care what may become of me!—And do I not feel for George? The pain of the pain I must give him has been upon me for days and days!—But you do not understand! You do not care to understand!—You are not interested in me! You never were! You never loved me, aunt! Never!'

'You were always a rebellious child, Bell!—And now you wag an ungrateful and wicked tongue!'

But Isabel was now stricken with distress. Her strained feelings had given way and produced these jangling plaints, and she trembled with the excitement of them.

'Forgive me, aunt!' said she. 'It is indeed wicked and ungrateful to talk to you like that!—I don't know what has come to me!—But, oh, you do not know what I have endured for days!—Forgive me, dear!'

She impulsively embraced her aunt, who leaned her head on her shoulder and wept.

'Oh, wicked, wicked creature that I am!' cried Isabel.—'But why, dear, why were you so hard with me? Why would you not understand how it had come about?'

And these two women embraced and kissed each other, and understood each other better in that hour than they had all their lives before.

'I must see Uncle George,' said Isabel, when the emotions of both had been assuaged somewhat. 'I wonder if he is come in?'

Her aunt made inquiry; found he had returned, and told Isabel he was waiting for her in the library.

'Well, my lass,' said he, when she had entered the library and he had closed the door.

Her self-control gave way utterly, and she threw herself sobbing into her uncle's arms.

'There, my lass!—there!' he murmured, patting her shoulder. 'Thou'rt wi' thy owd uncle, and he cannot find it in his heart to blame tha!—Though 'twould ha' saved a lot o' trouble and cryin' if things had gone straight for'ard, instead o' comin' right in this hind-foremost kind o' way. But it's come right now, and we mun be as good friends as ever. Ainsworth's a good lad; and if you love him and he loves you, you're both set in th' right way.—And George, of course—well, George has got to open a new account all round: that's only right, after all.—Well now, my lass, about this money. Sit tha down, and let's ha' it out.'

'You must take it, uncle!' said Isabel, drying

her eyes. 'Please! If you want me to live happily, you must take it!'

'Suppose,' said Suffield, 'I take the money over and pay thee a percentage?'

'No, no, uncle!' she cried. 'It must be yours wholly and entirely!—I never want to see any thing of it again, or to hear of it!'

'It's queer,' meditated he, 'how thou dost hate that money! I wonder now if there was anything odd about th' way Harry got it?—However, thou sayst a percentage won't do. No.—But what, lass, if this money should be as unlucky to me as it has been to thee?'

'It won't be, uncle!' said she. 'It cannot be! You are a good man, and you will use it well and wisely!'

'I don't know,' said he, 'that that'll make any difference. Nevertheless, I suppose I must risk it.—But what the dickens,' he demanded, 'art tha going to do without it?'

'I suppose,' said she with a deep blush, 'we shall be married soon.'

'Of course, of course,' said her uncle. 'And he wants tha to g'v'e this money up?'

'He does, of course,' answered Isabel.

'Ah, he's young yet,' said he—'he's young.—But what about thy father's keep at that place?'

'We hope he needn't stay longer than the year; but in any case Alan wishes to pay it.'

'And thy Aged?'

'Among us we will manage that too—Alan and others.'

'Seems to me,' said her uncle, 'that's rather hard on Alan. A man might as well start wi' a family. Howsoever, these things'll get his hand into th' way o' extra expense: they'll be o' use to him that way.—Well, I suppose, thou must ha' thy way wi' thy owd uncle, as thou always did.'

'Dear uncle,' said she, 'how kind and indulgent you have always been!'

'Well, lass, I'll take this over for two or three years. By the end o' that time thou'll ha' learned th' value o' money better, wi' one thing and another, and may be glad to ha' it back.'

'Never, uncle—never!' she protested. 'You must take it for good and all, for better or worse.'

'Well, Isabel, my lass, I never was so unwilling to do anything for tha. But thou wilt ha' thy way.—I'll tak' and use th' money till thou dost ask for it back.'

'If I am wilful, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile, 'you are obstinate. But let us leave it as you say—leave it till I ask for it back.—I am really very grateful to you, uncle! You have done me a great favour! You have taken a terrible load off me!—Just then, a beam of the afternoon sun passing by the lofty and supercilious lords of Paliham, shed its gentle, wintry radiance on these two.—'It is a good omen!' exclaimed Isabel. 'Say, uncle dear, that it is!—Forgive me all the wrong I have done!'

Suffield was moved. He said nothing; but he put his kindly hand on his niece's head; and there was blessing in the act.

'How is it you two always get on so well together?' said Mrs Suffield, who entered at that moment.

'Tha knows, Bell,' said Suffield, taking his

wife's hand, 'I believe she begins to be jealous in her old age.'

'Old age!' exclaimed his wife. 'Speak for yourself, George!'

Isabel went to her aunt and embraced her. 'You forgive me, then?' she murmured.—Her aunt's answer was a caress and a kiss.—'I will come again before you go,' added Isabel—'to see Phemy.'

And thus in mutual forgiveness and reconciliation ended the stress and storm which with minds less just and generous and hearts less tender and true might have resulted in estrangement and hatred.

BUNHILL FIELDS.

NEXT to Westminster Abbey, there is perhaps no place of sepulture of such historic interest in the British Isles as Bunhill Fields; for there lie two men who in their writings have appealed as widely to English hearts as any who rest within the great Abbey—John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe. If John Milton lay with them, whom, as an Independent, we should expect to find in this the 'Campo Santo of the Dissenters,' the spot would indeed be very sacred. He rests, however, not far off, in the little church of St Giles, Cripplegate. Yet the locality of Bunhill Fields is indissolubly linked with the closing years of the poet, and it will therefore do no violence to the fitness of things to start on a pilgrimage to the burial-ground, as the writer did, from the spot first associated with Milton, namely, Bread Street.

Bread Street is now a narrow thoroughfare of warehouses running from Cheapside into Queen Victoria Street, crossing in its course Watling Street and Cannon Street. Bread Street 'is thrice blessed' with literary associations. Here Milton was born; from this street the 'Mermaid Tavern,' haunt of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson and of many others, had its chief entrance; and in St Mildred's Church, still standing at that corner where it meets Cannon Street, Shelley married Mary Godwin. The Great Fire swept away birthplace and church (All-Hallows) of Milton's baptism; but it is known that the 'Spread Eagle,' the house of his nativity, once occupied the site of the present row of warehouses known as '58 to 63 Bread Street.' The firm who are now in possession have placed a bust and inscription in an upper room. Th' house is two or three doors down the left side of Bread Street from the Cheapside end.

Crossing Cheapside, we make our way up Wood Street, a street opening almost opposite to Bread Street. This, too, is classic ground. Here that curious compound of worldliness and otherworldliness, Robert Herrick, poet and divine, was born; and this long and somewhat uninteresting street Wordsworth has made musical for ever with the song of the thrush which he heard 'at the corner of Wood Street.' Long though it is, it has an end, and its end is in Fore Street.

A few steps and the name Milton Street recalls our starting-point, but only by its name. It is the modern disguise for Grub Street, the miserable warren where the pamphleteers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had their

burrows. Fox, probably the most respectable literary dweller ever in that unsavoury region, wrote his 'Book of Martyrs' here—but that was before its notorious days; he lies with Milton in St Giles, the church of which he was incumbent for a short time, where, as Aubrey says, 'I ghesse Jo Speed and he lie together.' The new name was obviously suggested by its proximity to the street into which we now pass, so hallowed by memories of Milton, Bunhill Row.

The familiar Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields, last earthly home of the poet, we look for in vain; but careful search has very reasonably identified a spot not far from this southern end of the street, and on our left hand, as the former site of Milton's house. Here 'Paradise Lost,' 'Paradise Regained,' and 'Samson Agonistes,' were dictated to the three suffering and rebellious daughters; and here 'an ancient clergyman of Dorsetshire found the poet, dressed neatly in black; pale, but not cadaverous; his hands and fingers gouty and with chalk stones.'

Bunhill Fields Cemetery, when Milton was led, blind, through the Row, had hardly become the recognised burial-place of the Nonconformists; for we cannot but think the poet would have willed that his bones should lie with those of his brethren, had he known that within a few years the bodies of the blessed dead, of John Bunyan, of John Owen, of Daniel Defoe, of General Fleetwood, and of some fifteen of the Cromwell family, would be laid to rest here. The ground, which we enter from Bunhill Row, is well planted with trees, and is neatly kept by the beadle who guards the sacred enclosure—a straight causeway, paved with broad gravestones, leading across the Fields to City Road; little gateways in the iron fence allowing the curious and the wearied to wander or rest among the tombs. The graves lie close, so close, indeed, that there is little room for flower-beds, and yet the stones commemorate only six thousand of the one hundred and twenty-four thousand bodies crowded within this little space of barely four acres. Close by was the Great Plague Pit which Defoe describes in his semi-apocryphal History. At a rough calculation, bodies must lie in strata to a depth of some ten or fifteen feet beneath the surface; for the tombs of Fleetwood and of Henry Cromwell were discovered seven feet below the surface. The history of the preservation of the Cemetery from the irreverent encroachments of warehouses and the desolating hand of 'improvement' is almost romantic. Too long to relate here, suffice it to say that the loving care of faithful Nonconformists, with the co-operation of the Corporation of London, secured in 1868, by special Act of Parliament, the guardianship of the historical spot to a Committee of the latter for ever. Closed as a burial-ground in 1852, it then completed the roll of its mighty dead; its doomsday book now lies in twenty-seven volumes upon the shelves of Somerset House, among the Nonconformist Registers. The earliest date on any stone is on that of Debora Warr, Nov. 10, 1623; but as it is possible that this may be but an instance of re-interment from a neighbouring ground, the year 1665 is probably the earliest date of a burial.

When we pass into this God's-acre, the first tombs we instinctively seek for are those of

Bunyan, and of that other great idealist, Defoe. Defoe's monument is modern; Bunyan's, the restored form of the original; Defoe's, a granite obelisk, erected in 1870 'By the Boys and Girls of England to the Memory of the Author of "Robinson Crusoe";' Bunyan's, a somewhat elaborate sarcophagus tomb, upon which rests an effigy of the 'inspired tinker'; on either side a medallion, one representing Christian escaping from the Slough of Despond, the other, the falling-off of the burden from the shoulders of the Pilgrim, and at one end the inscription, 'JOHN BUNYAN, Author of "Pilgrim's Progress," ob. 31st Aug. 1688, æt. 60. Restored by public subscription, under the Presidency of the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, May 1862.' Both inscriptions pleasing in their simplicity, and in their contrast to the fulsome legends on many a surrounding tombstone. In Bunyan's grave is buried a Mr Strudwick, in whose house, on Snow Hill, the great writer reached the goal towards which, as a pilgrim, he had been journeying during his sixty years.

Perhaps in popular interest, if not in literary, the grave of Isaac Watts would rank next. Watts lived from 1713 to 1748 with a Sir Thomas and Lady Abney at Theobalds, in Hertfordshire; and afterwards at Stoke Newington, where he died in the latter year. Like that of Dr Johnson in the house of Mr and Mrs Thrale at Streatham, the presence of this good man was never deemed burdensome by his host, though his visit extended over thirty-five years! Here he probably wrote many of his familiar 'Hymns,' although it is known, from his own statement, that he published poems in 1705. Another popular hymn-writer, Joseph Hart, who died in 1768, also rests in Bunhill Fields.

The family most numerous represented in this burying-ground is that of Cromwell. The appearance of the names, upon two plain altar tombs, of Richard and of Henry Cromwell, at first sight would seem historically more suggestive than afterwards proves to be the case. For this Major Henry Cromwell was but the grandson of the Lord Protector, son of that Henry who was Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and who died in 1673, and lies buried somewhere in Cambridgeshire. It is hard to say what relationship this Richard Cromwell bore to the leader of the New Model Army; at all events, he was not the Richard who succeeded the Protector. No fewer than eleven, perhaps twelve, of the family are buried beneath this one tombstone. Not far from the Cromwells' tomb is buried a more interesting connection of the family, General Fleetwood, who married the eldest daughter of Oliver Cromwell. By this marriage, as is well known, he doubly bound himself to the fortunes of the Independents, for Dame Bridget Fleetwood was Dame Ireton before her second marriage, being the widow of Cromwell's trusted colleague, Lord-deputy Ireton. Another of Cromwell's officers, Lieutenant-colonel Kiffin, lies here in an unidentified grave, whose daughter was the wife of that Major Henry Cromwell whose family vault we have just visited. So the Cromwells and their connections fill no small space in this City burial-ground.

Amongst the names of the many Nonconformist divines, perhaps those of John Owen, D.D.,

Nathaniel Lardner, D.D., and George Burder, are most familiar. Owen, as a sentence in the long Latin inscription declares, with some obscurity as to its exact meaning, 'in divinity, practical, polemical, and casuistical, excelled others, and was in all equal to himself.' He died in 1683. Lardner's two chief works, 'The Credibility of Gospel History,' and 'Ancient Jewish and Heathen Testimonies to the Truth of the Christian Religion,' are named upon his tombstone; and as appropriate to his Christian name, the inscription closes with the exclamation, 'An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' Born the year after Owen's death, he departed this life in 1768. The familiar collocation of the words 'Burder's Village Sermons' is perhaps all that now perpetuates the memory of the divine who, born so far back as 1752, lived well into the year of Lord John Russell and the Reform Bill.

The surname of Thomas Doolittle, M.A., preserved amongst the twenty-seven volumes in Somerset House—for his grave is unidentified—certainly belies the man; for his sermons were of appalling length, one alone filling two hundred and fourteen pages of a good-sized volume, and in delivery demanding the attention of an audience for the space of some three hours and a half!

Of Thomas Bradbury, another divine, an amusing story is quoted in the admirable little guide-book printed by the City Lands Committee of the Corporation of London. He claimed to have been the first man in the kingdom to have announced publicly, as he did from his pulpit, 'Queen Anne is dead;' and under the following circumstances. Bradbury was a keen anti-Jacobite, was constantly dreading a return of persecuting days, and counted with somewhat indecent impatience the moments until the Protestant succession was secured to the throne of England. Crossing Smithfield on the morning of that Sunday in August 1, 1714, when Queen Anne breathed her last, ruminating sadly on the thought that he might be called upon at no distant date to prove his resolution and constancy, as the noble company of martyrs had done on that very spot, he met the Bishop of Salisbury, Gilbert Burnet, the well-known author of the 'History of his Own Time.' The Bishop, whose sympathies, as far as the House of Hanover was concerned, were quite in accord with Bradbury's, cheered the despondent Nonconformist with the intelligence that the queen had been given over by her physicians, and that he, Burnet, was on his way to court to ascertain all particulars. The Bishop seems to have been quite as anxious that Bradbury should have possession of the latest bulletin, as Bradbury was himself, and the following ingenious plan was proposed. Fearing lest Bradbury should be in the middle of his sermon when the messenger whom the Bishop promised to despatch should arrive, it was arranged that if the news was as they both hoped, a handkerchief should be dropped from the gallery by the messenger. Sure enough, when Mr Bradbury was preaching, the signal was seen fluttering down upon the head of some perchance slumbering member of the congregation; and so led to the announcement. Bradbury finished his sermon; in his closing prayer returning thanks for the deliverance of these kingdoms from the evil counsels

and designs of their enemies, and imploring a divine blessing upon 'His Majesty King George and the House of Hanover.'

The Preservation Committee have had inscribed upon the gate-pillars of the City Road entrance the names of the most distinguished who rest within. A singular clerical error occurs in the case of one familiar name, 'Samuel Wesley' appearing in mistake for 'Susannah Wesley.' The mother of John, Charles, and Samuel Wesley, and of sixteen other children, does indeed lie here, but Samuel does not. The inscription, on a very plain tombstone, records how that 'here lies the Body of MRS SUSANNAH WESLEY (widow of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A., late Rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire, who died July 23d, 1742, aged 73 years. She was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Samuel Annesley, D.D., ejected by the Act of Uniformity from the Rectory of St Giles's Cripplegate, August 24th, 1662.' Close by, across the City Road, stands the house (No. 47) in which John Wesley lived when incumbent of the City Road Chapel, of which he laid the foundation stone in 1777. He died in the same house, and his grave is in the little burial-ground behind the Chapel. It is not commonly known that under a flagstone in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey four children of Samuel Wesley, described as 'brother to John Wesley,' rest.

But the time would fail to tell of the many whose names we recognise as we wander through the grounds: of John Eames, F.R.S., personal friend of Sir Isaac Newton and Isaac Watts: of Lady Erskine, sister to Lord Chancellor Erskine: of Thomas Hardy, enlightened patriot, who suffered imprisonment in 1794 as a promoter of Radical Parliamentary Reform, but who lived to see his principles become law in the Reform Bill of 1832: of Joseph Hughes, founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society: of John Morley, whose 'high honour and inflexible integrity' were perpetuated in his son, the late Samuel Morley, M.P. for Bristol: of Hugh Pugh, the famous Welsh Harpist: of Thomas Stothard, R.A., the painter, whose illustrations of 'Robinson Crusoe' are dear to children and adults: and of many another. Two famous names we read upon the pillars, whose graves are unidentified: those of Joseph Ritson, F.S.A., the notable antiquary; and of William Blake, poet and painter. There is something in keeping with the life-history of this eccentric but inspired genius that oblivion should have closed over the exact spot of Blake's grave, one whom the world called mad.

Finally, Bunhill Fields is not without its quaintly worded inscriptions and examples of extravagant panegyric. Of the latter class, we commend the reader to the legend on the stone of a Dr Henry Hunter, for thirty-one years pastor of the Scots Church, London, as an admirable specimen. In it occurs the following remarkably modest statement: 'His best eulogium and his most durable memorial will be found in his writings, which the revolutions of years cannot efface; and when the nettle shall skirt the base of this monument, and the moss obliterate this feeble testimonial of affection—when, finally sinking under the pressure of years, this Pillar shall tumble and fall over the dust it covers, his name

shall be perpetuated to generations yet unborn.' Curiously enough, the Henry Hunter who is thus panegyricised was a native of Culross, on the Firth of Forth, and at one time minister of the parish of South Leith, before going to London. He died in 1802. The 'Sacred Biographies' and 'Sermons' published by him are probably now quite forgotten; and of his numerous volumes of translations, perhaps the only ones now known to book-hunters are the five which contain the text, with eight hundred engravings, of Lavater's 'Physiognomy,' published 1789-98, the original price of which was thirty pounds sterling.

As belonging to the quaint species of epitaph, the monument to a certain Lady Page may be cited. It contains the following extraordinary piece of information:

Here lies DAME MARY PAGE,
Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart.
She departed this life March 11, 1728,
In the 56 year of her age.
In 67 months she was tap'd 66 times,
Had taken away 240 gallons of water
Without ever repining at her case,
Or ever fearing the operation.

A TALE OF THE KARROO.

ACROSS the red, sandy karroo came 'trekking' a huge, lumbering Cape wagon, drawn by a span of sixteen oxen, which were continually urged on by the 'vorloopers,' two Kaffir lads. At the front of the wagon, beside the Kaffir driver, sat James Rockhurst, a big, black-bearded fellow of thirty-five or forty, whose once handsome face was sadly disfigured with the marks of many a scrimmage, for he had lived and fought in almost every rough corner of the globe. He had been a cowboy in Texas, a gold-seeker on the Pacific slope, a stock-rider in the Australian Bush, and goodness knows what beside; but, like the rolling stone that he was, he had gathered no moss. He had been drifted by the tide of circumstances to South Africa, and was now crossing the Great Karroo in the hope of getting a job on the ostrich farm of a distant relative.

By the side of the wagon rode another Englishman, on horseback. The rider, who was roughly dressed, was young—not much over thirty—and was an average specimen of the Cape colonist, with skin bronzed to a deep hue. He was singularly reticent about his personal affairs; and although the two men had now travelled in company for a couple of days, Rockhurst knew practically nothing about his companion save that his name was David Grant, and that he was last from the Transvaal. But although silent on one subject, Grant was by no means a bad companion. Occasionally he would gaze thoughtfully over the great rolling 'veldt,' and a wistful look of yearning anticipation would come into his eyes; but on the whole he was a pleasant fellow, and as mile after mile of the rough track was steadily covered, his laugh grew cheerier, his spirits rose higher, and, unconsciously, his fingers sought oftener than before the leathern belt strapped round his waist under his vest. This nervous action betrayed him, for Rockhurst's lynx-like eye took in his every movement.

'Diamonds!' quoth Rockhurst to himself, and his eyes glistened at the thought. All that fore-

noon as they trekked beneath the blazing sun; at noon, too, when they 'outspanned' for a couple of hours by the dams of a farmstead, the word was uppermost in his mind. Mr James Rockhurst's moral code was not of the highest, and his notions of right and wrong were peculiarly convenient.

That evening, the travellers halted for the night by the side of a 'sluit,' down which trickled a tiny stream. The Kaffirs made a fire, and over it the rude supper was cooked. Then the two white men, having smoked their last pipes, stretched themselves upon the 'kartel,' or hanging bedstead, inside the wagon; while the blacks got hopelessly drunk on a bottle of 'Cape smoke' they had procured at the farm where they had outspanned at mid-day.

About midnight, Rockhurst raised himself cautiously to a sitting posture and listened intently. His companion's regular breathing told him he was sleeping that sound sleep which follows a day in the saddle; and the loud discordant snores that came up through the floor of the wagon assured him that there was nothing to fear from the Kaffirs who lay beneath, stupefied by the vile stuff they had debauched themselves with. With as little movement as possible he drew the curtain of the wagon aside. Outside, the great full moon had turned the veldt into a plain of frosted silver. The glorious Southern Cross, too, looked down upon the tranquil scene, that was strangely out of harmony with the wicked thoughts that thronged the watcher's mind. The oxen lay contentedly near, and Grant's horse stood motionless, silhouetted against the fairy background, tethered to the stump of a prickly-pear. A moonbeam strayed in through the parted curtain and played softly on the sleeper's smiling features, as Rockhurst bent over him, his hands fingering the belt that encircled the prostrate figure. To one side of the girdle was fastened a small pouch. This the marauder detached and slipped into his own pocket. As he did so his unconscious victim stirred a little in his sleep and murmured 'Maggie;' but he did not wake.

'The fool is dreaming of his sweetheart,' muttered Rockhurst *sotto voce*, as he swung himself gently from the 'kartel,' and picking up the saddle from the floor, quietly left the wagon. Stopping for a moment outside to open the pouch and make sure that it contained what he expected—a few rough pebbles, diamonds in their 'gang'—he unhitched the horse, led him carefully a little distance beyond the wagon, saddled him, and springing upon his back, quickly disappeared over the moonlit plain. All that night the guilty man urged on his beast, keeping to the track as best he could. All the next day, too, he pushed on, stopping twice at lonely farmsteads to bait the horse and procure food for himself. He was no connoisseur of diamonds, and could not form any idea of the value of his plunder, but he judged that it must be worth some hundreds of pounds. He had got a good start, and he meant to keep it. The programme that evolved itself in his brain was this: He would make direct for Graaff Reynet, at which place he expected to arrive at least a couple of days before any information of the robbery, for news travels slowly over the veldt. There he

would take the train for Port Elizabeth, leave the cars before they got to their destination, and make the best of his way across country to East London, where he could ship to any distant port whither a vessel might be on the point of sailing.

Full of this determination, he spared neither himself nor his steed, and that night drew rein at a solitary farmhouse from one of the windows of which shone the light of a candle. The appearance of the homestead did not give one the idea that the tenant was blessed with a superfluity of this world's riches. The squat, mud-built dwelling-place was small and ugly, and the kraals and outbuildings were few and scanty. Nevertheless, Rockhurst determined to stop and beg for a night's quarters. Dismounting, he approached the house, and peered anxiously into the lighted room through the uncurtained window; but the sight he saw was far from the comfortable scene he expected. On a low settle, which had been transformed into a bed, a sick child—a little girl—of three or four years of age moaned wearily as she tossed restlessly in her feverish slumber; while in a chair in front of the dying embers in the grate a pale wan woman, haggard and hollow-eyed with long watching, sat lost in that deep oblivion which only overwrought nature can give.

'Smallpox!' exclaimed Rockhurst, recognising the symptoms of the loathsome disease on the face of the little sufferer. 'Bad, too! I'm getting out of this as sharp as I can—even if I have to camp out on the veldt all night;' and springing once more into the saddle, he urged on the jaded beast. But however much he tried, he could not rid himself of the sight of that little face disfigured with the fatal blotches. Suddenly he turned his horse's head. Something drew him back to the farm. A second time he approached the lighted window and peeped in. The sash was open at the top, and as he stood watching the pathetic scene, the parched lips of the tiny patient moved and faintly lisped: 'Mammy, want a drink!'

A jug and a cup stood upon the little table; but the woman in the chair was deaf to the plaintive voice. For four days and nights she had watched unremittingly by the sick couch; now her strength had failed; sleep had overcome even a mother's devotion; and it is doubtful whether anything short of an earthquake would have aroused her just then.

'Mammy, want a drink—want a drink, mammy—inam-my!' came again, still more faintly, from the settle.

In the moonlight, something suspiciously like a tear glistened in the corner of the hardened scamp's eye as he hitched his horse to a ring in the wall of one of the outhouses and turned to the door. No bolts stopped him, and, raising the latch, he stepped straight into the little room. With clumsy fingers, trembling with a strange emotion, he poured out the cooling drink and held the cup to the discoloured lips of the little sufferer. The child swallowed the draught eagerly, and then lay motionless for a few minutes before beginning to toss and moan as before. Next Rockhurst raked together the glowing embers, heaped on more fuel, and snuffed the candle with his fingers. Then he gazed round

the small apartment, and spying a box under the table, he drew it up to the hearth and set it opposite to the sleeping woman. Wrapping up the child in a blanket, he lifted her from the settle, and with his precious burden in his arms sat down on the box. As he swayed gently to and fro, the moaning grew fainter and less frequent, and finally ceased as the little one, without opening her eyes, turned her face towards him and snuggled closer to his rough breast. The crisis was past; and, thanks to Rockhurst's timely attentions, a peaceful, health-giving slumber had come to the child.

On and on through the long dreary watches of the night the woman slept soundly; and no less securely did the child rest cradled in the arms of her rough-handed nurse. The candle burnt down into the socket and went out with a splutter, and still the man sat motionless in the flickering firelight, for fear lest he should awake his charge. The moon sank beneath the western horizon, the stars faded and the dawn appeared, and just as the rim of the rising sun became visible above the veldt, the woman stirred in her chair and awoke with a start. 'Oh, my child—my poor darling!' she exclaimed in an agony of alarm. Then her eyes fell upon the stranger, and a look of helpless bewilderment came into them.

'Hush!' said Rockhurst; 'the kid's all right. See! she's sleeping soundly.'

'Thank God!' cried the woman, as the tears rolled down her cheeks. 'I must have fallen asleep. I—Oh! how could I ever forgive myself if any harm had come to my little one—my precious Lisbeth? But you, sir—how did you come here? Are you a man or an angel in disguise?'

At this, Rockhurst smiled grimly, the woman's surmise was so *very* wide of the mark. Nevertheless, it made him feel decidedly uncomfortable. 'No; I ain't no angel, marm, as I know on,' he replied; 'I'm only a poor traveller, who saw your light, and came to beg a night's shelter. I peeped in at the window and heard the kid ask for a drink; so I just stepped in and gave it one, and thought as how I might as well stop till you woke up. So, you see, it's only by chance I happen to be here.'

'No, don't say that,' cried the woman; 'say, rather, that God sent you. Oh, how can I ever thank you and Him? If it had not been for your coming, my poor little Lisbeth might have died!'

'Now, don't you take on so, marm—don't say nothing about it,' replied Rockhurst huskily, as he handed her his burden. 'I don't want your thanks; but I'd be much obliged to you if you'd give me a mouthful of something to eat and a feed for my horse, and then we must be jogging again.'

The mother laid her sleeping child tenderly upon the couch, and then bustled out intent on hospitable matters. Soon she returned with food, and placed it before the hungry man, who fell to with ravenous appetite, while his hostess went off to rouse one of the Kaffirs to attend to the horse. While she was absent, the man's eye fell upon a book which lay open upon the table. He drew it towards him, and mechanically turned over the pages until he came to the fly-leaf, upon which

was written in a bold hand the name 'David Grant.' The cake he was conveying to his mouth with the other hand fell untasted from his lips. Good heavens! could it be possible? Was he eating the bread of the man he had robbed? Could this be?— There was not time for further conjecture, for at that moment the woman re-entered. Her maternal anxiety led her first to the couch to make sure that her child was all right. This gave the man a little time in which to recover himself; and when she turned round, he asked, with assumed carelessness, as he pointed to the name on the fly-leaf: 'That your husband, marm?'

'Yes; that is my husband—my David,' she replied, with a smile that spoke volumes. 'I am expecting him home every day. Won't you stay until he comes and can help me to thank you for what you have done for our only child?'

'No; I must be on the move directly,' Rockhurst replied. Then he added, quite casually: 'Husband been away long, marm?'

'Twelve months—twelve long, weary months,' she said, with a sigh. 'You see, it was like this. Things were bad on the farm. We had made little or nothing for three or four years. Then came the dreadful drought. The water in the dams ran short; the well gave out, and we lost nearly all our stock. That decided David. He gave up all hope of making money at farming, and determined to try his luck at the Diamond Fields. It is just a year since he left for Kimberley, leaving me and old Grierson, the overseer, to look after what little stock we had during his absence. I didn't try to stay him, although the parting well-nigh broke my heart, for I knew that his mind was set upon it. His letters, sometimes hopeful, sometimes desponding, have been my comfort during his absence. At first, things went against him; but at last the luck changed, and now all the weary waiting is over, and I shall soon have him at home again. He doesn't know his child is ill—he doesn't know how I have sat hour after hour by her side, watching the flickering spark of life, and not daring to think—afraid even to hope. But now the worst is past; little Lisbeth will soon be well and strong again; David—my David will be with us; and we shall all go to England, to settle down in the old country on the results of his labours at the Diamond Fields. Now, do stay—do, I beg of you. David will be so vexed when he learns what you have done for us—how, probably, you have saved our darling's life—if he cannot thank you. He will be home, perhaps to-morrow—to-day.'

Great beads of sweat stood on Rockhurst's brow as he listened to Maggie Grant's words. When she had finished speaking, he rose and paced thoughtfully to and fro across the little room, while the woman looked on wonderingly. Suddenly he stopped, faced about, and drawing the leather pouch from his pocket, flung it upon the table. 'Dash it! marm,' he cried; 'I can't stand this no longer. When your husband comes home, tell him I brought on his horse and his diamonds and delivered 'em safe;' and with these words he snatched up his hat and strode out of the door.

A faint glimmer of the truth broke in upon the astonished woman. Still, what were all the

diamonds in the world compared to the life of her child? 'Come back!—come back!' she cried, hastening after him. But Rockhurst only quickened his steps. And murmuring 'God bless you! Heaven will reward you!' she stood and watched him out of sight.

But he never reached Graaff Reynet. The fatal sickness, caught from little Lisbeth Grant, was already insidiously at work within him, and the hand of Death was even then upon him. After two or three days' weary plodding, his strength gave out, and he laid himself down upon the veldt to die. It was here that David Grant found him, and took him back in a wagon to his farm. It was Maggie Grant who spoke the soothing words of comfort that sank into the dying man's heart like the welcome rain into the parched veldt; and it was David Grant's hands that closed the glazed eyes when the Angel of Death had borne away the erring soul.

SEAL-HUNTING ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

THE greater part of the sealskins sent to the London market are obtained by schooners which sail from Victoria, British Columbia, in the spring of each year, provided with many boats and hunters, and cruise during the summer and early autumn in the Behring and Arctic seas, where the seals are killed in large numbers, often in the 'rookeries' or gathering-places on some of the islands, where they crawl up on terra-firma, and are easily slaughtered. There are, however, quite a number of skins obtained, a few at a time, along the west coast of Vancouver Island and the north-west shores of British Columbia, chiefly by the Siwash Indians; and it is one of the latter expeditions we propose to describe.

The north and western portion of Vancouver Island is about as wild a country as any in the world, consisting entirely of huge rocky mountains, some of the higher peaks crested with eternal snow, and dense forests of fir, cedar, and hemlock. It is a land of great lonely lakes, of rapid rivers, and almost impenetrable forest jungles, through which even the foot of the Siwash rarely penetrates, and inhabited only by elk, black bear, wolf, and eagle. The coast is, however, wonderfully beautiful; here and there a great mountain slopes almost perpendicularly into the sea, clothed with the dark green of fir and pine right down to the water-line; while between are to be found lovely bays, stretches of golden sand; and occasionally, in some deep rock-bound fiord, the mouth of a river issuing from the unknown interior wilderness of impassable forest and rocky peak.

The Siwash or coast Indians of the Pacific are a very different race from the Indians of the plains, and are, generally speaking, cleanly and industrious. While they do not engage in any regular labour, such as road-making, logging, or mining, they are expert hunters and fishermen; and by seal-hunting, catching salmon for the large canneries, and hop-picking, frequently enjoy what is for them quite a considerable income, and are often better customers at the stores in the small villages than the white settlers. The

Siwash villages or 'rancheries' on the coast very much resemble one another, so that the description of the one we sailed from would apply fairly accurately to them all.

The reader must imagine two high mountains running for some distance into the sea, covered to their feet with huge fir-trees; between them a deep narrow valley, almost impenetrable from the thick timber, through which a river of perfect clearness runs to the sea; and on the north bank, two or three very large one-storeyed houses, built of boards roughly split out of fir-logs, in which many families of the Siwash live, each having its own particular portion of the floor, on which the bedding of skins and blankets is spread. From the roof hang long strings of smoked salmon; and in the corners are large jars and empty coal oil tins, filled with seal oil, on which, with the smoked salmon, they occasionally live for weeks together without any other food. The men are short and broad-shouldered, with by no means a dark skin; and some of the women or 'klootchmen' might compare not unfavourably with European ladies in appearance, at all events when young. They are generally good-humoured, and always seem to be pleased with the company of white people.

Looking seaward, the Pacific stretches away into the infinite distance; while along the shore at all times there is a fringe of snowy surf. Great glassy swells come rolling in, some of them nearly a mile in length, round and smooth until they reach the shoal water of the beach, when they range themselves up into great green walls, partly transparent where the bright sunlight strikes through them, and crested with a comb of pure white foam, till, rushing onward, they curl over and break on the sand or shingle with a shock like an earthquake, and pour back again down the slope a broken mass of sparkling green streaked with purest white, accompanied by the grinding and rattling of the shingle and stones that are whirled along with the backwash. All day and all night the thunder of the surf fills the air, although a gale of wind is almost unknown on this coast, where even a fresh breeze is rarely seen.

During the spring, summer, and autumn, at least the northern coast of the Pacific, with its soft warm winds and almost changeless blue sky, certainly seems to approach the ideal of an earthly paradise. Owing, however, to the great breakers rolling in, it is impossible to make a landing except in a river-mouth or under the lee of an island or reef. Early in the morning we launched our canoe, a Siwash sea-canoe, twenty-six feet long, with about four feet beam, and some twenty-six inches deep inside. These canoes are chopped solid out of a large cedar log, and show very fine workmanship. They have a beautiful shear-line, fine hollow bow flaring above water, and surmounted by a projecting beak, which, besides being ornamental, serves to lift the boat in a seaway and to take her through without shipping any water. They are always propelled by paddles, and carry two small spritsails; but being nearly flat-bottomed, are not good under canvas except with a fair wind, when they can run very fast, and will go dry through a surf that would swamp most ships' boats.

There were four of our party—a white man,

myself, and two Siwash. For stores we took a bag of flour and a tin of yeast powder, some pork, tea, sugar, and a bundle of smoked and salted salmon. A large double-bitted axe and our rifles, three 44-70 Winchester repeaters, were carefully piled on top. Each, of course, had also the inevitable couple of brown or green blankets. We soon dropped down the river, and had the usual anxious time going through the surf, which, for some unknown cause, was rather bad that morning. Right across the mouth we could see three great green ridges curling up one behind another, and the chance of getting through looked a poor one. Two of us paddled on each side, the two whites, one on either side amidships, and a Siwash at bow and stern.

The first roller was a small one, and before we knew it, we felt ourselves high on its crest, and apparently carried along backwards, stern first, with the speed of an express. All the four paddles were worked like mad, and drawing away from the summit of the breaker, we flew down its steep side until we met the second, a huge and almost perpendicular wall of glittering green water. The paddles were held in the water to take the way off her, and to keep her head on, and then the writer firmly closed his eyes, quite expecting next moment to be striking out for the surface from beneath a fathom or two. Fortunately, this was not necessary; the canoe seemed to be standing almost upright on her keel, and then all the paddles again being frantically urged, we rushed safe and dry, down the other side, to meet the third comber. Unluckily, she took a shear, and instead of the flaring bow and high beak meeting the sea-end on, the comb struck us slantwise, and poured in over the starboard bow. However, the next was a small one; and not quite washed out, we stretched away into the now smooth rollers and plied the bailing can. Luckily, a bag of flour will stand a good deal of wetting without damage; the water will apparently only penetrate about a quarter of an inch, making a dough with dry flour inside.

Setting the two spritsails and shipping the rudder, we stood away to the northward, sailing all day and all night before a gentle south-west breeze. The climate here is perfect during a great part of the year, and it is hard to say which is the most beautiful, day or night. Under either brilliant starlight or with the almost daylight radiance of the moon, on the one hand the long smooth swell of the Pacific, and on the other the dim and hazy outline of majestic mountain or silent forest, the picture was one that, once seen, is never forgotten, accompanied and driven into the memory as it was by the distant roar of the breakers on the beach. At sunrise in the morning all were on the lookout for a seal; and before noon we saw a dark object motionless on the water, apparent half a mile away. The sail being taken down, the canoe was gently paddled towards the seal, which was asleep on the surface of the water; and the writer and one Siwash, each with a rifle in hand, crouched in the bow. Slowly we were paddled up until, when about one hundred and fifty yards away, the seal moved, and appeared to roll over. At once both of us fired, and our prey disappeared only to again come to the surface, splashing and rolling

about. The Siwash kept on working the 'Magazine,' much to our disgust. We could only hope that he was a bad marksman, and would therefore not plug the skin more than necessary. However, in a minute or two we were alongside, and had the prize safely on board. Then a somewhat unusual fresh breeze sprang up, and after an hour or two turned the smooth rollers into rather nasty crested seas for a deeply loaded canoe; and we were at length glad to step the foremast and run for the shelter of an island, on the lee side of which the canoe was beached in fairly smooth water and launched up.

As so far we had fed on dried salmon alone, we were glad to have a chance of making some bread. A hole two or three feet deep was scraped in the soil, and a big fire of fir-wood chopped out of the all-prevailing forest made over and in it. After the hole had filled up with red embers, and had become hot enough, it was carefully raked out; the flour, at once mixed with yeast powder and water into a dough without kneading, was wrapped up and put in; and in a short time the large loaf was ready, a good many pounds in weight. Primitive as the outfit is, the writer has never seen more wholesome bread turned out by city baker than that made in this manner by many a lonely lake and mountain in the far North-west.

Next day we again launched the canoe, and with a gentle fair wind, stood again to the north. Day after day and night after night passed, always the same soft wind, the ever blue sky, the bright sun overhead by day, and the silver moon at night. All day the shore on our starboard hand rose high and rocky; the lower sides of the hills, covered with dark-green firs, with a dividing line of white surf where the dark foliage met the deep blue of the sea, the only difference between day and night being the softened outlines and grayer colours during the latter. This was very pleasant; but as seven or eight days passed before we killed our second seal, asleep on the surface like the first, it was by no means profitable business; and as the provisions were getting low, we had reluctantly to turn the canoe's head southward with only two skins aboard. A sealskin on the animal is very different from the same made up into a jacket or mantle. In its natural state it is covered with a long and rather coarse hair, which is either cut off or pulled out by the furriers before the soft and glossy appearance of the made-up article can be obtained.

As the wind had drawn round to the south-east, and as the canoes will not turn to windward under sail, we had to take down our masts and settle down to steady hard labour, paddling all day dead to windward, and all night too, unless we could get ashore under the lee of an island. Under these circumstances, the time passed tediously enough, and no one was in the best of tempers, until, when nearly home, and pretty well worn out, one day, when driving the canoe through a little frothy head sea, a seal suddenly came up within fifty yards of her. All of us had been used to quick shooting at deer rushing through the thick bush; and the paddles were tossed into the boat and rifles grasped instead in the course of a second or two, and before the seal had time to see us, two bullets—one in his

head and the other through the body—stretched him out, an ungainly object, close alongside. The wind freshening still, and there being no place where a landing could be made, we had to steadily slave away with the paddle; and after nearly thirty hours of almost uninterrupted labour, we reached the mouth of the river we had left. The wind being partly off the land, and the surf running, of course, with us, we came through quite dry, and were delighted to stretch our aching backs and arms, and to camp at night in the then, to us, luxurious though flea haunted rancherie, instead of on the damp flooring of a rolling canoe.

As the skins are only worth from twelve to fourteen dollars each, it will easily be seen that the trip was not a great financial success; but for any lover of nature, a similar voyage along this beautiful and almost untrodden coast, with the great snow-capped mountain rising over the coast ranges, its lonely, dense forests, and wonderful deep fiords, seen under the almost unchanging blue sky, would form an experience not to be forgotten in a lifetime.

IN HOSPITAL.

In the long night-time, when the ward was chill
And drear with sleeping faces thin and white,
One lay in wakeful silence, wan and still,
And waited for the light.

And as he lay and waited for the morn,
And peered about the dim, familiar room,
The door into that glimmering place forlorn
Opened, and some one entered through the gloom—

A shadowy Shape that filled him with a vast
Vague fear; it came in silence and alone;
Mutely it glanced from bed to bed, and passed,
But paused beside his own—

Paused, and looked down, and all his terrors fled;
He grew as quiet and as restful now
As if his mother stooped beside the bed
And laid her cool hand on his fevered brow.

And looking up into its eyes but seemed
Like looking into hers that loved him so;
He heard old voices speak, as if he dreamed,
Of things of long ago.

And 'What art thou?' he asked the Shadow then,
'Who comest so like memory old and dear,
That I, who feared thy coming, loved thee when
I saw thine eyes and felt thy presence near?'

Then, in the hush, an answering whisper saith—
(His child it was that answered, or his wife,
Loved and long lost)—'This is that Angel, Death,
Whose name in heaven is Life.'

And when the night was gone, and morning shed
A sunny glory into all the place,
They came and put the screen about his bed,
And wondered at the smile upon his face.

A. ST J. ADcock.

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A DAY IN ELSINORE.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

THE chance of travelling in Denmark in a train called 'express' was of itself alone almost enough to tempt me to take the run from Copenhagen to Elsinore. Nothing more terrible as a trial of patience can be imagined for an impetuous man than a long course of railway journeys in Scandinavia. It is much the same in Sweden and Denmark in this respect. If you fail to get into an express train—and there are very few of these—you may spend a whole day in covering less than a hundred dreary miles.

Besides, in my case it was winter. It is all very well in the bright northern summer to have from ten to twenty minutes to loiter at each little railway station. In winter, however, when you may have thirty or forty degrees of frost in the outer air, the constant going and coming of travellers keeps you in a perpetual state of discomfort, and you have no inducement to stretch your legs in these little wayside stations, which have nothing for you except a dull series of advertisements and a succession of keen draughts.

The distance to Elsinore is rather under forty miles. To cover this in a little over an hour is a feat of which the Danish State officials are reasonably proud. In Denmark the bulk of the railways are in the hands of the Government. This has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. A Government is bound, for example, to care for its subjects. Therefore, perhaps, it is that slow but sure travelling is one of the features of Danish railway locomotion, even as also the carriages are in winter kept excellently warmed. On the other hand, the fruits of enterprising competition between rival railway companies are not obtained. As a further comment upon the State influence here, it may be mentioned that the more important trains carry electric light, in the blessing of which even the lowest class of travellers participate.

Elsinore is famous for two or three characteristics. I suppose most of us on this side of the

German Ocean are still fanciful enough to think of it chiefly in connection with Hamlet and his father's ghost. Until about a generation ago, to merchant shippers it was a subject of execration because of the Sound dues, which were here collected. Both these elements of interest may, however, be dismissed from the mind nowadays. To the ordinary person, whether a business man or a seeker after the picturesque, the town appeals most as the ferry port betwixt Denmark and Sweden. There is here only some two and a quarter miles of waterway in the Sound. A man must try very hard if he is to be sea-sick in so brief a crossing, especially with so much beauty and animation around him: the gay villas of Helsingborg on the Swedish side, with their wooded knolls; Kronborg's noble castle by Elsinore; the long line of Danish pleasure resorts north and south; and the myriad of craft of all kinds—from one tonners to five thousand tonners—which adorn the blue waters far as the eye can see up and down the Sound.

As it was winter, however, with the thermometers of Copenhagen sticking at zero, I scarcely expected a surfeit of the beautiful either *en route* or at Elsinore itself. An unkind gray fog hung over the capital when we left it; the same mantle stayed low upon the spew-bound landscape on either hand of us. From out of it, once or twice, several blotches of black stood strongly, telling of the forests around the summer palaces of Denmark's king. But there was too much rime on the window of the car to allow more than a dim glance at these. I had as companion a stout, good-natured man, who entertained me with English conversation. He had been cut to pieces by a railway train years back during a holiday in which he had come from America to his homeland; and, thanks to his amazing constitution and the doctors, his trunk had survived the shock. I did not at first notice how he was mutilated, he looked so hale in the face. He was extremely anxious to be agreeable, poor fellow, and succeeded entirely. 'Now, what,' he asked, after telling about his accident, 'would

you have done if you had been me? Would you have stayed in Denmark or gone back to America?' It was an odd question, since I knew nothing of his circumstances. But on general grounds it seemed to me that for the battle of life in the States at least a pair of hands and legs are necessary; and so I commended him for his own determination. The commendation pleased him.

Near Elsinore, the train hugs the sea-shore; but on this day you would never have dreamed you were by ocean's flowing tide. In fact, there was no water to be seen. All was frozen fast, and buried beneath six or seven inches of new-fallen snow. The fog east cut the horizon short even as it severed it in the west. There was but a white level skirting for the mind to toy with. Here and there men were to be seen fishing. They had dug themselves holes in the ice, and tried for their prey with nets and long-handled tridents. Snow-bound villas with fantastic eaves and gables rose at intervals in the haze, compelled admiration, and were lost to sight. And so at length we sped into Elsinore station, which my companion described, and I think justly, as 'the most beautiful in the world.'

Here the ferry-boat was at hand, ready to plough its way through the ice-floes to Sweden. A bevy of travellers in furs boarded it; and a bevy of disestablished watermen, fisher-folk, and others stood by with blue noses to watch its interesting exodus. For my part, I was not for Sweden to-day. When I had watched the boat begin its crunching against the blue bergs, I put my hands deep in my pocket and went away to see what I could of Elsinore.

The town is a neat little place of about nine thousand inhabitants, and shows very scant traces of the antiquity it may claim to have. Its streets are cobbled and flagged, and its houses mainly of wood, with a certain irregularity of style, though similarity of windowed gables, which has a pleasing effect. The Elsinore children were sliding their way to school with reckless swing of their book-bags and with very rosy cheeks. Save for the children, Elsinore's streets slept tranquilly under the snow which covered them. I soon came to an amiable signpost which told me just what I wished to know. It bore two black, weathered arms. Upon the one was the word 'Kronborg;' and upon the other was written 'Marienlyst.' Thanks to the fog, the Kronborg arm seemed a mere delusion. For whither it pointed could be seen nothing but a fuming and stinking factory of gas and storeyard of coal. Instead of the gracious pinnacles and embellished gables of the mediæval castle, there were chimney shafts, grimed walls, and doors inscribed, 'No admittance except on business.' From one of these last, a trio of black-faced operatives emerged into the purer outer fog as I passed the place.

For the present, however, I left Kronborg to itself. I was for Marienlyst, that sweet strand of villas bowered amid trees, of green meadows bordering the yellow sands laved by the blue sea, with its bosky ridge binding it close on the west, as if to keep the pure air of the ocean diffused through it. The snow was quite tiresome. It must have been a foot deep when I had left the last house of the suburbs behind me. They had gazed at me somewhat inquisitively

from these snug little white houses, as I plodded past their double windows.

Marienlyst was in white mourning. Its houses on the edge of the sand and its radiant crimson and yellow villas were thick in snow and desolate as the Pyramids at midnight. No cheerful threads of azure smoke were visible above the chimney-pots. The very entrances were flanked high with drifts of snow, and icicles of appalling magnitude hung from the gutters of the roofs like portcullises. A belated bird squeaked rather than twittered as it flew over my head; and the thin wail of the telegraph wire was heard through the fog. I saw no one in front; and now that I had gone from Elsinore, I could see no one behind. The white statues in the gardens of the Bath Hotel—empty as a soap-bubble—looked altogether miserable. Can you imagine anything more distressing to a sympathetic person than the discovery of groups of Graces, Venuses, and the like, unclothed, in the open, with snow to their knees and thirty degrees of frost pinching their woe-begone faces?

But I had not come to Marienlyst to see empty houses or the martyrdom of marble ancients. Like the rest of my countrymen, I yearned to see where Hamlet, that wondrous madman, lies interred. For the moment I was content to laugh anachronisms to scorn. Faith should overcome them, as it has overcome so many tougher obstacles. Much, indeed, should I have to reproach myself with, if, being at Elsinore, I failed—no matter what the season—to commune with this brilliant young Dane's disembodied spirit in echoing its own corporeal utterance so many centuries ago, 'To be or not to be,' &c.

I had no very exact idea where to look for the sepulchre. Chance came to my aid. I plunged into one drift worse than the rest, and in scrambling from it saw a mound beyond, overshadowed by trees. A monolith, small and smoothly chiselled, topped the mound. It was as I guessed. This pretty little pile of rockery, a few feet high, covered Hamlet's dust—the trivial remains of the inspirer of an inspired man. Upon the monolith may be read the convincing words, 'Hamlets Grav.' I hope my readers will not misunderstand me, that they will, in short, see that 'My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites.' I could not possibly, though I had strained my hypocrisy to the bursting-point, have shed the tear of sensibility here, so persuaded was I of the unauthenticity of the tombstone. Nevertheless, I was not wholly unmoved. The fancy has its own empire.

Subsequently, I bought a photograph of the grave in a shop in Elsinore. I asked the young woman who sold it to me if she had any doubt of the truth of the thing. 'Was it really Hamlet's grave?' She seemed shocked that I could even hint at scepticism on such a subject, and would have put the photograph aside for a more worthy purchaser, had I not interfered. As if to overwhelm me with evidence, and the more to pique my unbelieving nature, she would fain also have found for me a picture of the brook in which poor Ophelia drowned herself. It was somewhere in the shop, she was sure. I urged her to seek for it; but she sought in vain. 'It is a very little river, sir,' she said, as if to excuse herself for being unable to discover its photograph. I am sorry, truly sorry, I cannot put

poor Ophelia's brook in my album of curiosities side by side with Hamlet's tombstone.

Satisfied with my experiences in Marienlyst, I returned to Elsinore. At the byroad I deviated to Kronborg. The fog still held; but there were scarlet-coated soldiers on the track, and following them as torches, I soon came to the broad moat and drawbridge of the castle. A couple of warriors were in the ditch sweeping a convenient area on its ice for the exercise of the officers and their ladies. Above them loomed the nearer of Kronborg's pinnacles. The castle is a showplace in summer. There is a tariff for admission, which includes an ascent to the telegraph tower, the highest point of the old fortress. The girl who took me in hand, however, positively declined this latter adventure. If I would wait for her father—the orthodox cicerone—it might be compensated. Even then, it seemed a freak of folly in mid-January. But when the man came he showed more regard for a traveller's enthusiasm. Without ado we crossed the courtyard of the castle, its snow studded gaily with knots of gossiping soldiers, and straightway attacked the steps. But of course there was very little to repay us for our toil. The snow on the turret roof was a fathom deep and soft as pepper. The wind howled over the exposed summit. And there was nothing to be seen from it except the castle courtyard much foreshortened, and the piled sand on the seaward side of the castle, with the pallid mist wrapping sand and the frozen Sound with chill impartiality.

The chapel of Kronborg was much more cheerful to behold. Its woodwork pulpit, pews, organ, and royal 'box'—if I may call this so—of minute carving and brilliant colouring, with a predominance of scarlet, gladden the eyes. It is small but dainty. My guide bestowed a string of eulogistic adjectives upon it, and really quite half of them were not much out of place.

There are also pictures in Kronborg—a double suite of low rooms full of them. The pictures are poor things, even the historical ones scarcely sufficiently well done to allow the mind to appreciate them for the drama in them, quite apart from their demerits of workmanship.

Two features only stay in the mind as strong reminiscences of Kronborg. The one is the small octagonal chamber always associated with Caroline Matilda, Christian VII.'s divorced queen, and our George III.'s sister. If she had a soul much alive to the attraction of marine prospects, this room must have given her pleasure at times. Its outlook over the Sound and Sweden is admirable in fair weather. But on this day it sounded grim to hear that the poor lady occupied such an apartment. As well might a man be congratulated on inhabiting a cage suspended from London Bridge during a week of persistent fog. A little after we had viewed this chamber, the guide brought me level with a kind of terrace, on the eastern side of the castle, with banks of dingy sand pressing it, the sand set with trivial guns, pointed seaward. Here the gentleman struck an attitude, and with a flourish of hand that would not have discredited a real life 'cicerone' of Italy, remarked: 'This is where the spirit appeared—Hamlet's father's spectre, the royal ghost! This is the terrace it haunted, and here were the soldiers when it appeared to them.'

The announcement did not come unexpected. Still, I could not welcome it seriously. There was less here to send it home to the mind than I had found by Hamlet's grave. I suppose, however, one must treat most legends with a certain mercy. I did not therefore attempt to cross-examine my guide, but received his statements reverentially, as I gazed at the snow-clad terrace and the forbidding sand with its artillery.

Such are the attractions of Kronborg, which has now fallen from its high estate as a guardian of the Baltic, to become a mere barrack!

The short January day had already begun to wane when I had done with the castle. I returned, therefore, to the railway station, dined in view of the score or two of fast-frozen steamboats and barques in the port, smoked my cigar, and prepared for the evening express back to Copenhagen. My friend of the morning did no more than justice to Elsinore's railway station in talking of its beauty. It is a gem of a railway station—in style more nearly Elizabethan than aught else, though in Denmark they would call it Christian the Fourthian, since that monarch in the sixteenth century introduced it so largely throughout his realm. Externally, it is of red brick and white stone, having a staircase gable in the middle of its façade, flanked by a square tower, capped by a pinnacle on either side. Within, it is altogether pleasing, with its red brick walls, pale-blue iron girders, whence depend electric lamps shaped like ostrich eggs. Its very advertisements are artistically arranged, and none are aggressively prominent. The officials are in keeping with their chaste surroundings: comely men with the courtesy of aristocrats.

I ought to grieve to confess it, but really Elsinore's railway station stays in my mind as the most engaging thing in the district. It is a model. One cannot help being utilitarian. Hence I feel no shame in avowing that all Elsinore's traditions about the royal Hamlet are of weak interest compared to this excellent achievement. The architect's name deserves to go down to posterity.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XII.

You love: no higher shall you go,
For this is true as Cæsar's text;
Not noble *then* is never so,
Either in this world or the next.

TENNYSON.

WHAT a curiously constituted thing the human heart is! It is no wonder so many novels and love-stories are written, for the variety of effect produced on the puppets when love pulls the strings is infinite, and there is no calculating beforehand what will happen; it can never be reduced to an exact science or argued about; the same causes produce directly contrary effects, and the unexpected is generally what happens, though not invariably so; so we may not even reckon on that.

There is, however, one thing that I think is generally the case, and that is, that anything like opposition strengthens the feeling of love—indeed,

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may sometimes be said to create it. Perhaps this was the case with Maurice Moore. I cannot help feeling that if he had not hastened his departure from Scar in consequence of Owen Ludlow's representations—if Owen Ludlow had held his tongue even at the risk of that last remaining day, allowing opportunities for yet more tender tête-à-têtes, or farewell words, Maurice Moore would have gone away and forgotten all about Sage. I even go further, and think that if he had not had to get up so very early to catch the up-train—if the morning had not been wet and the walk into Shingle muddy and uncomfortable—if his portmanteau even had arrived, as it should, the same evening, instead of visiting about at various stations on the way up, and only reaching its destination at the end of three days, thereby causing much discomfort and irritation to its possessor, if none of these *contre-temps* had happened, he might not have remembered her so constantly. But he felt that he was enduring a good deal for her sake, beginning with his old friend Ludlow rounding on him, and not, he maintained, doing him justice; and this sense of injury rankled, and naturally kept him in mind of the cause of it.

And then, when he got back to Edelstadt, he found the society there uncongenial. The reigning beauty at the Embassy at the time was a girl who had 'a tongue with a tang' to it; and Maurice got into her bad books, and she used her sharp weapon unmercifully on him. She was a good deal cleverer than he was, and she made him look ridiculous before other men, and that is a thing hard to forgive. And there was a new *attaché*, whom the beauty greatly affected, and who was well off, and had expectations in the future, and a possible title; and on every occasion, this 'conceited puppy'—as Maurice, perhaps unjustly, entitled him—was preferred to Maurice, and brought very much to the fore.

At another time, Maurice might have been amused at this petty warfare, and have taken up the cudgels, and paid his enemy back in her own coin; but he had no one to back him up, and laugh over the joke of it with; for one of his special friends out there had gone to India, and another was in very low-water, and too much taken up with his own troubles to enter into other people's jokes. And it is almost impossible to go on feeling amusement at a joke, especially one with a sting in it, unless you have some one to participate in the fun.

And then, too, he was not very well; and it is humiliating to realise how much this may have to do with emotions of the heart. I am afraid sometimes that a blue pill may have a very beneficial effect on a broken heart, and a tonic prevent the worm in the bud from preying on the damask cheek. Anyhow, circumstances within and without him combined to give Maurice a disgust of his present life, of the empty round of inane society, and of the conventional girls he met there, whom he had found tolerable enough before they had begun to worship the rising sun,

and of the empty-headed men who had not two ideas to rub one against another.

So, naturally, his mind reverted to the little, fair girl at Scar, who never said a sharp, cutting word, though it was not for want of brains; for she had twice as much in her as that sneering Miss St Clair, 'who thinks herself so mighty clever.' Sage was not one of those conventional dressed-up dolls of whom you could calculate to a nicety beforehand what she would say on any subject. Sage's conversation was full of simple little surprises, always pleasant ones too; her opinions were not second-hand; they might be often girlish and illogical, but they had a quaint originality about them, and at any rate were real, and not merely for effect.

Owen Ludlow thought so much of her, too. Maurice felt that since that last evening at Scar, his old friend was not quite the same to him; he fancied his letters were cooler in tone and less frequent; and there was never a word about the Merridews, though Maurice felt sure the friendship had not collapsed when Sage left Scar. He amused himself one evening, when he was more than usually out of tune with his surroundings, by imagining what Owen Ludlow would say, if, for love of Sage, he, Maurice, gave up his prospects, which, all said and done, were not so very brilliant, and settled down in some humbler sphere of life, into some government office or bank, or something of that sort, and had a little house in some pretty, unfashionable suburb, where Sage should be surrounded with everything pretty and tasteful, and be perfectly happy. Of that last part of the story he had no doubt at all, conceited fellow!

And after that first indulgence in such a day-dream, he often reverted to it, and filled in details and imagined incidents, till, by Christmas, it had assumed such solid proportions, that when the chance of a few days' leave turned up unexpectedly, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to go right off and find Sage, and lay the matter before her, and to tell Owen Ludlow his plans, and ask his assistance in carrying them out.

His own people up in Yorkshire would no doubt make a bother; but that could not be helped; he was man enough to settle his own affairs, and to know what was best for him; and by this time he was entirely convinced that Sage was the best for him; and he was quite sure that Owen Ludlow would say the same.

His programme was to go straight down to Scar and talk the matter over with Ludlow, and find out from him where Sage lived. But he was saved this long fruitless journey into Dorsetshire by asking at Ludlow's club, where he was told that the painter was in London; and he made his way instead to Regent's Park; and Ludlow found him established there when he reached home after his visit to the Merridews on Christmas Eve.

It cannot be said that at first Ludlow's greeting to his young friend was particularly hearty; but after that prolonged sitting, which lasted far into Christmas morning, Ludlow had been talked into perfect sympathy with Maurice, into romantic enthusiasm which exceeded even Maurice's, into belief in love in a cottage and simple happiness worthy of a girl in her teens, into utter

oblivion of worldly wisdom and hard common-sense, into building castles in the air of an elaborate style of architecture rarely attempted except in extreme youth. He went to bed at last in quite a whirl of pleasant anticipations; it was so delightful to think of the happiness this would bring to his little friend. He had accused himself so often of having been inadvertently the cause of spoiling her life, that it was an infinite satisfaction to have some hand in glorifying it.

The sense of having regained Owen Ludlow's good opinion had a very fortifying effect on Maurice's resolutions, and everything combined to make him well content with the turn affairs were taking. There was something quite providential, Sage felt, in the unusually favourable aspect under which the little house at Dalston first presented itself to Maurice Moore, if it were not profane to attribute such small matters to Providence. First of all, there had been a fall of snow the very morning after Christmas-day, and all the street and houses were clothed in white, which had not yet had time to become smutty. Then Sarah opened the door in a tidy black dress, not gaping at the seams, and disclosing mysterious under garments; and, moreover, she had on a spotless cap and apron, an event almost unparalleled in the domestic history of the family. And Sage, as she gazed shyly at herself in the little looking-glass, was not displeased at what she saw, and was glad her serge dress fitted so well and was nicely made; though at the time of its construction she had had a dreary, little feeling in her heart that it did not matter and nobody cared. But even if she had never seen Maurice again, I do not think she would ever have really felt that it did not matter how she looked; there was always the feeling that the girl he had liked, even a little, ought to look her best.

And it all went so pleasantly, and father was so nice—there never was so nice and kind a father. He took Maurice off into the surgery, where they had a long talk; and when they came in, he was seized with a sudden and, as it seemed to the boys, unseasonable desire to hang the picture of Kitty in his bedroom, an operation which of course required the assistance of the boys and Kitty, and apparently took a wonderfully long time. Kitty described to Sage afterwards how father kept changing his mind as to where the picture should hang and would look best. 'And would you believe it, Sage—Nigel drove in six nails; and after all, father decided on the very first place we put it in, opposite the window. And I told him ever so many times that he ought to come down and talk to Mr Moore, and that I knew you would be awfully angry at being left all alone with him such a long time.'

Was it a long time? Sage wondered. And then they had tea; and then Maurice carried them all off except the doctor, for Owen Ludlow had by some happy accident got a box at Drury Lane for the pantomime, which seemed to the children almost incredible bliss.

It was such exquisite pleasure to have her cloak wrapped round her, and to be taken care of, and no rude crushing allowed to come near her, she who had pushed her way hitherto, and taken rubs and elbowings as a matter of course; and to feel

his hand seek hers, and to hear his voice sink to a tender tone that made the most commonplace remarks sound like poetry; and for Owen Ludlow to take it for granted that Maurice should monopolise her and take care of her; and that she should linger on their return just for a minute to say good-night at the door, while the children rushed in to describe to father all the glories of the pantomime, Dennis and Nigel being anxious to illustrate some of the practical jokes played by the clown on the pantaloons, but neither of them being willing to enact the pantaloons' part.

Sage was obliged to tell Kitty something about her happiness, when she went up to bed, finding Kitty wide awake with the excitement of the theatre. It seemed as if she must impart some of her great joy to some one of the womankind, though it was only a child who could not understand a tenth part of all it meant to her. But to kneel by Kitty's bed with the child's warm arms round her neck, and sob for very happiness, seemed to relieve the heart that was full to bursting with happy love. It seemed next best to laying her head in mother's lap, that dead mother, whom she sometimes conjured up to love and sympathise with her in trouble or joy.

Next day was quite as perfect; for Owen Ludlow had arranged a grand shopping expedition to get Christmas presents; and 'poor Sage,' as Kitty described it, 'was left behind in the studio, and did not go to any of the lovely shops and bazaars; and Mr Ludlow did not buy any present for her. Mr Moore stayed with her; so perhaps she did not mind; Kitty added doubtfully, with a remembrance of Sage's confidences the night before, which were somehow mixed up with harlequin and columbine's adventures.

Mind? It was only too delightful to sit over the studio fire and hear all that was to be in that bright future, painted by Maurice in such glowing colours.

It was his last day; and he would have to return to Edelstadt to-morrow; but the parting would not be for long, he told her. Ludlow was going to make all sorts of inquiries after the employment that was to provide ways and means for that jolly, little house.

'Good old Ludlow is as keen after it as I am, pretty near, and he won't leave a stone unturned. He knows heaps of fellows, you know, and has a lot of interest of an odd, out-of-the-way sort. We must have a room for Ludlow—mustn't we, Sage?—whenever he likes to come up to London. I wish I hadn't to go back at all. I wish I could stop here with my little sweetheart; but I may get a chance of running over again before long; but it won't do to be extravagant, eh, Sage? I shall turn over every sixpence now. Ludlow has been reading me a fine lecture on economy; and he's quite right; and I mean to be as close-fisted as anything.—And look how I have begun! I haven't even got a ring for my little lady-love. Just think of that! Every ploughboy gives his sweetheart a ring nowadays; and I have none for mine. But when I come home I shall bring one. Even if I don't come before, I must come for the private view. I must be among the first to see my little girl's picture in the Academy. Isn't it queer that we should be in one picture before we ever met, just you and me, Sage, with little Kitty to play propriety.'

'And Pomona, Maurice.' Her voice would not keep quite steady yet to say his name.

'Oh, Pomona does not count; she is merely imaginary. Of course, I know it is Ludlow's remembrance of his wife; but I often wonder if it is really a bit like her, whether he has not idealised her out of all reality? And I also wonder, sometimes, looking at it—I have been looking at it a good deal to-day, Sage, not so much, I must confess, at the central figure, but at that right-hand corner where there is something far more interesting—but I wonder sometimes, looking at Pomona, whether in real life one could call her pretty at all, though she looks pretty enough in the picture.—But don't tell Ludlow what I say, for he would regard it as rank heresy.'

'You will not go away without saying good-bye this time, Maurice?'

And then she had to tell him all she felt and suffered that day at Scar; and he pitied and comforted her, and blamed himself, and, in self-excuse, told her all he had gone through, and the dreary start from Scar in the wet and misty morning, and how he had looked up at the window with a drawn blind opposite the 'Black Dog.'

And next day came the parting, and father—that good father, who really felt a little hurt and injured at the entire desertion of him by his former devoted admirer and slave, yet managed to give her twenty minutes alone with Maurice to get through the sweetly painful operation of saying good-bye.

'All my patients will be poisoned in consequence,' he complained; 'for I let Nigel and Dennis make up pills; and when my back was turned, preventing Will and Kitty from demolishing all my lozenges, they put in all sorts of drugs they had no business to. Well, it will be on your head if any mischief comes of it.—Bless you, little Sage!' And he took the little fair head on which the blame was to fall, between his hands and kissed it.

GALL-FLIES AND THEIR WORK.

THE drop of ink which flows from my pen as I write these words is intimately connected with the insects about which I am going to make a few remarks. For to certain of their kind we owe the gall-nuts which form so important an ingredient in its manufacture. Gall-producing insects belong to two different orders. The first, along with bees, wasps, and ants, come under the Hymenoptera; the others, along with the flies, are known as Diptera.

It is their remarkable power of modifying plants to suit their own ends which renders them of special interest. One of them alights on a tree, inserts its ovipositor, and lays its egg in the puncture. Thereupon, the vital energy of the plant is directed to that spot, and throws up around the egg a mass of nutritive tissue. This tissue serves at once as the cradle and food-supply of the grub which is presently hatched, and which remains there until it emerges a perfect insect.

Man, in order to coax the vegetable kingdom to supply his needs, has had to select and cultivate laboriously for many generations: the gall-fly with a touch, so to speak, of its ovipositor calls

forth the required result at once. Had it appeared at the wave of the magician's wand, it would scarcely have appeared more wonderful.

One of the most remarkable facts in the history of the gall-fly is, that different species acting on the same tree produce totally different results. Thus, one of them puncturing the wild rose gives rise to one of those pretty moss-like tufts which so frequently adorn it. Another on the same plant produces round growths resembling currants in size and form. A much greater variety of form is produced on the oak-tree. No fewer than fifty species of gall-fly, indeed, are said to produce their particular forms of growth upon it. One of the most common is that which produces the marble gall. This gall is produced on the twigs in the form of round bodies, soft and green at first, afterwards brown and woody. The familiar oak-apple is of more irregular shape, and prettily coloured red and yellow like a fruit. Of a similar shape to the marble gall, but softer, and of a pretty red colour where exposed to the sun, is the cherry gall. Another fruit-like gall, small, round, and often appearing in clusters on the male catkins of the oak, is known as the currant gall. Still more remarkable, perhaps, is the artichoke gall. In this case the gall-fly has laid its egg in the centre of a bud, and the vegetative growth, though disturbed, has asserted itself in a symmetrical manner. The oval body in the centre, containing the egg or grub, is covered with a series of imbricating or overlapping scales, so that the whole bears a striking resemblance to the involucre of a thistle.

Of quite another class are a number of small galls which appear studding the leaves in considerable numbers, and are known as 'spangles.' They occur in the form of little disc-like bodies, each attached to the under side of the leaf by a tiny stalk. These spangles are of different shapes according to the different species of fly forming them.

The cause of this variety in the vegetative response to what seem to us such similar stimuli, is somewhat of a mystery. When it has been said that differences in the shape of the original wound, in that of the egg and grub, in the nature of the irritant fluid injected with the egg, in the position of the wound on the tree, probably all contribute, there is perhaps nothing more to add. Or we may shelter our ignorance by speaking of the influence of the vital force of the egg. And what makes the thing more remarkable still is the fact that other insects can puncture the leaves of plants and lay their eggs without causing any abnormal vegetable growth. This is the case, for example, with the whole class of leaf-miners.

The oak responds with overflowing generosity to the appeal made to it by the gall-fly, and provides nourishment far in excess of the wants of its guest; and so it happens that the cradle and larder of one particular gall-fly are made use of by others. We have here one example among many of the curious mixture of reckless extravagance and strict economy to be found in nature. Flitting about among the branches of the oak-tree are countless myriads of flies on maternal thoughts intent, which have nevertheless no power of inducing the oak to provide galls for them. But here are the marble galls produced by another species forming a ready-made supply

of nourishment of the right sort. Piercing the excrescences with their ovipositors, they deposit therein their eggs and depart. The young are hatched, and feed on the substance of the gall without damage to the rightful owner—there is food sufficient and to spare for all. The rightful owner is indeed fortunate if nothing further happens to him than this feeding on his preserves without doing him bodily injury or starving him. For there are other and more dangerous flies flitting about the oak-tree. Glittering in green and gold array, and armed with long ovipositors, they also are looking out for places to deposit their eggs; and the only place that will do is the *body* of the fat grub lying in the centre of the marble gall. Hence it is woe to the original possessor when one of these gay hoverers chooses its gall. With its long ovipositor, the fly pierces the gall, and places its egg *within* the body of the grub inside. An exceedingly common tragedy in nature is played out within the narrow stage of the oak-gall. The second comers to the gall—the harmless ones—are likewise subject to their own proper parasites, and may be made the unwilling receptacles of their eggs. And then the nutritious mass of the gall proves acceptable to caterpillars of various small moths, while beetles, bees, and wasps may avail themselves of it as a shelter. Thus many species of insects may be found in an old oak gall. An enthusiastic naturalist once counted the different species in one of them, and they amounted to forty-three! These included six species of small moths, seven beetles, and the rest saw-flies, gall-flies, ichneumon flies, mason wasps, bees, &c.

The marble gall is properly inhabited, as we have seen, by a single grub; but the fly which causes the growth of the oak-apple lays several eggs. These are contained in a group of hard woody cells near the centre of the gall, the rest of which is soft. The soft part is frequently eaten by insects, or torn away by birds in search of the grubs; and the hard cells remain on the tree, where, along with the hard brown marble galls, they may be seen during the winter months.

The life-history of the insects inhabiting the spangles on the oak-tree leaves is of peculiar interest. It furnishes us with an example of what is known to naturalists as alternation of generations, and of parthenogenesis. Two distinct forms of gall-fly were formerly described as different species—they were even placed in different genera. One of them is found inhabiting the currant galls, and the other in one form of the spangles. Some fifteen years ago it was shown by Dr Adler that they were two different stages of the same species of gall-fly; and the discovery has since been confirmed by others. These two forms, so distinct as to be ascribed by naturalists to different genera, proceed the one from the other by direct generation: the children are totally different from their parents, but the grandchildren resemble them. This is termed alternation of generations. In May a little gall-fly lays its eggs on the leaves or male catkins of the oak, and the currant gall is produced. Development is rapid; and from this gall issue male and female flies. After mating, the females pierce the oak-leaves and lay their eggs. But

instead of a second crop of currant galls, there appear spangles. This takes place in the autumn. After a while the spangles become detached from the leaves and fall to the ground; there they swell, and the further development of the larva takes place. In the spring, there issues a fly perfectly distinct from the one which laid the eggs on the leaf and produced the spangles; and, strange to say, they are all females: no males appear among them. Yet these females puncture the oak-tree, and lay their eggs to produce another crop of currant galls, as their grandparents did, but not their parents, which produced spangles. From these currant galls issue male and female flies as before.

Other trees and plants are liable to the attacks of gall-flies. In late summer and autumn, the willow bushes are often seen covered with pretty red fruit-like bodies adhering to the backs of the leaves. These are also galls. Less symmetrical and beautiful are the effects of gall-flies on more lowly plants like wild thyme and speedwell, on which they take the form of irregular swellings and distortions of the stems and leaves. Probably, indeed, the possession of a peculiar gall fly or flies is the rule rather than the exception among plants.

The influence of man on vegetation has been deep and far-reaching: nature has responsively ministered liberally to his needs and his sense of beauty. Yet the wild rose, yielding to his prolonged efforts the 'Gloire de Dijon' and the 'Baroness Rothschild,' is less of a wonder than the same bush bursting out into mossy tufts and round berries under the influence of insects; the Chinese oak, a hundred years old, growing in a small pot, has less of the marvillous than that one in the hedgerow responding to the punctures of thousands of its tiny guests, and covering itself with oak-apples, marble galls, spangles, &c., to supply them with food.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XLII.—DISSOLVING VIEWS.

THUS Isabel stepped from her proud position as the courted heiress, and divested herself of her 'gold and jewels,' her 'silver and pearls.' When her aunt took her departure for Lancashire—Mr Suffield having still to remain in town for a day or two—Isabel met her at the station with a small box, which she enjoined her aunt to take great care of and not to open till she was in her own North. That box contained the jewellery of rare foreign workmanship which Uncle Harry had left: so resolved was she to be rid of all she could be rid of that had belonged to Uncle Harry. She tried to be rid also of the furniture and other things that had been bought with Uncle Harry's money; but Ainsworth had thought it was a pity that her pretty home should be broken up, and he had suggested a compromise. He had gone to Mr Suffield and proposed himself to pay for the things. But Suffield had been so angry at the suggestion, and had so obstinately declared that if he heard any

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more of it he would have nothing to do with the money at all, that the matter was allowed to drop. Then Isabel sweetly asked Ainsworth why the flat should be given up: would it not do as a dwelling for both of them?

'And then,' said she, 'then I shall feel as if I had brought you something—a very little something!—besides myself and the cares I took upon myself.'

And then Ainsworth, greatly daring, asked, since the dwelling was ready and since she was now—or soon would be—a mere spinster without an income, why they should not prepare to join hands and purses as soon as possible?

So it came to pass that an early day in spring was fixed for their wedding. Isabel went to see her father with the uncertain design of asking him to perform the usual office of a father on such an occasion, and 'give her away;' but his sequestered life on the Surrey hills seemed so serene, he was so occupied with his 'Defence of Transcendentalism,' and he showed so remote an interest in what she told him of herself, that she thought it was a pity to disturb his equable leisure.

'I am delighted to hear it, my child,' said he. 'Marriage, with love, is the completing of a woman; so she fulfils the law of her being. You should read Luther on marriage, my dear. He has given the most beautiful picture of the nature and ends and duties of the wedded life you are ever likely to read.'

That was all he said; and so he turned again to his 'Defence of Transcendentalism.' Isabel, therefore, turned to her uncle: who but he—the kind and indulgent nourisher of her youth and friend of her maturer years—her all but father—should give her away? He was asked, and at once agreed, to perform the paternal office; and so Isabel went down to Lancashire to fulfil the time before her wedding, for she desired to be married from her uncle's house.

Meanwhile Mr Suffield had been getting through the business for which he stayed behind in London. He had arranged with the whip of his party to pair for the session and then to resign his seat. One important division he could not be paired for, and he remained a day or two longer than he had intended, to perform his duty to his party. There was another debate on Indian affairs—it concerned Opium this time—and his secretary, the Tame Philosopher, had prevailed on him to make a speech. He had written for him a most learned discourse, packed with words of the peculiarly Tame-Philosophic kind. Suffield sat down for a little in the Library of the House of Commons and wrinkled his brows over the sheets, but his thoughts would wander after his family and his affairs into Lancashire.

'I can make nought o' this!' he said, and rose, folding the sheets away in his pocket.

He went down into the House, and promising himself that he would not miss the night-train home, he sat and listened in a half-dazed condition to the droning and the buzzing, and grew weary of it all. One of the whips of his party came to him and asked him if he meant to carry out the desire he had expressed to speak on the question.

'Nay,' said he; 'I ha' nought to say. But I'll vote.'

Still he sat, and still the debate drawled and mumbled on—with an occasional screech or two—till eleven o'clock struck. There was no sign that the division was at hand; and he went to the whip and begged that he might be paired for the division, because he must hurry down to Lancashire on business. The whip looked coldly on him, but acceded to his request; and Suffield walked out of the House never to enter it again.

In the lobby he encountered the Tame Philosopher, hanging about in expectation of hearing his own rhapsodical and bombastical periods delivered by his patron.

'You are not going away!' he exclaimed in dismay.

'I am,' answered Suffield, cramming his oration into his hands. 'Thou'rt th' only man that can fitly deliver that fine composition. Keep it, my friend. This question, if I'm not mistaken, 'll come up again, and then thou mayst be in th' House thyself, and canst deliver it!'

He drove away to the station—he had brought his travelling bag to the House—and caught his train to the North. He entered a sleeping-carriage, and quickly put himself to bed. And as the train rolled away through the soft night, charged with premonitory whiffs and whispers of spring, the unbidden refrain kept rolling through and through his mind:

O the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birken tree,
They're all growing green in my ain countrie.

And at length he went to sleep, to awake in his own Lancashire.

And so the interest of our story fades from London; for the Tame Philosopher soon followed his patron back to the North—he could not live, he declared, 'without the solace of seeing my dear George Suffield, a true man's-a-man-for-a'-that'—and Doughty's existence was regularly merged now in Ainsworth's, the interest of whose life was now in Lancashire. Gorgonio was heard of no more; and as for Tanderjee and the blameless Daniel they had fitting punishments meted out to them at the Lancashire spring assizes for felony and for obtaining money on false pretences.

But before we say adieu to the excellent family that has largely figured in this story, let us see how they were affected by the revolution in their circumstances. They dwelt no longer in the noble old Holdsworth Hall: that had been let to a Dutch-German-French Jew who gambled successfully on the Stock Exchange. They lived in a modest, old-fashioned house on the border of the village which Suffield had built, George having rooms of his own in town, to be always in supervision of the City part of the business.

Isabel—who lived in her uncle's house till her marriage—could not but note with delight how he and her aunt renewed their youth. Both might have been held somewhat excused if they had expressed or shown regret for their lost wealth and position, and resentment against the necessity for returning to work, when they had thought that work was over, according to the doleful habit of people who have been 'reduced;' but neither of them behaved as the foolish people behave. They were busy, cheery, and harmonious by day, and by night they were wrapped

in the peaceful and profound sleep of the just and merciful. Suffield was up and into the works as early in the morning as his work-people; and Mrs Suffield was up not much later, and with her daughter and her maid-of-all-work setting her house in order and preparing breakfast. It was to Isabel a delightful and stimulating lesson in life to see how her aunt, the courageous, vigorous-minded woman who had held her own with duchesses and female politicians in 'the gilded saloons of greatness,' shone with all the virtues of the house-mother in the little Lancashire home, and was evidently at peace with herself and with the world.

'Of such,' thought Isabel, 'must be the women who have made Englishmen great with their peculiar quality of greatness!'

And it was not at home only that her aunt was active and helpful; she was also helpful and active in the village among her husband's people; for Suffield was not one of those employers who consider that their responsibility for their workers is at an end with the payment of their weekly wages. There were particularly gaffers and gammers upon whom the cold of Death was gradually creeping while yet they lived, who needed such comfort and encouragement as a wise woman can best impart: cheering words, and comforting food and drink. Isabel knew these pensioners from of old, who had so long benefited by the Suffield bounty that they had come to think they had a prescriptive right to the care of 'th' mester,' as most people think they have a right to the regard of Providence. Isabel went among these ancient, quaint creatures, alone sometimes, and then she heard how her uncle and aunt were regarded by them.

'Aw'm real glad,' said one gray gaffer to her, who was ancient enough to wear knee-breeches and coarse stockings, 'th' missus ha' come back—though they do say as how it's because th' mester ha' lost lots o' brass. Brass or no brass, hoo [she] is a rare un to mak' broth.—I set on my lass and owd Betsy to try to mak' th' broth; but, bless thee! they conna mak' it nohow.—Aw reckon th' missus has a special kind o' barley.'

Of 'th' mester' she heard more sympathetic commendation still. She visited an old woman supposed to be dying, who had in her time worked very hard and borne a large family of great sons, and who had known 'th' mester's' mother.

'Ay, aw knowed th' mester's mother,' said she to Isabel, while an attentive neighbour sat by—'as clean and nate a woman as could be, and as bonny and free-handed as th' mester himsen. When aw sit down i' th' Kingdom o' Heaven, aw'll ha' a good look round for th' mester's mother, to tell her how well th' mester's going on. Happen, aw'll clap e'en on her sitting right again' me; for we're fro' th' same village.'

'Happen,' said her neighbour, almost as old and quaint a creature as herself—'happen thou'll gi'e a look round and find out my owd John and tell him about Betsy.'

'Nay,' said the other; 'aw'll do nought o' th' sort!—Trapesing round to look for thy owd John! When aw get to th' Kingdom, aw'll just put me on a clean apron, and sit me down in th' first cheer, and rest me!—But aw'll look out for th' mester's mother!'

Thus work, peace, and contentment reigned in the Suffield home and throughout the village which Suffield had created and which depended on him. The only person who seemed at all sad and who occasionally sighed was Euphemia. And it presently became evident what was troubling her: not reduced circumstances, not the necessity of putting on an apron and performing the duties of a parlour-maid, but because her 'Beast' seemed to have ridden away, and because since she had not seen him her mind turned him into a Prince. When her father had to announce to Lord Clitheroe their contracted circumstances, she bravely—but with no terrible pang of heart—offered Clitheroe his liberty. He refused to accept it, although he anticipated that his father and mother would strongly object to his carrying out his engagement; he declared, however, he would wait and 'lie low'—by which he meant 'bide his time'—until the not very distant day when his invalid old father must slip out of the title and estates. From that day, Pheny had not seen or heard from her 'Beast,' and she began to think he must have ridden away indeed. Then, since she had not seen him dancing attendance on her, she had begun to long for his presence, and at length to be convinced that she loved him and was going to lose him—such being the wayward fashion of love with maidens of Euphemia's character.

But on a certain day a tall horseman with a big flaming-red beard, and a piece of crape on his arm, rode up to the Suffield door and alighted. It was the 'Beast-Prince' come to claim his bride: his old father was dead, and he had stepped into the empty shoes and inherited the empty title, and by right of his freedom now to do as he pleased, he had come to his lady-love. Euphemia welcomed him with more demurrance and at the same time with more fervour than she had ever before shown.

'Well, little one,' said he, 'you see I've come, now that I am free to do as I like.'

'I see you have come,' said she, with something of her old sauciness: 'you are a very noticeable fact;' but she refrained from calling him 'Beast' or 'Goose.'

'Come now,' said he; 'have you missed me at all? Tell me.'

'A little,' she answered: 'not much.' But her look was better than her words.

They were closeted together for a little, and then they came forth radiant. The new Earl of Padiham congratulated Isabel on her approaching marriage—of which, he said, he had just heard—and regretted that his own could not be celebrated at the same time. And so he rode away, and left Pheny as merry as a bird in the waking of dawn.

So almost before Isabel was aware—with these events and with preparations for the wedding—her marriage day was at hand. It seemed to suddenly leap out of the future into the present! Three days before it seemed still very distant; two days before it seemed only one day nearer than it had been the day before; then the gulf seemed to contract and disappear, and lo! they were at the morning of the very day, and Ainsworth was by her side!

George was absent: he had gone for a holiday; but he wrote a manly letter to Isabel, begging her

to believe that he stayed away from her wedding because of no feeling of estrangement, but only because he thought that his presence might embarrass the whole party. And with that he wished her and her husband—about to be—'happiness and prosperity.' The letter was simple and honest, and strove hard to be rid of all trace of self-pity or wounded vanity.

Suffield had declared a holiday at the works on the wedding day; and there was a great concourse in the church on that August morning, when the worthy man with tears in his eyes gave his niece away, and anon greeted her as 'Mrs Ainsworth.' But the most notable fact in connection with the wedding is that Mrs Suffield's wedding present to her niece was that very box, containing Uncle Harry's jewels and trinkets, which Isabel had turned over to her aunt not many weeks before.

And then—and then the married pair drove away into the new life which lay before them—the life of husband and wife, with its new cares and new burdens, its new duties and new responsibilities.

THE END.

OUTPOST DUTY AND 'SECRET SERVICE' IN WAR.

On the 19th of October, 1886, Lord Wolseley, by direction of the Commander-in-chief, issued a Memorandum to the general officers commanding military districts, in which it was pointed out that the Duke of Cambridge had recently noticed that 'many officers of all ranks evinced a considerable lack of information in those field-duties, such as outpost and reconnaissance work, a thorough and practical knowledge of which is vitally important to all military efficiency.' The Memorandum recalls that the yearly course of military training prescribed by the Queen's regulations was laid down with the object of affording officers sufficient opportunities of practising these duties and teaching them to their men; and that the Commander-in-chief had been disappointed to find that little progress had been made in this respect. The general officers addressed were ordered to impress upon officers commanding regiments or battalions that the Commander-in-chief held them personally responsible for the efficiency of their corps in every particular. The necessity of devoting a great deal more time and attention to the instruction of troops, especially in field-duties—'upon the proper and intelligent performance of which, in time of war, the credit of corps and the lives of men must in no small measure depend'—is very strongly insisted upon. Finally, the officers commanding the districts are requested themselves to see that corps under their command were frequently practised in outpost and reconnaissance duties.

The gravity of this severe rebuke will be understood when we consider the nature and duties of outposts. They act as the *feelers* of an army, it being their office to guard it from every danger, and keep it constantly informed of everything that can add to its safety or assist its move-

ments. It is their business to screen the movements of the army in their rear, and prevent any intelligence of its movements from reaching the enemy. The outposts thrown out to the front, to the flanks, and, when necessary, in the rear of a force in the field for its protection, are known in our service as 'outlying piquets;' whilst for reconnaissance duties we use patrols, varying in strength according to circumstances. All outposts should be as far in advance of the force they are thrown out from as they can be with safety; that is, without exposing them to be cut off or overpowered before assistance can reach them. A great military authority says that, 'as a general rule, five-sixths of a force should be able to rest in peace and quiet, whilst to the remaining one-sixth is allotted the outpost work. It is essential that they should be sufficiently far to the front to enable the Commander-in-chief, when he receives the report from them that the enemy is advancing in force, to make up his mind whether he will or will not fight; and if he decides upon fighting, to enable him to occupy the position he had previously selected to fight in, before the enemy could disturb him in the movements necessary for that purpose.'

Ignorance of outpost duty was a distinguishing feature of our officers in the Crimean War. It accounts for the blindness and feebleness with which Lord Raglan groped his way forward towards Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma. It is now known that he might have marched into the practically unfortified northern side, in the September of 1854, instead of besieging it, at an immense cost of blood and treasure, from the south side during two long and trying winters. The greatest possible attention is given to the efficient performance of outpost duty in the armies of Germany, Austria, and France, every officer, whether of cavalry or infantry, being made to study General de Brack's 'Light Cavalry Outposts,' which, although the work of one of Murat's old officers, is still accounted the best authority on the subject.

The most reliable method of obtaining information of an enemy's movements is by reconnaissances, which may be divided into four classes: (1) Reconnaissances in force, always conducted under or by order of the Commander-in-chief. (2) Those made by a detachment of all arms, of sufficient strength to protect themselves and secure their retreat. (3) Those made by staff officers, accompanied by small cavalry detachments; and (4) and last, those which are continually made by individual officers from the outposts.

One of the admirable light-cavalry officers of Napoleon, who distinguished himself in the third of these divisions, was Curély—Sous-lieutenant in 1807, and General in 1813—whose name I have not succeeded in finding in any civil or military biography. In 1806, says De Brack, Curély, 'being twenty leagues in advance of the army, at the head of twenty of the French 7th Hussars, carried terror into Leipsic, where were three

thousand Prussians. In 1809, when fifteen leagues in front of the division to which he belonged, and at the head of one hundred chasseurs and hussars of the 7th and 9th, he passed unperceived through the Austro-Italian army, which he was engaged in reconnoitring, and penetrated to the centre of the staff of the Archduke, the Commander-in-chief. In 1812, at Solosk, at the head of one hundred chasseurs of the 20th, he carried off twenty-four guns from the enemy, and took prisoner the Commander-in-chief of the Russian army. When services such as these can be rendered by a Sous-lieutenant of cavalry, the reader may understand the significance of the 'Memorandum' issued by Viscount Wolseley.

I think we may match Curly or any of the officers mentioned in General de Brack's work with the celebrated Colquhoun Grant of the Peninsular War. It was of Grant, as an 'exploring officer,' that Wellington said that 'no army in the world ever produced the like.' When Marmont came down on Beira in 1812, and was supposed to contemplate a *coup de main* against Ciudad Rodrigo, Wellington sent Grant to watch him. Attended by Leon, a Spanish peasant of fidelity and quickness of apprehension, who had been his companion on many occasions of the same nature, he arrived in the Salamancan district, passed the Tormes in the night, and remained in uniform—for he never assumed any disguise—three days in the midst of the French camp. He obtained exact information of Marmont's object, and more especially of his preparation of provisions and scaling-ladders, notes of which he sent to headquarters from hour to hour by Spanish agents. On the third night some peasants brought him a general order addressed to the French regiments, saying the notorious Grant being within the circle of their cantonments, the soldiers must use their utmost exertions to secure him, for which purpose also guards were placed in a circle round the army. Nothing daunted, he consulted with the peasants, and before daylight next morning entered the village of Huerta, close to a ford on the Tormes, and six miles from Salamanca. A battalion was in Huerta; and beyond the river, cavalry videttes were posted, two of which constantly patrolled backward and forward for the space of three hundred yards, meeting always at the ford. When day broke, the French assembled on their alarm post, and at that moment Grant was secretly brought opposite the ford, he and his horse being hidden by the gable of a house from the infantry, while the peasants standing on loose stones and spreading their large cloaks covered him from the cavalry. There he calmly waited until the videttes were separated the full extent of their beat, when he dashed through the ford between them, and receiving their fire without damage, reached a wood, where the pursuit was baffled. Leon being in his native dress, met with no interruption, and soon rejoined him.

He had before this ascertained that means to storm Rodrigo were prepared, and the French officers openly talked of that operation; but to test that project, to ascertain Marmont's real force, and to discover if he was not really going by Perales to the Tagus, Grant now placed himself on a wooded hill near Tamames where the road branched off to Perales and to Rodrigo. There lying perdue until the French passed by in

march, he noted every battalion and gun; and finding all moved towards Rodrigo, he entered Tamames, and discovered they had left the greatest part of their scaling-ladders behind, thus showing the intention to storm was not real. This it was which allayed Wellington's fears for that fortress.

As a purveyor of intelligence, Colquhoun Grant was of more use to the British army in the Peninsula than all the cavalry officers under Sir Vincent Cotton, Lord Uxbridge, and Lord Edward Somerset put together. His unrivalled mastery of French and Spanish, both of which he spoke 'like a native,' enabled him to penetrate wherever he pleased. Scorning to wear any disguise, he would often spend days in the French camp wearing the British uniform, which his unsuspecting comrades supposed he had picked up on the battle-field and substituted for his own. His adventures were extraordinary; but it would be manifestly out of place to follow them in the present paper.

In the Austrian wars of Napoleon, the French bivouacs were sometimes visited by Jews, who asked leave to purchase the skins of animals slaughtered for the soldiers' food. These men were spies, a 'secret service' which renders invaluable assistance to the general in time of war. Wellington had numerous spies within the French lines, even at the headquarters of Marshal Victor. The greater number were Spanish gentlemen, alcaldes, and poor men who disdained rewards, disregarded danger, and were distinguished by their boldness, their talent, and their integrity.

But the spies I have especially in my 'mind's eye' were officers—English and French—of singular boldness and sagacity—such as John Grant, Major in the Portuguese service, often confounded by the French—especially by Marmont—with Colquhoun Grant, already alluded to. It is to be regretted that the adventures of this ill-requited officer, who was allowed by the English War Office to die in sordid poverty and neglect, were never preserved, for they must have been indeed extraordinary. Men of this sort carry their lives in their hand, for, by the laws of war among all civilised nations, a proved spy is summarily put to death.

As a fitting conclusion to this subject, I give the following on the authority of the late General Cavalié Mercer, Royal Artillery, 9th Brigade, at that time captain of a troop of horse artillery. It occurs in his 'Journal of the Waterloo Campaign': 'It was on the evening of the 15th of June (1815), and about sunset, or a little later, that an officer of hussars rode into the little village of Yseringen, Leathes [an officer of horse artillery] being at the time at dinner with me at our château. He was dressed as our hussars usually were when riding about the country—blue frock, scarlet waistcoat laced with gold, pantaloons, and forage-cap of the 7th hussars. He was mounted on a smart pony, with plain saddle and bridle; was without sword or sash, and carried a small whip—in short, his costume and appearance were correct in every particular. Moreover, he aped to the very life that "devil-may-care" nonchalant air so frequently characterising our young men of fashion. Seeing some of our gunners standing at the door of a house, he desired them to go for their officer, as

he wished to see him. They called the sergeant, who told him that the officer was not in the village. In an authoritative tone he then demanded how many men and horses were quartered there, whose troop they belonged to, where the remainder of the troop was quartered, and of what they consisted. When all these questions were answered, he told the sergeant that he had been sent by Lord Uxbridge to order accommodation to be provided for two hundred horses, and that ours must consequently be put up as close as possible. The sergeant replied that there was not room in the village for a single additional horse. "Oh, we'll soon see to that," said he, pointing to one of the men who stood by. "Do you go and tell the *maire* to come instantly to me." The *maire* came, and confirmed the sergeant's statement; upon which our friend, flying into a passion, commenced in excellent French to abuse the poor functionary like a pickpocket, threatening to send a whole regiment into the village; and then, after a little conversation with the sergeant, he mounted his pony and rode off just as Leathes returned to the village. Upon reporting the circumstance to the officer, the sergeant stated that he thought the man had appeared anxious to avoid him, having ridden off rather in a hurry when he appeared, which, together with a slight foreign accent, then for the first time excited a suspicion of his being a spy, which had not occurred to the sergeant before, as he knew there were several foreign officers in our hussars, and that the 10th was actually then commanded by one, Colonel Quentin. The suspicion was afterwards confirmed; for, upon inquiry, I found that no officer had been sent by Lord Uxbridge on any such mission. Our friend deserved to escape, for he was a bold and clever fellow.'

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

By LOUIS HAMILTON.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THE Marsdens had lived in the same house a long time, a very long time. About that there could be no dispute, seeing that three generations of Marsdens had been born and had died there. It was preposterous, the fourth Phyllis argued within herself, as she stood flattening her pretty nose against the window of her own sitting-room, on which the rain beat so thickly as almost to obscure the pleasant view of an old-fashioned garden below—it was nothing short of ridiculous folly to suppose that a house which was good enough for the Marsdens in 1780, when, as all the world knows, they first set up their great pottery in Stockwell, could be a suitable dwelling-place for that same family when a hundred years of prosperity had brought distinction to it in a dozen different ways.

It was roomy enough, of course! 'Bless me!' reflected Phyllis, with a shrug of impatience, 'that is not the drawback! There are half-a-dozen rooms, I daresay, that I have not entered since I was a child—damp, nasty, dusty places. If I had my way, I should pull down half the house; and cut all the living-rooms in two by building walls

across them. Then we might be comfortable. At least we should have one room, one climate; and not change torrid heat for Siberian winter every time we get up from our chairs to fetch a reel of cotton.'

She drummed on the glass with her fingers, and in a few minutes broke out again.

'There are Kate and Evelyn at the Deanery, as comfortable and jolly as possible, always going out to balls and tennis parties, and—and—things. And Georgie's life just makes me rampant when I think of it, with half her father's regiment always sending her flowers, and teasing her for dances, and making picnics. And here am I, the third family of cousins, with no brothers or sisters to cheer me up, left in this dreary place, without a single nice family in the neighbourhood.'

There were drops of water on both sides of the glass as Phyllis reached this point in her reflections, but she brushed them away defiantly. 'I don't care!' she said. 'I will be cheerful in spite of them all. I'll do something pleasant. What shall it be?'

She mused a little longer, and then turning away from the window, she began to pace up and down her spacious room.

'If I don't cease looking out of window, I shall be cross very soon,' she said fretfully. 'That constant splashing and dripping is enough to wear out any one's nerves. I don't suppose Papa minds it? Does he, I wonder? I'll go and see!'

The idea seemed to amuse her. She laughed a little laugh, patted her hair before the glass, and drawing herself up to the full height of her little figure, she walked with stately steps out of her room, and down the winding staircase, stopping with affected carelessness to look out of the tall window half-way down the flight. As she crossed the hall, she hesitated, and looked a trifle frightened; but recovered herself almost immediately, knocked at the door before her, and went in without waiting for an answer.

A man past middle life was sitting at a writing-table, littered all over with books and manuscripts. He looked up as Phyllis entered, and a frown was on his face. 'I did not say "Come in,"' he said sternly.

'Did you not?' rejoined Phyllis, with a fine air of surprise. 'Oh, how sorry I am! Well, but I could not suppose you would wish to be alone on such a miserable day.'

Then, finding no further rebuff forthcoming, she drew a stool near her father's chair, and rested her head against the arm.

'It really is weather in which people ought to stand by each other; don't you think so, daddy?' and Phyllis looked wistfully up at her father. 'For I couldn't bear to sit down comfortably in my pretty room up-stairs, and think that you were dull and worried by yourself down here. So I came to see how my daddy was getting on.'

Mr Marsden moved uneasily in his chair. Above all things, he disliked being interrupted

in his work; and probably on any other day he would have had no scruple in telling his daughter he wished to be alone. But to-day the ceaseless rain and dreary outlook had not been without its influence on his spirits; and that, combined with the pleading look on Phyllis's face, made him answer almost amiably: 'Well, well! perhaps it is!' And with a sigh he pushed aside a large pile of manuscripts that lay on the table before him.

'Why, daddy, you get busier every day!' said Phyllis, noting the movement. 'How I do envy you your writing on a day like this! Let me see what you're doing.' She picked up a tattered, old, leather-bound book which lay at her father's elbow. The characters were strange to her; and she knitted her pretty brows and pursed up her lips as she turned the book first one side up and then the other. 'What a queer old book, daddy! And what funny writing—all curls and dashes and dots! What language is it?'

'Persian,' replied Mr Marsden, wheeling round his chair. 'That queer old book is exceedingly rare, and contains the love-poems of a writer whose name would tell you nothing if I repeated it.'

'That means that he has forgotten it,' observed Phyllis to herself. 'But love-poems, daddy—that really is interesting! Are you going to translate them?' And she patted the old book with quite a loving gesture.

'I am going to try,' replied Mr Marsden, modestly. 'Indeed, I have already finished several; and as you seem tired of your own society, perhaps you would like to stay here a little, and I will read some to you. Possibly your observations on them may be of use to me.'

'Oh, yes! I am sure they will!' exclaimed Phyllis. 'Because I know so much about such things.'

'Do you indeed?' said her father sharply. 'Pray, how and where did you acquire this fund of information?'

'Oh, well, not really, you know! I didn't mean actually, of course,' explained Phyllis in a great hurry. 'Books you know, and stories, and things tell one such a lot.'

'Umph!' said her father, only half satisfied. Then he drew out his sheets of manuscript, turned to the light, and began to read, while Phyllis, with an air of demure propriety, seated herself on a stool before him.

'My beloved is fairer than the white rose of morning. Softer than the antelope's is her eye when she gazes on me. I rose in the night and stood beside her tower.'

'Oh!' cried Phyllis, with a little gasp of shocked astonishment.

Her father bent his brows at her, but went on reading. 'The night was cheered by stars, but in my heart is deepest blackness. Bitter are the waters of thy spring, oh Zoar-Azra! They are sour and bitter in the mouth, and the heart rejecteth them. But affection spurned is sourer still; and beside it Zoar-Azra is as honey mixed with sweet oil.'

'How very nasty!' murmured Phyllis, but her father did not hear her.

'Spurn me not! oh daughter of the mountains!' he read, raising his voice as he came to the loftiest portion of the composition. 'Thou

whose voice is as the enchanting murmur of soft waters heard at evening amid the breath of roses, which light winds carry from the distant walks of winding gardens, heard in silence, broken by no footfall, nor the gentlest rustling of the softest leaf which buds in spring-time on the juniper tree, thou whose hair is'—

'Oh! Ugh! Augh!' yawned Phyllis. 'Papa, I beg your pardon. You know I do think your Persian love-songs disappointing. Poor girl, she would never have stayed to hear all that. Now, when you want to make love to a girl'—

'Thank you!' said Mr Marsden grimly, as he replaced his manuscript in a drawer and locked it up. 'I will not trouble you to tell me what I should do in that very improbable event.—Go away, Phyllis; you are evidently not interested.'

'Indeed, I am afraid not!' sighed poor Phyllis. 'But oh! I am so afraid I have vexed you! Is there nothing more interesting in your funny old book?'

'Nothing that would appear so to you.—Be good enough to leave me now! Robins will let me know when lunch is ready.'

'Oh dear!' sighed Phyllis as she ran across the hall. 'How very hard it is to amuse people when they are old. And I did try so hard not to yawn. Poor daddy, I think he was rather hurt. Shall I come to that when I am old, I wonder? Oh, I do hope not. But I must be very careful not to let the taste for Persian love-poems grow upon me.'

By this time Phyllis had reached her own room, and had thrown herself into a large deep chair beside her fire. 'Love-poems,' she mused—'love-poems are not necessarily Persian. English love-poems would be much nicer.' Not all about roses, and bitter springs, and winding walks. No, not at all! Nice, sensible, straightforward love-poems, just like what a nice man would say! But what would he say? What should I say, if I were a man, and wanted to talk poetry?

She lay considering for some time; and then, with a pencil and paper, endeavoured to write some of the nice love-songs she had imagined. But at first the words would not come; and when they did come, they would not arrange themselves. So in a little while Phyllis threw her pencil down, went to her piano, and played waltzes, with a secret hope that the luscious harmonies might be heard in the study downstairs, and infuse a little warmth into the ancient Persian verses.

When the luncheon bell rang, she went down humming to herself one of the airs she had been playing, and took her seat opposite her father with a pretty unconsciousness of the frowns he cast towards her.

'Papa,' she said at length, having failed in several efforts to draw him into conversation, 'I think of going to see Kitty this afternoon'—then she added, hesitatingly—'if you do not particularly want me.'

'Mrs Huxtable!' said Mr Marsden, interested at once. 'Is her brother at home yet?'

'No; I think he is in Scotland. Shall I remind Kitty that you want to see him?'

'Pray, do no such thing! I presume my acquaintance is of as much value to him as his can be to me. If he comes to call upon me, I

can put him right about several theories he seems to have formed, and direct him to a course of inquiry which may be profitable to him when he returns to Persia. If he does not care to seek that advantage, that is his own affair.'

Phyllis made a mow, under the shelter of a decanter, but said no more. Only, when she rose to leave the room, she stopped by her father's chair and threw her arms round his neck. 'Don't be cross with me, daddy,' she said—'don't be cross with me. I can't help not being clever, you know; and I do love my old daddy, though I plague him so.'

'I'm not cross!' said Mr Marsden, softening—'that is, not very cross.—Well, well; not at all cross. There, get along, little plague! Leave me to finish my claret.'

'But I want you to show you're not cross,' said Phyllis, still hanging round his neck. 'Let me copy your poems out nicely for you. You know I can write a nice clear hand, much better than yours! Let me copy them. Ah! do—then I shall know I'm not in disgrace.'

'Foolish child!' said her father, pinching her cheek. 'You shall have the poems. But be very careful of them. If anything were to happen to them, nearly six months' work would be lost.'

'I'll take the greatest care possible! Oh! you dear old daddy.' And Phyllis ran off radiant.

Half an hour later, she was in a hansom, being whirled rapidly across the river to a quiet square in Kensington, where she was dropped on the steps of a roomy old house, which looked as if all its life it had sheltered dowagers of irreproachable family. The servant who let her in smiled as if he knew her; and Phyllis, nodding and smiling in return, ran lightly up the stairs.

As she laid her hand upon the drawing-room door she paused, for at that moment there issued from within the sound of a deep, man's voice raised in a kind of croon, which sounded inexpressibly odd:

There was an old woman all skin and bone,
Such an old woman was never known.

These words the voice chanted, wofully out of tune; when the further adventures of the old woman were cut short by a much more youthful voice which interrupted, saying with decision: 'I don't like people all 'kin an' bone. Sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Pon my word, Dickie,' said the older voice, 'I'm afraid I don't know that song.'

Phyllis listened with a laughing face, turned as if to go, blushed, hesitated, and then suddenly opened the door and went in. She found a tall, fair-haired man sitting with a little boy astraddle on his knee, looking the picture of discomfort and embarrassment. A younger boy was sitting on the ground between his legs, nursing a green parrot, and causing no trouble to anybody, except when he tried to swallow it, or to wedge his head between the bars of the chair. The moment they saw Phyllis, they started off to meet her, and while the younger one clung to her skirts, the elder boy leapt straight at her, crying out: 'Oh! Auntie Phyllis, he can't sing one bit!'

'Sh! Dickie!' said Phyllis as she kissed him. 'You mustn't be rude.'

'Indeed, Miss Marsden, Dickie is quite right,'

said the young man.—'And permit me to say I am very glad to see you.'

'You look glad, certainly,' Phyllis admitted. 'May I ask where Kitty is, and why you are left in charge of these little people, who seem to be quite too much for you?'

'Too much indeed! I've never spent such an anxious afternoon in my life. The nurse is ill, or dead, or gone to the pantomime—I don't remember what exactly; and Kitty's gone to lie down with a headache. I believe she did it on purpose to see what I should do.'

'Very possible, I should say,' observed Phyllis. 'That corresponds also with my idea of Kitty's character. I should not wonder if you were right. And what *did* you do?'

But before this question could be answered, Dickie interposed. He had climbed on a chair, and jumped down to the ground ten times in succession; and being somewhat exhausted by this feat of agility, he came over to Phyllis, put his knees on her lap, and said in a pleading voice: 'Please, Auntie Phyllis, sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Not now, Dickie,' said Phyllis, trying to put him off. 'Another time, dear.'

'No, now!' pleaded the boy.

And Captain Benson, with an anxious face, added: 'Indeed, Miss Marsden, I think you had better, if you can, and don't mind very much; for Dickie will never be satisfied until you do.'

'But I am not going to stay! I am going home!'

'For mercy's sake, do no such thing!' cried her companion. 'If you are naturally cruel, remember that you may be in need of help yourself some day, and don't leave me in this emergency.'

'Upon my word!' said Phyllis, shrugging her shoulders, 'what helpless creatures men are!—Yes, Dickie, I'll sing to you, my birdie, as long as ever you like.'

So she sang:

Wing, wang, waddle oh!
Sing, sang, saddle oh!
Fly away, pretty boy!
Over the moon,

to the huge delight of the children, who laughed, and clapped their hands.

Then Dickie said, nodding over towards Captain Benson: 'You listen, and see how she does it!'

'All serene, Dickie,' was the reply; but Phyllis looked annoyed.

'Wouldn't you like to go and smoke, Captain Benson?' she asked.

'I want to learn the art of entertaining children,' he said. 'Pray, go on.'

So Phyllis sang another song, and then another; and then, espying a box of bricks in a far corner of the room, she led the children over there and set them to work to build a temple. Leaving them immersed in this labour, she returned towards the fireplace, and sank into the chair which Captain Benson set for her.

'I thought you were in Scotland still,' she observed, after a pause.

'I did go to one or two places after leaving Dunveith; but they were all very dull. I sup-

pose it was having such a jolly time there that made the other houses seem dull.

'Perhaps,' Phyllis assented. Then she added: 'Alice Markham told me she had never in her life been so bored as she was at Dunveth.'

'How very strange! I thought it such a delightful time. Didn't you?'

Phyllis hesitated. Just at that moment there came a crash, a scream from the children, and the sound of breaking china.

'Goodness gracious me!' cried Phyllis.

'What on earth have the little wretches done!' exclaimed Captain Benson; and they hurried over to the scene of the wreck.

A FAITHFUL TRAITOR.

THE 25th of March 182— was marked by a thaw succeeding a severe frost of three weeks' duration. At Lenham Court, a mansion situated fifteen miles or so from London, on the west side, great inconvenience and some damage had been caused by the bursting of a water-pipe during the day. In especial, one room was rendered so damp that its usual occupant 'Spencer'—Lady Brown-Salter's lady's-maid—was compelled to change her sleeping-place. Instead of sharing one of the housemaids' beds, she chose, with her Ladyship's permission, to make up a bed for herself in the small room, or large cupboard, situated at the end of the corridor which runs through the whole breadth of Lenham Court on the first storey. It was a room used to store trunks and boxes in, and Spencer placed some of these as a foundation for her couch. Many of these trunks had made the voyage to India and back, for Colonel Sir William Brown-Salter had distinguished himself not a little in John Company's service. There had been much extra work for all the servants at Lenham Court that day, and it was late before Spencer retired to her cupboard.

On getting into her bed she found her novel couch by no means so comfortable as it looked. It had to be rearranged; but on extinguishing her candle a second time, she found herself as far from sleep as ever. While she twisted and turned, she heard the stable clock strike two; and immediately afterwards she became conscious of a subdued sound outside her door. Remembering the jokes at her expense at the supper-table about the size of her bed-chamber, it occurred to Spencer that her fellow-servants might be going to play her a trick, or indulge in some practical joke. So she slid from her uneasy couch, and removing the key from the lock—she had locked herself in on coming to bed—she applied her eye to the keyhole. The door, as we have said, faced directly the whole length of the corridor; about two yards from her stood a man, but not one of her fellow-servants; he held a lighted candle in one hand, shading it with the other so as to cast the light now here, now there. His face was concealed by a mask of black crape, and he was listening intently. A breathless minute or two passed, and, as if by magic, there

were either two or three other men in the corridor, all masked in crape, behind which their eyes shone in the candle gleams. They went and came and consulted, noiseless as so many spectres. In and out of the rooms, locking doors softly behind them, now ascending to the third storey, now descending to the basement; now the one holding and shadowing the candle was left alone again.

Spencer drew back from the keyhole a moment, trying to think if there was anything she could do. Sir William's room gave on to the corridor—he must be murdered, thought poor Spencer, or surely she would have heard some sound, for he often sat late reading, and it was round his door that the thieves were clustered. He was a passionate man and a powerful, beloved by his servants for his bounty, though feared on account of his temper. Surely he would have made a fight for it, if he had not been taken at some cruel disadvantage. What could she do? The alarm-bell, even if she could muster courage to try and get to it, was quite at the other end of the house. Applying her eye once more to the keyhole, she was terrified to find not only darkness, but in the darkness, some one breathing close to the door. Then the handle brushed her cheek as it was softly turned, and lock and hinges were strained by the silent pressure brought to bear on them to such a degree that instinctively she drew back, expecting the door to be forced in upon her. The door creaked as the pressure relaxed, and just then the stable clock struck three.

As the minutes passed and silence was unbroken, Spencer gathered courage to look from her spying-place. The watchman stood alone, candle in hand, in his former place. She became stiff and cold at her post; nothing moved that she could hear or see, except that the man trimmed his candle now and then with his fingers, and turned his head watchfully from side to side, his eyes gleaming behind his mask, and seeming now and again to fix themselves on her lurking-place. At a low whistle from the basement, he and his light vanished together. Taking the precaution to stop up the keyhole, Spencer struck flint and steel till she obtained a light, then huddled on a few clothes, inserted the key, turned it, stood one minute outside, in silence and darkness, then snatching up her candle, made a rush for the only open door in the corridor—it was her master's.

Bound hand and foot to a chair, and gagged, was Sir William. The room was in the wildest confusion—boxes, caskets, chests, all turned upside down, and their contents scattered indiscriminately on the floor. Her Ladyship was in bed, bound and gagged too. With nimble fingers Spencer set to work to free her master. No sooner was this accomplished, than, speechless and foaming at the mouth, Sir William staggered out of the room, and, to her dismay, she heard him descend the stairs. Having released her mistress, the lady's-maid next hurried to the rooms of her fellow-servants, on all of whom the keys had been turned after they had been threatened with instant death if they uttered a sound. They were

soon released ; and the men-servants descended in a body to the ground-floor in search of their master. Here everything was in disorder. On the dining-room table were the remains of the thieves' supper ; but Sir William as well as the depredators had vanished. The groom returned from the stables with the news that his master's favourite hunter was missing. There was no doubt now that he had gone single-handed in pursuit of the thieves—as was indeed the case.

Concluding that they were from London and were returning thither, Sir William had saddled his hunter and started without an instant's delay, save to arm himself with a couple of pistols from the stand of arms in the hall. When he reached the head of the avenue, three-quarters of a mile from the house, he dismounted to open the heavy gates. Then he perceived, in the dawning light of the chill March morning, a strange dog sitting shivering inside the gates, unable either to surmount or pass under them. He concluded at once that the cur belonged to his late visitors, and that, having stayed behind, either for his supper or in search of game, his retreat had been cut off by the closing of the gates. He resolved to follow the clue thus given him, and was confirmed in his resolution when, the gates being opened, the animal scoured away, with his nose to the ground, in the direction of London. Away went the dog, and away galloped Sir William, keeping an eye upon him always. It was broad daylight when the three reached the outskirts of London, and Sir William was hailed by a voice he knew well. It was that of the Major of his late regiment.

'Hullo ! Colonel, where are you off to so early ?' Major Higgins was on his way home after a night's play at Brooks's.

'Turn your horse's head and I'll tell you,' returned Sir William through his set teeth. The idea of communicating his losses and the indignity, he, an old soldier, had suffered, sufficed to make the blood, which his swift ride had kept at fever heat, boil again.

Major Higgins did as desired ; and putting his horse to the gallop, received, in as few words as possible, the news of the night's occurrences at Lenham Court, as he and his old Colonel made their way side by side through Oxford Street and the Strand, never once losing sight of the mongrel that was, he fancied, to be the clue to the recovery of his property. Dodging and winding his way among market carts and huckney-coaches, the dog, never once relaxing his speed, diverged into by-streets and lanes, until he disappeared up a court in Leather Lane.

Dismounting, and giving their horses in charge to a lad, and having impressed a watchman into their service, they advanced up the court in single file. Sir William led the way, a cocked pistol in either hand ; Major Higgins, who came next, was unarmed ; the watchman brought up the rear in a leisurely way, that showed him by no means thirsting for the fray. Doorway after doorway was examined, but the cur seemed literally to have vanished. In an angle of the *cul-de-sac* into which they had entered, Sir William at last discovered an outside wooden staircase. Despite the remonstrances of his companions, he persisted in creeping cautiously up the crazy stairs. There, curled up at a door, and apparently

fast asleep, lay the clue who had so faithfully but unconsciously guided him to his master's lair.

A summons to open the door met with no response. Sir William, to whom anger and excitement gave additional energy, put his knee to the door, and bidding Major Higgins 'Duck !' as he did so. The door yielded with a crash ; a shot passed over the lowered heads of the two officers, and took effect in the cocked-hat of the watchman. A short scuffle, and the thieves saved their lives by surrendering at discretion to Sir William's pistols. On a table in their midst was spread out the whole of the 'swag ;' not an article was missing. A presentation sword of Sir William's, the hilt of which was thickly crusted with gems, was the only part of the booty that had met with ill usage ; but every diamond, ruby, or emerald that had been knocked from its socket still lay on the worm-eaten table, and was, before many days were past, restored to its accustomed bed. A few bruises and dints in the metal-work of the hilt remained, and these Sir William would show with great glee in after-days, telling how the good sword was lost and won ; while, as to the dints and notches on the blade, gained in a more legitimate warfare, the good Colonel could scarce ever be got to speak a word.

GHOSTS.

WHEN the brilliant hues of the sunset fade
Into amber and paly gold ;
When the wren and the robin sleep in the glade,
And the shepherd shuts his fold ;
When the lamps are lit in the deep, blue skies,
And the toil of the day is done—
Pale, haunting ghosts of the past arise
From the shadows one by one.

The ghost of the words we did not say
In the days for ever fled,
Comes out of the shadows dim and gray ;
And the ghost of the words we said,
Of the cruel word, of the bitter word,
Of the word of blame or scorn,
That was keen as the point of a warrior's sword
On a fateful battle morn.

The ghosts of the woes of age and youth,
That we passed unheeding by ;
Of the griefs we did not ask to soothe,
Of the tears we did not dry ;
Of the ills of which we took no heed ;
Of the grievous wrongs unfought—
Come with that of many a churlish deed,
Or of good deed left unwrought.

They cluster round us, these phantom shades,
These ghosts of the days of old,
As the cheerful glow of the daylight fades,
In the twilight dim and cold ;
And in vain we moan, and in vain we weep,
And we may not from them hide ;
Closer and closer these shadows creep
In the twilights to our side.

M. ROCK.

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ON ANXIETY.

ALL who survive childhood feel the grip of Anxiety at some time and under some form; for, if a man be not anxious from care and business, he will be anxious about his pleasures and indulgences. Anxiety is as searching as the east wind; it pierces into the marrow of our bones, finds out a weak spot, and chills it only to inflame it into a fever—an intermittent fever, however. Intense anxiety is hardly consistent with a persistent ill-fortune: resignation—a mild despair—comes to the relief of the man constantly cast down by ill-luck, and he ceases to kick against the pricks. Hoping nothing, expecting nothing, he fears little. The essence of anxiety is a feverish hope; its quintessence, a sickening fear. The atmosphere of anxiety is uncertainty; its food, suspense. It carries a keen chisel, and carves men's countenances into more wrinkles than all the greater passions put together; while its acid bites into their minds, leaving channels into which fear will run so long as their lives last.

Though a man be so fenced about that for himself he need entertain no anxiety, yet if he be of any magnanimity of soul, anxiety will creep into it for the sake of others. In vain does man strive to forecast the object of his doubt: while watching the east, in all probability his dread will be stealing upon him from the west; if he looks to the north, behold! his fear has found him out, creeping upon him from the south. Or he may teach a cause for anxiety to appear by dreading it; for courage to overcome a devouring fear of the future is as necessary as putting on a bold front in the presence of a wild beast. This is one reason why it should be as much as possible repressed. Another and stronger one why it should be zealously guarded against is, that it clouds and dims the mind, as fasting or ill food subdues the body. And so we become open to an infection, capable of ill thoughts, weak enough to entertain sick suspicions, which would gain no admittance in a healthier state of being.

An anxious night—who has not passed it? For anxieties, like bats, fly best by night. As the twilight falls, how insidiously an anxiety flits into the mind, scarcely troubling us at first—still, it is there. By-and-by, as the gloaming deepens into darkness, the creature brushes past our face, and rouses us with a start to a sense of its presence, filling us with a nameless dread. We coax ourselves into a doze, only to be awakened to a consciousness that the vampire has settled and is sucking our lifeblood. No more sleep for us: we toss and tumble from side to side; the flitting bat-wings of the trouble, and our sighs, the only sounds disturbing the darkness. Now is the time for an exorcism: we try it, and listen fearfully. All is still. Has the enemy departed? For ten panting seconds we believe it has; till a sudden sinking of the heart—a sudden inrush of thoughts and fears that kindle fears, 'an indistinguishable throng'—warns us to put aside all vain notions of reprieve, all hope of release for this one while. We have compared troubles to bats; and when bats have once entered a room, they are difficult of dislodgment; despite drivings to and fro, beatings up and down, they swoop silently and uninjured from wall to wall, just managing to elude their pursuer. An open window and a light outside is a better remedy than all the buffetings within the house; so, to open the window of our mind and let our anxiety flit out into the light of another man's understanding, to tell our fearful anticipations to a friend, is more likely to bring relief than the battering of it up and down in our dark and ruffled minds.

A man may be anxious by habit, or by temperament, or, still oftener, by ignorance; and all these things, like mist, by confusing the outline of an object, magnify it. When a man has suffered anxiety silently and, as the event proves, needlessly, he draws a long breath, and dismisses it wholly from his mind: he was mistaken, that was all. But should his anxiety have been aroused by another needlessly, he feels himself at liberty to despise his prognostications hence-

forth—without, however, suffering his opinion of his own wisdom to be impaired by a perhaps similar error of judgment. But then, no one but himself knew of *his* mistake, and we live so much in what we think to be other people's opinion of us, that what they do not know is comparatively easy for us to forget. Many nourish a secret dread of naming a fear, lest a whispered word may bring it—like an avalanche, unsettled by a breath—down upon their heads. Others, impatient of suspense, unable to wait with steady nerves to pay their debt in due season, hurry the toll into the reluctant hand of the grim collector: of these are suicides. It is not despair—certainty—that unnerves a man, so much as a prolonged uncertainty; events inclining now this way and now that, until the balance of the strained and anxious mind is lost.

Yet it is exactly the mingling of hope and fear that forms the most powerful stimulant to energy and exertion of which human nature is capable. Under its influence men are goaded to excel themselves. Nay, more, without it, the joys of life would be robbed of half their poignancy. Who is it, think you, that relishes the desire fulfilled, like the man who has experienced hope deferred? There is no one object on which our minds are greatly set, from which all spice of anxiety can be completely banished. The Indian shooting the rapids in his frail canoe feels it, and it adds a thrill of pleasure to his sense of the audacity of his venture; the statesman perorating to the House on a question by which his Cabinet is prepared to stand or fall, feels it running tingling through his veins, adding fire to his imagination, lending eloquence to his tongue. The gambler is so enamoured of its power to brace up his relaxed and over-stimulated nerves, that to its delirious enjoyment he will sacrifice state and station, mankind's and his own esteem, and think the madness cheaply purchased.

Life without the joy of mingled hope and fear, without anxiety, would be a stagnant pool deprived of the spring that keeps the waters running and sweet, and relegating this 'pleasing anxious being' of the Western world to the Oriental calm of fatalism. When the current of life runs slow, when weeds gather on the surface and crowd the depths, we are in danger of yielding to the strongest temptation that besets a life free from fear, unflavoured by hope—namely, the danger of yielding ourselves to the power of the *vis inertiae*; shut up in ourselves, our fancies, our ailments, our own affairs, lost to all use, like Merlin in the forest under Vivien's spell, sunk in sloth, and the 'sweet reasonableness' of doing nothing when nothing apparently needs to be done.

There is a story told of a respectable tradesman, who, having attained the dignity of the *dolce far niente*, confessed to a friend of his that the happiest month in the year to him was the month in which his fit of the gout came on: it gave him something to think about. Let the man—himself on the rack of anxiety and envying the ease of another man's leisure, perhaps—remember, when enduring his own pangs, that a state of mind which entertains neither hope nor fear, which holds out no inducement to activity, is a state bordering on the greatest misery. Moreover, if a man be possessed of a strong mind, he

recognises the fact that this anxiety, so painful to endure, this hoping for the best and preparing for the worst, is the very process by which he may attain the cautious sagacity necessary for the conduct of affairs; his fear has taught him prudence, hope has been productive of patience, both have nourished activity, and the doubt, distrust, and dread of the future, implanted by nature or circumstances, he has learned to moderate by cultivating courage, patience, and cheerfulness; his reward being that feeling of calm, dignified pleasure, which has made it so well worth his while to labour for their attainment.

We have spoken of the Oriental calm of fatalism, such as that which 'Eöthen' attributes to old Shereef, sitting by the bivouac fire, 'unknowing where he was, or whither he might go, unknowing of all geography, but trusting in the goodness of God, and the clenching power of fate, and the good star of the Englishman.' But Oriental ignorance and fatalism, though coupled with trust in God, are not so impressive as that trust in God which is coupled with an absence of superstition, with knowledge, and with courage and self-reliance.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XIII.

And the blossoms that bask in the sunshine
So wanton and fair,
For the apples which wait on their beauty
Have never a care.

EMMA RHODES.

It was the private view day at the Royal Academy, and such a lovely day too, as if Nature wanted to show that there was no flattery in all the beautiful landscapes that adorned the walls. Spring was early that year, and April had been in her kindest mood, and had smiled her sweetest with the soft tears in her eyes, and little balmy breaths of west wind that had opened the fragrant hearts of the wild-flowers to her, and made the young lambs leap with sheer happiness.

Pomona had begun her reign in the Kentish orchards quite a fortnight earlier than usual, and only morbid people prophesied frosts yet to come, and told of little blighted apples falling like hail, under its cruel touch, from trees that had been full of promise in blossoming time.

What troublesome things some people's memories are, on which are indelibly printed all the bad, unfortunate things in life!—snow on the Derby day, frosts in June, chilblains at midsummer, wet hay-making, drenched harvest fields; and there is no mark made by the much more frequent beautiful springs, sunny haytime, and plentiful harvests.

Sage had no such misgivings. The winter had sped away so pleasantly with that private view day to look forward to, which was to bring Maurice back to her, and it was further shortened by the letters from him that came every few days, and the almost equal delight of writing to him. His letters were not so long as hers; but that she did not expect; indeed, she hardly wished it. Men never wrote so much as girls, and, long or

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short, his letters were just what they should be. Neither did they always come as regularly as her anxious little heart would have desired, a heart that kept her awake all the night before the post by which one of those missives might arrive, and leapt into her mouth when the postman's knock sounded on the door. But even this irregularity, she stoutly maintained to herself, she preferred, that he should not feel bound to write if it were inconvenient, or he was busy, for he knew that she was not exacting or unreasonable, like some girls, who fretted and took offence at the slightest delay. She would even persuade herself that she should be quite satisfied if he never wrote at all; and that she should quite like to prove to him in this way her entire trust in his love and constancy.

Owen Ludlow had been in London off and on all the winter, and his presence had done much to make the time pass pleasantly and quickly. But just a day or two before the private view, he was called away down to Sear, where good, puritanical Stock lay a-dying, and his kind, little, cheery wife badly wanted a friend. I am afraid happiness is apt to make us selfish, for Sage felt a little petulant vexation that this should have befallen just now, when Maurice was coming back, and when Owen Ludlow's presence at the studio would have made it available for so many pleasant meetings.

I am not sure that Owen Ludlow was not a little glad to be away at the private view. He had got used to his picture being seen, and had not the same shrinking from exposing it that he had felt when he first showed it to Sage and Kitty. Many of his fellow-artists had seen and criticised it, and it had been described in one of the society papers in 'A Visit to the Studios.' But there still lingered in his mind a dread of the gaze of the general public, and a sense that Pomona was his no longer, now that any one might look at her and pass their ignorant comments on her.

Maurice Moore had kept his promise, and had come home for it; and, as Sage told herself over and over again, had come home for good, having resigned his appointment. Not that he had at present any other occupation in view, though Owen Ludlow had done all he could, and Maurice had not been idle. But he thought it would be easier to find a berth if he were on the spot. He did not leave Edelstadt with quite as much satisfaction as he would have done at Christmas. Things had gone decidedly more pleasantly since then; the reigning beauty had deigned to be more gracious to him, having been disappointed in the new attaché, who was not nearly so agreeable as he appeared at first, and had, moreover, a *fiancée* in England, who detracted very much from his excellence. Miss St Clair was certainly very good-looking, and could be very agreeable when she chose; and she had it in her power to make society much pleasanter. He did not a bit waver in his preference for Sage; and he told himself constantly—a little too constantly—that he never regretted for a moment the sacrifice he was going to make for her; but he indulged in a good deal of harmless flirtation with Miss St Clair, and was conscious of a certain amount of regret in saying good-bye to her and the empty society life, which did not impress him as quite

as hollow and unsatisfactory as it had seemed before Christmas. But he was rather glad of this, he told himself, as it made the sacrifice on love's shrine more worthy.

That grimy, old monster London puts on a very pleasing appearance early in the season, at any rate at the West End. The flowers in the parks are a sight to see with the brilliant colours of tulips and hyacinths, and the window-boxes in fashionable houses are marvels of taste and sweetness. The drive is full of elegant carriages, with fair and graceful occupants; and in the Row the horses and the pretty faces and the well-turned-out young Englishmen make one proud of one's country, for there is not another capital in Europe, or, for that matter, in the world, that can show the like. Up above, the sky is blue, as if it was never obscured by fog or smoke; and the pavements look quite dazzlingly white, in contrast with the newly watered roads. Maurice Moore was much struck by the look of this much-abused London, that first day of his return; and perhaps it was in contrast with the brightness and trimness and air of stir and fashion in the West End that Dalston impressed him less favourably.

There was a dustiness already beginning to pervade the neighbourhood, and a tendency for bits of paper to blow about and whirl round corners; and the watering was done in a more rough-and-ready way than in the west, splashing on the pavements, and catching unwary foot-passengers across the legs. Providence had not been so kind in arranging circumstances pleasantly for Maurice Moore's return to Sage. Sarah opened the door in her least presentable condition. Cook had chosen this very inopportune moment to wash down the passage, and, in her agitation at Maurice's arrival, upset the pail, the contents of which rushed hospitably to meet him. There were two of Dr Merriew's patients waiting for cook's washing operations to be ended to pass into the surgery, patients whose very much enlarged cheeks made it easy to diagnose their case as one of mumps.

As he had arrived before he was expected, Sage was not ready to receive him; but Will, with a furiously bad cold in the head, was; and he engaged his services at once in his absorbing occupation of mending his white mouse's cage, proposing that Maurice should hold the occupant of the cage, while Will executed some repair with the glue-pot, which was emitting fearful smells from the fireplace.

It was better when Sage appeared, with a pretty little flush of haste on her cheeks, and her eyes shining with delighted welcome and love. He felt he could tolerate even the white mouse and the glue-pot for her sake. And she was looking greatly to advantage in a pretty fresh new dress, that she had bestowed much thought and pains upon, having begun to plan what it should be soon after Christmas. She had been awfully extravagant, she felt, in the matter of boots and gloves; and she had great qualms of conscience over the price of that little bonnet, though Dr Merriew paid the bill without the slightest remark. But she knew that the general effect was good; and though she blushed up to the roots of her hair under Maurice's smiling scrutiny, she felt he would have no need to be

ashamed of her, if he met any of his fashionable friends at the private view.

He could not quite conceal his haste to be off and clear of white mice and upset pails and mumps; and Sage felt a little bit sorry, as she hoped Dr Merridew would have come in before they went; and there were several things she would like to show Maurice—some sketches of Scar she had worked up; and a sketch of herself that Owen Ludlow had taken in crayons, and which she had had framed, on the chance of some one liking to have it. And besides, she felt a little remorseful at leaving Will alone, poor Will, who really had a very bad cold, and was in difficulties with the white mouse, known in the family as the Pink un, knowing that the servants would decline all assistance, as they regarded white mice as 'orrid things.'

But all these regrets were forgotten when they were once off in the sunny streets side by side. She gave herself over to perfect satisfaction; there was not a cloud to dim the sunshine, no care or anxiety or doubt to disturb the entire content. Let what would come after, the present was all that heart could desire, and why should it not always be the same, since it was Maurice's presence that made the happiness?

She made no expostulations on the score of economy, when he called a hansom; they would be wise another day, and she would preach prudence and advocate omnibuses and third-class tickets. She did not demur, either, at an elegant, little lunch that he ordered at a restaurant, though she guessed that it must have cost more than most of the meals of the entire Merridew family, servants included. Just for that one day they would be extravagant and enjoy themselves; and after that, be prudent, and go in for two-penny 'buses and buns for lunch, and enjoy themselves just the same.

Now they were at Burlington House. What splendid carriages were turning in; what gorgeous flunkeys were opening carriage doors; and what wondrous toilets issued therefrom, and swept or rustled up the broad steps! Every moment Maurice touched her arm to notice some celebrity passing, some society beauty whose photograph was in all the shops—an archbishop's glittered legs—some statesman who had come from affairs of vital importance to the country for a few minutes' relaxation with art—there a poet—here a millionaire—now a duchess—then an actor. Sage would have been content to stand all the afternoon and see this brilliant company pass by, with Maurice to tell her who each one was. But Maurice would not linger; and they went on up the stairs and passed straight on to the third room, where hung No. 540.

It looked wonderfully small. That was the first effect. Sage could hardly believe at first that it had not been cut down, or in some marvellous way diminished in size. In the studio at Scar it had seemed such a large picture; and, in her mind's eye, when she had fancied how it would look at the Academy, she had imagined it as among the more important canvases. It was on the line, and showed to great advantage, though Mr Ludlow had declared it was entirely killed and crushed by the big full-length portrait of an alderman's lady in crimson velvet just above it; but perhaps it was the

portrait that suffered, for Pomona showed out in comparison, fair and pure and refined in her white dress with the apple blossom shadow dappling it.

If Kitty had been there, she would have been greatly astonished that every one was not crowding round this picture; and even Sage, who realised that there were other pictures that would attract more attention, was a little surprised that, when they first came up to it, there was no one else looking at it.

'I wonder if any one will recognise you from the picture, Sage?' Maurice said. 'I never thought that Ludlow did you half justice. I don't fancy my portrait will be recognisable, though you declare that you knew me as Vertumnus at the first glance. It is rather humiliating to appear for the first time before the British public in the character of an old woman.'

There was a sort of fascination about the picture to them, though they knew every line and shade of it by heart; and it was interesting, too, to hear the remarks people made on it; but at last they were preparing to go on to the other pictures, when a clear, fresh, young voice behind them caught their ears, and they involuntarily stopped to listen.

'You really must show me this wonderful likeness of mine, Sir Robert. At least half-a-dozen people have been at me since I came in, talking about my portrait. I assure you it is the first I have heard of it.'

'But indeed, Miss Lester, if the likeness is accidental, it is the most marvellous thing I ever heard of. But you will see for yourself. Ludlow is the name of the painter, Owen Ludlow—surely you must know him.—Excuse me'—

This to a broad-shouldered lady, who was consulting her catalogue just in front of No. 540.

Maurice and Sage were standing too close to the speakers to allow of turning to look at them; but they were conscious that a tall girl was standing beside them, with a gentleman behind her, and, when the stout lady had moved away, the man's voice said: 'Now, you will confess'—

And then came a low, rippling laugh, and, after a pause: 'Well, I suppose there is a likeness; but it is a most curious accident, for I never even heard of Mr Ludlow before.'

'He must have seen you—there can be no doubt about that.—By Jove! it seems to me a piece of impertinence to introduce any one into a picture without asking permission. If I were Lady Lester'—

'Well, really, he has drawn a very complimentary portrait of me. I don't see that I have any reason to complain.'

A sputtering attempt at a compliment from the gentleman followed, during which Sage moved away, and Maurice following her, was able, without rudeness, to turn and look at the speakers. A little, fussy, middle-aged, military-looking man, with an eyeglass; and beside him a tall girl—Pomona herself, with the same smiling, sunny face and radiant blue eyes, and apple-blossom tints of complexion; the same bright, soft hair, crowned, curiously enough, with a little bonnet of apple blossom.

The conversation, of which Maurice Moore had heard every word, had only partly reached Sage's

ears; so she did not look with such lively curiosity as he did at the speaker, and did not get such a full view of her as he did, for the gallery was fuller than when they came in, and other people came in the way.

'Did you see, Sage? What an extraordinary thing!'

'She was rather like Pomona, wasn't she?'

'Rather? She might have stepped straight out of the canvas.'

'What odd things likenesses are!' Sage said absently.—'But oh! Maurice, look at that lovely landscape of Leader's!'

But Maurice could not appreciate the pictures. His mind was distracted by the living Pomona; and his eye kept straying from the pictures that so engrossed Sage, and from the catalogue, which he marked almost at random, seeking among the changing crowd the sweet, bright face that was so familiar to him from Ludlow's picture, that it seemed as if it were the face of an old friend.

Once they came across her again; and Maurice felt almost irritated with Sage's raptures over one of Alma Tadema's masterpieces, which entirely prevented her from looking up in time to see the smile with which Pomona received her catalogue, which some hasty passer-by had knocked out of her hold, and which Maurice restored to the little hand in a pearl-gray glove.

That second look made the likeness appear more bewildering than before; and he was so full of it, that he quite started when Sage's voice said, 'Are you tired, Maurice?' and he found her eyes looking at him with tender anxiety.

'Not a bit, dear,' he answered, with a laugh.—'But if you have had enough of the pictures, I want you to come to the Burlington Arcade. I have a fancy that I would like to give you a really good pair of gloves. Pearl gray, shall they be?'

And Sage agreed, with a little sigh of regret for those she had on, which she had been rather proud of, but which he was looking at now with a decidedly depreciating expression.

TRADES-UNION TRAMPS.

THE regular, unmitigated tramp's pet horror are the men who trudge from town to town in search of work—'travelling tradesmen,' as he calls them. Numerous and constantly changing, these are of two classes. There are non-unionists, who live principally by 'calling their trade,' or obtaining assistance from fellow-workmen in situations; and there are unionists, who are allowed by their organisations so much a mile or so much a day. These Society men, again, may be divided into those who voluntarily go on tramp, and those who are obliged to do so by the rules to which they subscribe. Some trades-unions do not compel any member to travel; while others—the Amalgamated Engineers is a case in point—exercise a discretionary power in the matter. The Typographical Society pursues a middle course. To induce its members to search for work, or, rather, to relieve the congestion of labour in large towns, it allows each man

a certain amount when he leaves a branch. A Society printer who has been in Manchester for some little time is given two pounds when he starts on tramp; but he cannot receive this allowance more than once in three years. Always, however, a trades-unionist who leaves a town in search of employment is supplied with a travelling card or certificate, on which is entered by branch secretaries the relief he receives on his journey.

The amount of assistance afforded varies greatly. Carpenters and joiners—and in this, as in all other cases, we of course speak of unionists only—are entitled to one shilling and fourpence a day, unless they be on strike, when they can demand two shillings and fourpence a day for six days in each week. Few, however, take a travelling card. Tailors receive a similar allowance on the road for only forty days in each year, between the months of August and April. During the summer, the busy season in the clothing trade, there is considered to be plenty of work for all. To plasterers the relief is one shilling and sixpence per district; but when they arrive in large provincial centres they are paid three shillings, two days' 'prov.;' and everywhere alike they are allowed one shilling and sixpence extra for Sunday.

Members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers get when on travel the usual out-of-work pay, from six to ten shillings a week, according to the time they have been unemployed, and eightpence a day for bed and breakfast. Iron and tinplate workers, braziers, mounting forgers, tinnerns, stampers, and galvanisers, are relieved in accordance with the following rule of their Society: 'A member shall be entitled to one shilling a day for not more than thirty days in each statute year. Before being entitled to travelling relief for any one day, he must travel at least fifteen miles from one town towards another, except in the Birmingham district, which is to be comprised within a sixteen-mile radius of Wolverhampton, in which district eight miles from one town to another is to be considered to be one day's journey. In continuous travelling, the relief is still to be one shilling per day where sixteen miles or more are travelled.'

Some trade organisations give relief on another principle—that of distance, not time. The National Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators used to pay its members three-farthings a mile, and so much for a bed each night; but now it gives them only seven shillings per week for eight weeks in the winter; and if they choose to travel, they have to depend for relief on painters and decorators whom they may be able to find working. At present, the principal Society which pays 'mileage' is the Typographical Association. Last year, its expenditure in this direction was more than twenty-two thousand pounds—an enormous sum, considering that a printer on tramp is entitled

to only one penny per mile, that he cannot receive more than eleven shillings and eightpence (including an allowance of one shilling and eightpence for Sunday) in any one week, and that the maximum sum he can draw at this rate is eight pounds. Should he not then have obtained work, however, he is entitled to 'second-class mileage'—that is, a halfpenny a mile.

Many Societies, besides those mentioned as doing so, allow a certain sum for Sunday, and the generality of 'travelling tradesmen' can easily obtain something in addition to official relief. When a man makes an unsuccessful application for work at an office or 'shop' where he is known, a collection is often made among the journeymen for him; and the same thing is done almost invariably when a workman on tramp drops in at a lodge meeting of his Society. Sometimes, too, he is presented with a small grant from the Incidental Fund.

The income of a man on tramp, therefore, largely depends on the route he takes—a matter as to which he is not often allowed freedom of choice. Printers may go where they like. Attached to their card is a map of routes, by the aid of which they can find their way all over the country. But, as a rule, the traveller is directed by the branch secretaries on whom he calls, and they guide him according to strikes, the state of trade in particular districts, and other circumstances.

His journey, let him go where he will, is too often a degrading and disheartening experience. Live on the cheapest and commonest of food he must; generally, he is also contaminated by the vile associations of the common lodging-house. There are trades-unions—such, for example, as the Amalgamated Engineers—which provide good beds for members on travel; but, as a general thing, the amateur tramp must get the best lodgings he can. For cheapness he goes to 'four-penny doss houses,' and in those objectionable 'travellers' hotels' all his indoor life for weeks, perhaps months, is spent.

One man, an iron-turner by trade, has thrice been on the road—for two months, ten weeks, and thirteen weeks respectively—and every time he was unsuccessful in his quest for work. Another—a printer—started off from Manchester and tramped all over England, visiting towns as far apart as Newcastle, Birmingham, York, Oxford, Plymouth, Taunton, Cardiff, Lewes, Winchester, St Albans, Hull, Leamington, Hereford, and Hanley. He walked, in fact, through nearly every county in England, and was away altogether seven months, during which he obtained casual labour representing only three weeks' work. Similar instances might be cited in abundance. It is, indeed, a common thing for a man to reach the limit of the official travelling allowance when he is many miles from home and friends, and to have to work his way back, as the non-unionist 'tramping tradesman' lives regularly, by 'calling his trade.'

This is a custom greatly abused. Should a navvy apply for work on an engineering undertaking, and not be started, the men who are on the job give him a shilling to help him on the

road. An idle navvy, therefore, is sometimes better off than a working navvy, because the former can collect six or seven shillings, or more, in the course of a day. Similarly, it is the rule in many trades to present so much to every 'traveller' who calls at a 'shop' or works, or to allow him to make a collection among the men.

Scores of lazy vagabonds—fellows who never had, and never will have, regular employment—take advantage of this admirable custom. Professing a dozen trades in a day, they 'call' them all, telling a different story on each occasion, though really no story is necessary. All that a man need do is to inquire for the 'father of the chapel,' 'the shop steward,' 'the leading hand,' 'the foreman,' or 'the overseer;' everything depends on his asking for the right person and using the phrase customary in the trade he is 'calling.' Sometimes, but not often, a question is put to the traveller. 'What is that?' a baker may say, pointing to his 'peel;' a tailor may see if the man knows the technical terms for a particular kind of work; a printer may pick up a stray 'quad' and ask to be told its size. Any error in replying is fatal; indeed, it has resulted in the applicant being kicked outside. Society men, however, rarely practise this form of swindling; and in calling their own trade they can prove the genuineness of their case by producing their travelling card.

Trades-unionists, when hard pressed, as they frequently are in passing through agricultural districts, are also obliged to sing at public-houses—a mode of 'raising the wind' familiarly known as 'working the pubs'—beg, sleep in casual wards, and avail themselves of charities. All who are in the south of England make a point of seeing at least Watts's Charity, at Rochester, celebrated by Dickens in 'Seven Poor Travellers.' So many wend their way thither, in fact, that the inhabitants of the town look upon the institution as a nuisance; and it is said that some years ago an effort was made to close it, and divert the money left by the founder to other charitable purposes. Almost any evening an odd-looking crowd of 'tradesmen' may be seen outside the unique institution, each man waiting to lay his claim before the Committee to be one of the 'seven travellers' who, by the terms of Watts's bequest, are to be boarded and lodged every night. Admission to the charity is worth trying for; it is a perfect paradise for tramps.

Yet, in spite of insult, hunger, and fatigue, travelling tradesmen, especially those who are unmarried, soon grow to like the life of the roads. 'A wanderer is man from his birth;' and when the natural instinct is revived, many individuals are loth to settle down to regular employment. The great army of habitual tramps is largely recruited from men who start from home with the intention of walking a particular number of miles in the hope that 'something will turn up.' Trades-unions are quite sensible of this and of other evils of the travelling system. The avowed object with which the 'Out-of-work Fund' of the Typographical Association was established in 1873 was to keep men 'off the road;' and the mileage relief of the Amalgamated Society of Painters and Decorators was abolished because it was so grossly abused. But these things are

perhaps inevitable, and certainly they do not detract seriously from the praise due to traders-unions for the assistance they render to those obliged to tramp in search of work.

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

CHAPTER II.

It was a sad sight! Dickie had built a beautiful temple. Judging from the ruins, as well as from his broken and tearful explanation, it must have been a singularly fine example of its class. When it was completed, however, Dickie, surveying it with a too critical eye, judged that it wanted colour; and seeing on a bracket not far above his head a valuable little china teapot, of a beautiful blue, he had climbed on a chair, possessed himself of the coveted ornament, and, amid breathless suspense, set it on the cupola of his temple. In that position, any one would have admired it—if only it would have stood erect. It was made with a stupid round bottom, and Dickie's temple had a cupola! It rolled off; it was most mortifying! Not only did the ornament tumble down and break itself too much to be replaced, but, what was worse still, the temple itself, the finest Dickie had ever built, was shaken down in ruins. It was too much to bear! Dickie wept aloud.

At that moment, the door opened suddenly, and a little lady ran in suddenly. 'What, in the name of fortune, is all this noise?' she cried.—'Phyllis, why didn't they tell me you were here?—Harry, what mischief is this? What have they broken? Not my teapot!—Harry, I'll never forgive you!'

Captain Benson retreated to the fireplace, and stood with his hands in his pockets, and a half-smile on his face, watching his sister, while she took up one piece after another of the shattered porcelain. She looked unutterable things at her brother; but Phyllis came forward and touched her arm timidly. 'Do you mind *very* much, Kitty?' she said. 'I am so sorry.'

'My dear Miss Marsden,' interposed Captain Benson, 'this grief is all put on. The teapot had no value. I saw its exact duplicate at Whiteley's on Wednesday, marked tenpence three-farthings.'

'Did you really, Harry?' asked his sister. 'No; but tell me—because Mary Haughton gave me that teapot, and I always suspected she paid very little for it.'

'I shall tell you nothing more,' said Captain Benson. 'I have said too much already. I shall certainly not put into your hands any engine for destroying Mary Haughton's peace of mind.'

Mrs Huxtable drew over to the fire, and settling herself comfortably, said: 'Now, Phyllis, tell us what you have been doing.'

'Well,' said Phyllis demurely, 'I spent this morning or part of it in reading Persian love-poems.'

'Reading what?' exclaimed Mrs Huxtable, sitting bolt upright with a face of amazement.

'It is quite true,' Phyllis nodded. 'At least, they were read to me.'

'And what were they like, these love-poems? Something your father is doing, I suppose.'

'They were not very interesting,' Phyllis ad-

mitted; 'but curious—decidedly curious. They were inflated and roundabout, and there was a great deal about the moon and roses, and the night and towers.'

'I see,' Captain Benson assented. 'All topics which have no business to be in a love-poem, which should be terse'—He paused.

Phyllis nodded.

'Direct in expression.'

'Of course.'

'Not too long.'

'Certainly not,' said Phyllis with decision, 'or one would be horribly bored.'

'I think you are very dull, you two,' said Mrs Huxtable, stifling a yawn. 'Can't you talk of something more interesting?'

'Forgive us, Kitty,' said her brother. 'Of course, your interest in such things ended when you married.'

Captain Benson went off to have a cigar; half an hour later, he returned with a sheet of paper in his hand. 'Why, where is Miss Marsden?' he asked.

'Half-way home, I should think. What do you want her for?'

'I had something to show her. Never mind; I will send it to her.'

Next morning dawned brightly, and Phyllis, as she donned her dainty garments, was half inclined to regret her hasty promise of the previous day, knowing full well that if her father's approval was to be gained, at least some hours must be devoted to copying the manuscripts.

Running lightly down-stairs, she paused to gather up a letter which lay on the hall table. 'Only one! When I expected at least half-a-dozen, and it looks like a stupid one. I don't know the writing.' Tearing the envelope, she entered the dining room, but stopped abruptly: 'DEAR MISS MARSDEN—Apropos of the love-poems we were discussing yesterday'—Phyllis hastily turned the sheet and read the bold signature, 'H. BENSON.' Flushing slightly, she put the letter in her pocket, as her father's step was heard in the hall. Why should Captain Benson write to her? It was a woman's question, and though little more than a girl, she had become a woman all at once after meeting Mr Benson at Dunveith. Her father did not note the difference, and she did not quite comprehend it herself. But difference in Phyllis there was.

She bade her father good-morning, but Mr Marsden took no notice of her remark, only seated himself at the head of the breakfast table; while Phyllis, surprised at the unmistakable gloom on his face, sheltered herself behind the coffee-pot.

Mr Marsden raised his eyes absently, then seeing his daughter's anxious face, remarked: 'I am perplexed, Phyllis. I have come to a line in the finest of my poems—the one I read, or'—pausing as he remembered the incident—'began reading to you yesterday, and I fail to find any word which expresses the sublime meaning of the original.'

Seeing that her father really was distressed, Phyllis rose, and putting her arm round his neck, said lovingly: 'Never mind; the right word will come; and in the meantime do start me copying; and when you see how beautiful your poems

look, you will be inspired, with fresh terms of admiration.'

Half an hour later, Phyllis in her own room was seated at her pretty writing-table, a large sheet of foolscap before her, a pile of untidy scraps of paper by her side, and a letter stuck up on the writing-table before her.

'My beloved is fairer than the white rose of morning,' wrote Phyllis. But her eyes turned again to the love-poem in that letter signed H. Benson.

'I sleep to dream of thee,' it said.

'I wake to live for thee,' it continued.

'And this is all for thee!' was the conclusion. This love-poem was certainly not too long.

'Must I answer it, I wonder? The lines really are direct, short, and to the point—out of his mother's old album, too! However, I can't write now, if at all;' and Phyllis determinedly placed the letter face downwards on the table, and for some time wrote most perseveringly.

The work proved far more interesting than she had expected. The quaint metaphor, exaggeration of language, and, to English minds, strange jumble of ideas, amused her; and she was surprised to find she had been writing steadily for an hour when she heard her father's voice calling her, 'Phyllis, Phyllis!' irritably.

'Coming, papa! Just coming!—Yes; what is it?' and Phyllis, peering over the banisters, saw her father impatiently pacing the hall below.

'Come here, Phyllis! You have taken all the notes of the poem I am engaged on now. They were all together on the right-hand side of my table, and I can find them nowhere. If you really wish to help me, you ought to be more careful.'

'I am sorry, papa. You can keep them till to-morrow. I wish I hadn't mixed them up. And here are the four I have copied. They really do look better now, don't they? And I found them interesting! Indeed, I did!'

Mr Marsden took the papers and manuscript, only half mollified; and Phyllis heard the key turn as he closed his study door. She looked back a little wistfully.

As she prepared to go out she could not help thinking of that love-poem from Captain Benson, and why he had sent it to her, and why her father should dislike him so, and why, since she knew him, something had entered into her life and made it all strange and new, with only her father's hatred of Mr Benson to darken the vision.

Notwithstanding this slight shadow, few brighter faces than Phyllis Marsden's could be seen as she sped gaily on her walk round Kennington Park. The sun shone brightly, and the air was crisp and clear, with a first feeling of frost. Phyllis felt exhilarated; and being breathless with her walk, and tempted by the sunshin, made for a seat at a convenient distance, and sat down to rest for a moment.

'I wake to live for thee!' sang a robin perched on a small bush near at hand, a cheery little fellow, who looked at Phyllis with a knowing look on his face.

'What ought I to do?' thought Phyllis. 'Why do I keep thinking of those lines, and why did Captain Benson send them to me? I wish I knew more about these things, or had some one to ask'—And Phyllis, looking cau-

tiously round, put her hand in her pocket and pulled out—nothing.

'It must be here! I know I had it in my pocket. Stay. Did I change my dress? No: then where is it?' And Phyllis in her impatience turned her pocket inside out; but there was nothing save a dainty embroidered handkerchief.

'Oh, I know! I must have left it on my writing-table. I had it there, of course!' And Phyllis, with a relieved expression, turned to retrace her steps.

The lunch gong sounded as she ran up the steps; and she was met by Robins. 'The master wished me to say he did not want to be disturbed; and I have taken him lunch in a tray.'

Phyllis's face fell as she replied: 'Very well, Robins. I shall be down directly.'

Up-stairs, Phyllis stood before her glass, smoothing her hair, a flush of annoyance on her pretty face, and tears of vexation in her eyes. 'It is too hard! I felt certain I should find it on my writing-table. There is no doubt I must have gathered it up with papa's papers, and now he has got it; and he is sure to read it, for I had carefully folded it with the verses outside, and he wouldn't see it with a letter at first. Oh! I do hope he won't see it before I can get it back. For he so dislikes Captain Benson, without having even seen him.'

Down-stairs, a bent and prematurely old man leaned on a paper-strewn writing-table, an open letter in his hand, an expression of mingled love, pity, and distress softening his hard, careworn features.

'Phyllis, my child, my little girl!' he murmured. 'She has grown into a woman, and I have been blind to it.' And then seating himself in his chair, and passing his hand wearily over his eyes, he thought of another Phyllis who had been his wife and his little girl's mother.

The afternoon passed wearily away, and Phyllis restlessly paced backwards and forwards in her large drawing-room, now striking a few chords on the grand piano, now picking up a delicate piece of fancy-work, or scanning the pages of a novel. 'I can't help it! I shall settle to nothing until I know. I shall go and hunt up papa; and if he is angry, it will be over. I have done nothing wrong, and I certainly couldn't help getting that letter. If he has not found it, I may have an opportunity of getting it back; and then we'll see what will become of Captain Benson's love-poem. "Live for thee!" Fiddlestick! Why, that person must have been lived for, ages ago, and died for too, for the matter of that. Tiresome creature! Why couldn't she keep her love affairs to herself, instead of letting them get me into trouble!'

Drearly, Mr Marsden sat over his study fire, the tray of luncheon untouched beside him. For three hours he had been sorrowfully living over his past life. Visions of the past flitted through his mind. A young student, fresh with university honours, and craving for literary distinction—months of study and Oriental travel; and then a period of purest happiness, no longer alone, but cheered and encouraged by a bright, loving presence; and then—then a long period of black, deepest despair; a life taken up again, but hence-

forth never to be shared with living soul—alone, yet not alone—a tiny, toddling babe, the merriest creature imaginable, who absolutely declined to be suppressed, crept into his life; a little being who would not be ignored; who expected to be welcomed on every occasion; who lisped ‘Daddy, daddy!’ as she patted the knee, and glanced up into the face of the grave, preoccupied man who lived the life of a recluse.

And now Phyllis—Phyllis, the living image of that other Phyllis, his wife; and Mr Marsden paused as he thought of what the long weary years would have been, uncheered by the merry prattle and loving ways of his child, his little one!

‘I don’t think it can be too late! She has only known him a few months. I must see what can be done; and find out something more about this “Yours very faithfully, H. Benson.”’

A low tap and timid voice. ‘Papa! do let me come in; it is tea-time;’ and with this the door opened, and Phyllis, nervous and excited, entered the study. Something in her father’s manner struck her at once with a feeling of alarm. ‘Papa, what is it? Are you ill? Why, how cold you are! And your luncheon never touched! Why, you must be starved!’ Phyllis laid her hand on her father’s and looked up in his face.

‘Not cold, exactly,’ he replied, ‘nor even hungry. But I came to a standstill in my work, and have been sitting here feeling a good deal upset ever since.’

Phyllis rang the bell, and set herself to work to stir up the last embers of the fire.

‘Bring tea in here as soon as possible, Robins!’ And Phyllis drew her stool to her father’s knee, and began chafing the almost numb fingers. ‘Papa, I shall confiscate all your work, if you behave so! The poems really are not worth it;’ and Phyllis glanced at the writing-table. ‘However, here is tea, and that will put some warmth into you.’

Phyllis rose; and in a short time Mr Marsden, once more warm and comfortable, lay back in his chair, listening to his daughter’s chatter, and ever and again passing his hand over the soft silky head. The caress was so unusual that Phyllis felt more uneasy still.

‘I hope papa is not going to be really ill,’ she pondered, ‘or have one of those awful fits of depression. I thought he had quite got over them.’

Then, with a glance at her father’s worn features, she went on to herself: ‘This makes it even more unfortunate about that letter. I must get it back.’ She half rose, looking wistfully at the writing-table.

The movement roused Mr Marsden. ‘Where are you going, Phyllis?’

‘Nowhere, papa. I was only going to draw the curtains and tidy up your table a bit.’

‘Sit still, child: I want you to write a note for me. I have been thinking perhaps I am foolish in my prejudice against Captain Benson, and ought to take advantage of his being in town to discuss some of the difficult points of my work with him. He has the reputation of being a clever man. I confess I consider it would have been better taste if he had called on me. But I suppose that would have been too much to expect.’

‘Papa, that is not just, really. It is my fault he has never come. He said several times in the summer he should take an early opportunity of calling on you; and I always put him off, and said you never saw any one. I thought he would only bore you.’

‘Bore me, Phyllis! Does he bore you?’

‘Me, papa!’ with wide open eyes. ‘Oh, no! not a scrap. But then it is different with me.’ And Phyllis smiled, as she thought of the many picnics and tennis parties of that never-to-be-forgotten visit. ‘Now let me write the note. What day shall I say? May I write at your table?’

‘You had better ask him to dinner on Thursday; and you must ask Mr and Mrs Huxtable, too, since he is staying with them.—No; I shall be using my table. I have a few letters I must write before dinner; and I have no small note-paper here, either.’

Phyllis felt the fates were against her; but she would make one more effort. ‘Very well; and I may as well take your notes and do some more copying after dinner. I have nothing else to do.’

‘The poems must wait till after I have seen Captain Benson,’ replied Mr Marsden. ‘They ought to be arranged carefully, according to the different periods; and that is one of the points on which I want another opinion.’

Phyllis saw that it would be useless to attempt regaining her letter that evening. Mr Marsden looked wistfully after the slight figure as she left the room. ‘Shall I call her back, and tell her what I know? Even now I might gain her confidence!’ Mr Marsden half rose from his chair; then the habit of years of reticence overcame him, and he re-seated himself.

Outside, Phyllis paused an instant with her hand on the door handle. ‘Shall I go back now, and tell papa everything? If only he were always as he has been this evening, I should never mind telling him anything. But he will be dreadfully annoyed; and he does not seem well to-night.’

So Phyllis took her candle and went up to her room.

FORTUNES IN VOICES.

THE Philosopher’s Stone—that dream of the old alchemists—takes many forms nowadays, but none more beautiful than that of the voice of a great singer—a truly potent spell to open the gold mines of earth! The amounts that have been paid to the famous sopranos, tenors, contraltos, and basses who have appeared from time to time above the musical horizon sound well-nigh fabulous, and are not a little interesting to consider. To go back to the early years of the last century, and to the early days of the Italian opera in this country, Mrs Catherine Tofts, its first lady-interpreter in England, claimed high salaries at the theatre in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. She drew considerably over six hundred pounds for a season; and at one time she was singing for twenty guineas a night—high terms in 1708. At the same theatre, twenty-six years later, the great singer, Farinelli, during the three years he spent in London, though his salary was but

fifteen hundred pounds a season, earned at least five thousand pounds yearly; for at but one of his numerous appearances at court, the Prince of Wales gave him 'a fine wrought gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds and rubies, in which was enclosed a pair of diamond knee-buckles, as also a purse of one hundred guineas.' Later in life he accepted an engagement at the court of Spain at a salary of fifty thousand francs (about £1979) per annum.

Two years after Farinelli had left London, the other great singer of the time, Caffarelli, appeared at the King's Theatre, but did not fulfil the expectations he had raised, though at Venice he received £385 and a benefit of £335 for a season of three months—higher terms than had previously been paid to any singer.

In 1768, Gabrielli, one of the most beautiful of women and magnificent of sopranos, demanded five thousand ducats salary from Catharine II. of Russia. The Empress objected that it was larger than the pay of a field-marshal. 'Then let your field-marshal sing for you,' retorted Gabrielli, as Caffarelli had replied before under like circumstances.

That phenomenal soprano, Agujari, was in 1775 paid one hundred pounds a night for two songs at the London Pantheon concerts—an immense salary in those days. About thirty years later, Catalani was receiving three thousand pounds for the season in Portugal; and in 1806 she came to London for a promise of two thousand pounds for the season from September 15th to August 1807, with a further sum of one hundred pounds to defray the cost of her journey to London, and one benefit night free of expense. As a fact, however, she drew from the King's Theatre in the Haymarket five thousand pounds, including benefits; and her total profits in 1807, with concerts and provincial tours, were £16,700. She once received two hundred guineas for singing 'God save the King' and 'Rule Britannia'; and for her services at one festival she was paid two thousand pounds. Her charities, however, were innumerable; and it is estimated that she earned at least two million francs at concerts for such purposes alone. As an instance of her reckless extravagance, it is stated that the cost of beer for her servants for a single year amounted to one hundred and three pounds.

The next singer, taken in chronological order, whose salary was unusually large was Pasta, who, having sung at the King's Theatre in 1816 with her husband at a joint salary of four hundred pounds for the season, was engaged alone in 1826 at £2200—an amount which was increased the following year to £2365. In 1840, after a long retirement from the stage, she accepted two hundred thousand francs to sing again at St Petersburg, though, for her reputation as a singer, it had been better had she refused.

In 1828 Lablache drew sixteen hundred pounds, with lodging and a benefit night free of expense, for a season of four months. This was, however, not nearly his value in an operatic company.

At the King's Theatre, in 1825, Malibran made her début, and was immediately engaged for the remaining six weeks of the season at five hundred pounds. In 1830 she was paid in Paris 1075 francs for each operatic representation, though a year before she had received sixty-six pounds

from Laporte in London for each performance. For each private concert in London she was paid twenty-five guineas; and she was engaged by Mr Alfred Bunn for nineteen nights at one hundred and twenty-five pounds per night, payable in advance! Singing at Drury Lane in English opera in 1833, she received eighty thousand francs (£3200) for forty representations, with two benefits, which produced not less than fifty thousand francs (two thousand pounds). Two years later, at the opera in London she drew £2775 for twenty-four appearances. Such sums were paid to her at the English provincial festivals as had never before been heard of; and at La Scala she received nearly eighteen thousand pounds for one hundred and eighty-five performances.

In 1838 Mario was offered sixty pounds a month for his first appearance, though this was of course largely the result of his romantic history. Alboni's salary at Covent Garden in 1847 was raised from five hundred pounds to two thousand pounds the day after her first appearance, singing as she was against Jenny Lind at the opposition house. Sontag was paid six thousand pounds for a season of six months at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1849.

Rubini, who began his career at thirteen years of age by singing, for five francs, an air in a new drama by Lamberti, made immense sums in later life, realising two thousand pounds at one concert in St Petersburg. Unlike Mario and Mara, who both died in comparative poverty, Rubini saved large sums, and left behind him one of the largest fortunes ever amassed on the operatic stage.

Jenny Lind was naturally paid enormous sums in the course of her triumphant career. During a tour of two years through the States, commenced in 1850, she made twenty thousand pounds, gaining a husband as well!

These pecuniary traditions are adequately preserved by at least two present-day singers, to whom a hundred or two for a concert is an ordinary sum—Madame Patti and Madame Albani. It is current knowledge that the usual terms of the former are eight hundred pounds per concert in London, and four hundred pounds in the provinces; and it was announced the other day that for a prospective tour in the States, during which she is to give about forty-five performances—some at the Chicago Exhibition—she will receive £40,500, or nine hundred pounds per concert, plus all travelling expenses. Madame Patti lately refused an offer of a tour in Brazil at the remuneration of twelve hundred pounds a night.

Fairly handsome salaries are paid also to leading artists of the Vienna opera. The florin is just now worth about one shilling and three-pence, and Herr Winkelmann, a tenor who appeared in London in German opera some years ago, is paid twenty-six thousand florins (£1625) for a season of nine months. M. Van Dyke gets about twenty-four thousand florins; but he sings only seven months of the year in Austria. Frau Materna, who is soon to retire, to be replaced by Frau Klafsky, gets the same amount for the whole year; and Frau Schlüger, the dramatic soprano, receives twenty thousand florins per annum. The tenors thus get more than the sopranos.

Before leaving the subject of singers salaries,

it were curious to mention the remuneration received some years ago by Mademoiselle Zélie, of the Théâtre Lyrique at Paris, while singing at a concert in the Society Islands, in the course of a tour round the world. She was to sing an air from 'Norma,' and a few other songs, and bargained for a third of the receipts. She found that her share consisted of three pigs, twenty-three turkeys, forty-four chickens, five thousand cocoa-nuts, and a considerable quantity of bananas, lemons, and oranges!

MRS MELROSE'S COMPANION.

By RICHARD WARFIELD.

'ABSURD!' cried Mrs Melrose scornfully; 'you must be dreaming, I think, Maria, or you would never propose such a piece of foolery. Why, that little chit is forty years younger than he is, at least.' And the angry widow tossed her head disdainfully, as if to imply she had never heard such ridiculous folly before.

Maria remained silent, knowing, probably from long experience of her friend's petty outbursts of temper, that silence was the only safe course to adopt. Her poor little heart was beating rapidly: she so much dreaded offending her benefactress, who really was a most kind-hearted, agreeable sort of person in a general way, and not much given—that is, as the world goes nowadays—to ebullitions of anger against her paid dependent.

On the afternoon, too, of which I write Maria had been particularly indiscreet—had shown an alarming want of tact, which in Mrs Melrose's eyes was scarcely forgivable. For poor Maria had actually suggested that an oldish gentleman, a well-to-do widower for whom Mrs Melrose had been fruitlessly angling for a long time, had appeared to be greatly enamoured of a certain young lady—a mere chit, as Mrs Melrose designated her, scarcely out of the schoolroom.

She was a tall, stout, well-made woman, this Mrs Melrose, a woman of distressingly doubtful age, just the wife for an affluent widower with no encumbrances; and as she sat with knitted brow reflecting on what Maria had been telling her, she fully resolved to make one last desperate effort to catch the widower, Mr Heavysides, who was now over sixty.

'Maria,' she began in a stony manner, shaking her head till every false curl rustled lustily, 'pray, let me never again hear you give speech to so improper and immoral an opinion. I am deeply distressed when I reflect that you, who for years have lived under my roof and had the priceless advantage of my almost daily companionship, have made no better use of your time than to form fatuous and wicked conjectures about your neighbours.'

'I only repeated what every one is saying,' Maria remarked, meekly.

'Don't interrupt me, please,' replied Mrs Melrose in her most majestic tones; 'nor do I ever desire to know what every one is saying.'

You must be aware by this time, Maria, that village gossip and tittle-tattle have no interest for me. I hope I am above listening to petty slanders and jealousies. You may be quite sure that if Mr Heavysides *does* see fit to marry again, he will choose a woman of suitable years and deportment.'

'Yea,' said Maria, feeling something was expected of her.

'As it happens,' continued Mrs Melrose, 'I had intended calling on Mr Heavysides this very afternoon—I hear his gout is worse again—and as matters now stand I shall feel it incumbent upon me to tell him of the scandalous reports in circulation respecting him. Though the affair is of a delicate nature, I, as a friend of long standing, may, I think, without detriment to my self-respect, make him acquainted with all you have told me. I am sure he will be greatly grieved.'

'Please don't give him reason to suppose I told you, Mrs Melrose.'

'I shall use my own judgment, Maria, and act as I deem best.' So saying, the lady rose, and left the room with a grand sweep of silk and lace.

Outside the door, however, her whole demeanour changed, and running up-stairs as quickly as her years and weight would allow, she was soon engaged in getting herself up to the best advantage. And when she had finished, she might, with her rouged face, false teeth, and yellow curls, have really been taken for what she was fifteen years before.

Poor Maria, in anything but an er-ri-able state of mind, watched her patroness leave the house. Tears coursed down her pale, tired-looking face. 'Oh dear! oh dear!' she exclaimed, 'what shall I do? He is the only one who has ever spoken a kind word to me during the weary years I have been here. And now she is bent on setting him against me; I know she is. But it serves me right; I have only my own folly to thank.'

Meanwhile, the widow, conscious of her unimpeachable appearance, walked through the village, bestowing bows and nods in every direction. She was highly pleased with herself, and consequently felt amiable towards all mankind—except Maria. The village of Wychford stood a few miles away from a large manufacturing town, and several families of pretty good social status lived in it, the male members of which went daily by train to their business, returning home in time for a seven-o'clock dinner. Mrs Melrose was rather a favourite among these people—partly because she was excellent company, partly because they derived a great amount of amusement from watching her airs and graces.

'I ought to have been born a duchess,' she said, plaintively, on one occasion, with a naïveté which was positively ludicrous, 'I feel myself so suited for the rôle.'

Once seated in Mr Heavysides' parlour, and having inquired tenderly after the old gentleman's

health, Mrs Melrose gingerly approached the subject uppermost in her mind.

'I should think you must find it very lonely here in the house all day without a soul to speak to!' she began.

'I have a housekeeper, madam,' Mr Heavysides returned.

'Oh yes—Mrs Perkins, of course; but she is an ignorant, uneducated woman. What I meant was that you have no congenial companion with whom you can interchange ideas.'

'Mrs Perkins has an uncommonly educated idea of cookery,' replied the invalid; 'so we have a mutual ground of sympathy there.'

'What a tiresome man!' thought the widow. —'I must try another tack.'

The truth was Mr Heavysides had long ago discovered the lady's anxiety to share the joys and sorrows of his home, and, recognising in her a dangerous matrimonial campaigner, was always more or less on his guard when in her presence, momentarily watching for some token that she was about to recommence her amorous siege; and when she opened fire by commiserating his loneliness, he was instantly on the alert.

'Oh, by the way,' she pursued, playfully tapping him on the arm in a would-be reproachful manner, 'I have heard such a shocking, shocking story about you this afternoon. Surely, it cannot be true?'

'I cannot say, madam, until I know what it is.'

'Well—now you must not be cross with me, for I assure you it is the talk of the whole place, though it is too ridiculous for anything—it is said, and openly, that you are going to marry that minx of a Milly Dale. Did you ever hear the like?'

'It is very foolish talk,' assented Mr Heavysides.

'Just what I said,' chimed in Mrs Melrose eagerly. 'Of course, I gave the report a flat contradiction. "I am sure that Mr Heavysides would have told an old friend like me if there were any truth in the rumour," I said. "Rely upon it, it's nothing but a canard."'

'I thank you, madam—I thank you from my heart,' cried Mr Heavysides fervently, a merry twinkle in his eye. 'No,' he continued, 'if ever I do see fit to change my present lonely state—and I will not say that I shall not—I shall marry no bit of a girl, but some good, worthy woman of an age suitable to my declining years. For you are right, my dear friend; mine is a lonely life, and I often think a wife would be a source of comfort and solace to me.' And the old gentleman clasped the widow's fat hand in his.

'I am sure she would,' murmured the lady, actually blushing beneath her rouge.

'I am not poor,' went on Mr Heavysides—'far from it—and I have neither kith nor kin to whom to leave my money. Therefore, my widow, supposing I were the first to be taken, would inherit all I possess.'

'Dear man!' cooed the enraptured Mrs Melrose, 'how good you are!' for she no longer doubted that victory was hers.

'And may I—dare I tell you a secret?—Yes! Very well. I have already chosen a lady'—giving the plump fingers a hearty squeeze—'to whom to offer my heart and hand. Do you think she will accept them?'

'I am sure she will,' cried the now secretly exulting woman. 'Who could refuse any request of yours?'

Pen cannot describe the state of elation in which Mrs Melrose proceeded homewards. Her face was literally wreathed in smiles, and she held her head quite two inches higher as she walked along the street. Maria, who was seated at the parlour window, darning a table-cloth, happening to glance up as Mrs Melrose came along the garden path, was struck with amazement by the amiable expression on that lady's countenance. 'What can have occurred? She's in high good humour about something,' mused the companion.

'Marie, my dear,' exclaimed Mrs Melrose, as she burst into the room, 'I'm afraid I was rather cross with you before I went out; but I did not mean it, child. There! let me give you a kiss. I know you are a dear, good, faithful creature, though a little trying sometimes.'

Marie! Child! Only on very rare occasions did Mrs Melrose use these pet names when addressing her companion.

'Have you seen Mr Heavysides?' inquired Maria timidly.

'Dear me! yes,' Mrs Melrose cried; 'and such news as he told me! You'd never guess it if you tried for a month.'

'That he's engaged to Milly Dale?'

'You'll make me quite angry again, Maria, if you will persist in such obstinate ideas! Mr Heavysides disclaimed all intention of making so preposterous a union. But,' and the widow gave a meaning smile, 'he is going to marry a second time, and the name of the lady is well known to you, Maria.' So saying, Mrs Melrose quitted the room and went up-stairs to take off her outdoor garments.

Meanwhile, Mr Heavysides had been engaged in a manner which, to say the least, was very extraordinary. No sooner had he heard the house door close behind his guest, than he lay back in his chair and gave vent to a series of spasmodic chuckles. 'I'll do it,' he gasped—'I'll do it. What fun it will be! And she really is a very nice little thing, and would make an excellent wife. She has not a very gaudy time of it with the old woman, I'll be bound. How mad she'll be. She thinks I mean business, and so I do; but not with her!' and the old fellow spluttered and grimaced till he nearly choked himself with merriment.

'Maria,' said Mrs Melrose about eleven o'clock the next morning, 'can you see who that is just opening our gate? I do not recognise the lady.'

'It's Mrs Perkins, Mr Heavysides' housekeeper,' answered Maria.

The widow bridled and smiled meaningly. 'Ah! yes, to be sure! I'd forgotten; but he did say something about sending here this morning, though what about I do not remember.—Just run to the door, Marie dear, and see what Mrs Perkins wants.'

'Good-morning, Miss Stonor,' began the house-keeper, in a purposely loud voice. 'I hope I see you well, miss? Master's sent these here grapes for Mrs Melrose with his compliments, and hopes as she'll enjoy them; "which no doubt, she will," says I, "as they're some of the finest you've got, sir."'

During this speech, which for Mrs Perkins was one of unwonted length, the housekeeper winked incessantly at Maria, to attract her special attention, and at the end of it pressed a note into her hand, with a whispered admonition to put it into her pocket and read it when alone.

'What are you dawdling out there for so long, Maria?' Mrs Melrose cried shrilly from the sitting-room.—'Oh, what beauties!' she pursued, as Maria entered bearing Mr Heavysides' gift in a basket. 'How kind, how thoughtful of the dear man to send me such a delicious present!—Give Mrs Perkins a glass of sherry, Maria—not the best,' she added in a lower tone. 'Also, Maria, tell her to convey my compliments to Mr Heavysides and my best thanks. He must have been aware of my penchant for grapes.'

As soon as the companion could steal away for five minutes to her own room, she hastily tore open and perused the note given her by Mrs Perkins. It was very brief, and surprised her not a little. 'DEAR MISS STONOR'—thus it ran—'You will probably be astonished by the request I am about to make—namely, that you will call upon me without delay; nor would I so far trouble you were I not suffering from a slight attack of gout. I have something of great importance to communicate to you; and as I am unable to leave home, I trust you will so far humour me as to come to see me as soon as an opportunity presents itself?—Please, let no one know I have written to you.—I am yours very truly,
GEORGE ALEXANDER HEAVYSIDES.'

'What can he want to tell me?' Maria pondered. A conviction—even a suspicion—of the truth never crossed her mind.

'Maria! Maria!' rang out the piercing tones of Mrs Melrose. 'Come here at once; I want you.'

The poor drudge hastened in answer to the imperious summons, and found Mrs Melrose busily employed in eating the grapes brought by Mrs Perkins. 'Maria,' she said, 'I wish you to go out to do a little shopping for me. Please, get ready immediately.'

'Yes,' murmured Maria in a dreamy voice, gazing into vacancy, her faculties still absorbed by the mysterious contents of Mr Heavysides' note; 'get ready, yea.'

Mrs Melrose bestowed on her a chill and haughty stare. It was thrown away, however; Maria was completely unconscious of it or its significance—entirely oblivious of Mrs Melrose's presence.

'Maria!'

With a start she came out of her brown-study, and a comical look of terror spread over her face. 'I beg your pardon, Mrs Melrose,' she began; 'I did not mean to be'—

'No excuses, please, Maria,' broke in the matron in glacial tones. 'If you don't think it worth while to pay attention to what I am saying, pray tell me. I am not an exacting mistress, Maria, far too indulgent, as is evidenced

by the fact that you so little heed what I say. I have been too kind to you, Maria, that is the truth; and I have long thought, Maria, that you have ceased to value your situation.'

Now, although Mrs Melrose spoke thus decidedly, it was far from her intention that her humble friend should really leave her. Maria was much too useful to be parted with in a hurry; and Mrs Melrose merely wished to strike terror to her dependent's heart. She did not imagine for a moment that she would be taken at her word. But she reckoned without her host. A worm will indeed turn if pressed too hard; and a certain undefinable elation inspired by Mr Heavysides' note, notwithstanding that she had not the remotest conception of why he desired to see her, caused a sudden feeling of loathing against her tyrannous mistress to arise in poor, down-trodden Maria's mind; and this feeling made her reply to Mrs Melrose: 'Indeed, I think you are right; I have stayed with you too long; I will leave this day month.'

Astonishment held Mrs Melrose speechless—astonishment not unmingled with uneasiness. What if Maria really meant what she said? Where could she (Mrs Melrose) find such another docile slave?—But pooh! it was ridiculous. In another week Maria would be begging and praying to stay. 'And then,' said the worthy dame to herself, 'I will not be conciliated in a moment; I will make her drink the cup of humiliation to the very lees.'

Maria left the room without another word; and, having put on her outdoor clothes, proceeded into the village—a thing she would not have dared to do under ordinary circumstances, but rebellion was rife in her heart, and she cared not whether Mrs Melrose were pleased or the reverse. She directed her steps at once to Mr Heavysides' house.

'My dear Miss Stonor,' the old gentleman exclaimed heartily, 'I am most pleased to see you. It is indeed kind of you to come so promptly in answer to my request.'

Maria smiled, and said nothing.

'Miss Maria,' went on the old man, and he took the little woman's hand in his and pressed it gently—a very different pressure from the one he had bestowed on Maria's mistress the day before—'Miss Maria,' he repeated, 'are you happy with Mrs Melrose?'

Maria looked down, but remained silent. Mrs Melrose was certainly not very kind to her, but her heart was too loyal to disparage the woman whose bread she ate.

'Ah! I see,' Mr Heavysides proceeded; 'you do not like to say. Well, my dear, I honour you for it; but I am afraid you are not happy, and, my dear, I want to make you happier—at least I try to persuade myself I do. Nevertheless, I believe I'm nothing but a selfish old fellow, and that it's my own comfort I'm thinking about all the while.—Miss Maria, will you marry me? I'm a cross-grained, grumpy wretch, with powers of making myself extraordinarily disagreeable; but I want somebody to cosset and make much of me; and if only you'll come to me, Miss Maria, I'll alter—upon my word, I will.'

Maria was crying softly to herself.

'Don't cry! don't cry!' implored the old man. 'Why should you cry?'

'You are so good,' murmured the little woman. 'Rubbish! Bosh! Nonsense!' he exclaimed, looking very fierce. 'Pooh! Fiddle-dee-dee!'

And then the two fell a-talking; and little by little Maria forgot to cry, as she told her future husband about the events of the past two days. Mr Heavysides was greatly tickled, especially when Maria said with much innocence: 'There's one thing I cannot understand: Mrs Melrose told me that the name of the lady you were going to marry was well known to me; but I am sure I was very far from her thoughts.'

Then her sexagenarian lover recounted to Maria what had passed between himself and the widow, and though Maria said, 'Fie, for shame!' she could not forbear to smile.

'And now, my dear, listen to me,' began Mr Heavysides, when he had laughed at Mrs Melrose to his heart's contentment. 'I don't know how you are off for money, and I don't want to know; I don't suppose she'—meaning the widow—'gives you too much; but you must take this to buy yourself what you require for the wedding.' And he opened a desk and took from it a fifty-pound note, which he pressed into her hand. '—Another thing, my dear: you must give Mrs Melrose a month's wages in lieu of notice, and leave her house at once—this very day. Telegraph to your sister in Cornwall that you are going to stay a few weeks with her, if she can find room for you. I'll see about the banns, and we'll be married in three weeks. I'll have no license; every one shall know that we're going to be married. It will give them a longer time in which to say, "There's no fool like an old fool."'

On reaching home, Maria found Mrs Melrose just sitting down to luncheon. 'Maria,' she asked with icy politeness, 'may I venture to inquire where you have been all this time?'

'In the village on some business,' replied the companion.

'And pray, how was it that you did not ask my permission before going?' demanded Mrs Melrose.

'Because I did not think it probable you would give me it,' Maria retorted boldly.

'How dare you answer me like that?' cried the infuriated woman. 'How dare you?' she reiterated, her true nature—that of the virago—coming to the surface, at the same time rising with clenched fist and advancing towards the really terrified Maria, as if about to fell her to the ground.

Just then the door opened, and in hobbled Mr Heavysides. O' all people in the world he was the very last whom Mrs Melrose desired to see at that moment. Try as she would, she could not compose her features to a natural expression.

The old man stood speechless with amazement. 'Goodness me!' he at length gasped out, 'are you ill? What is the matter?'

'Matter?—matter enough!' fumed Mrs Melrose, unable to repress her spleen. 'This woman, this Maria Stonor, who has lived beneath my roof for the last eight years, to whom I have been more than a sister, whom I have invariably treated as an equal—penniless dependent though she is—this woman, I say, has dared to grossly insult me in my own house.'

'Gracious!' ejaculated Maria, 'what have I said?'

'Said, minx?' retorted Mrs Melrose; 'said? Why, you'—

'Mrs Melrose,' Mr Heavysides interpolated, calmly, 'I had not intended to make it public quite so soon, but your remarks compel me to inform you that Maria Stonor is my future wife.'

Had a thunderbolt fallen at her feet, the widow could not have been more dumfounded. She was literally aghast. The room spun round with her. This, indeed, was the ruin of all her hopes, of her cherished ambition. With an effort, she pulled herself together. Her mind was chaos, a cataclysm; but one idea at last took definite shape, standing out clearly amidst the overthrow of all her plans: Maria must be conciliated. It would never do to be ill friends with the future Mrs Heavysides—a person able, were she so disposed, to confer many a favour on the widow.

Never had Mrs Melrose detested human being as she detested Maria Stonor at that moment, and never had she addressed her in more honeyed accents. 'My dearest Marie,' she cried—though she could not prevent her lips twitching, or banish the ominous glitter from her eyes which belied her words—'this is truly a pleasant surprise for me, the more so from its very unexpectedness. Allow me to congratulate you, Marie. When is the wedding to take place? You'll be married from my house, of course? I cannot say how glad I am that you are going to settle and have a home of your own at last.—I was only joking just now,' she explained, turning to the bridegroom elect. 'I knew you would see it was merely my fun—for Marie has been a faithful little companion to me; a dear good girl, if a trifle flighty and wayward sometimes; and we have never had a really cross word since you first came to me—have we, child?'

Maria was not deceived by this sudden change of manner, but having a peace-loving disposition, that disliked the idea of being unfriendly with any one, she took Mrs Melrose's words in good part, and cordially thanked her for her good wishes.

The following morning the now happy dependent escaped from the thralldom in which her mistress had so long held her, and betook herself to her sister's home in Cornwall, whence in due course she set out on her honeymoon, a bright and joyous bride. The future stretched out fairly before her. She had done for ever with the dependence of genteel slavery.

The wily Mrs Melrose, whose attempts to entangle Mr Heavysides had been too palpable to escape comment, spent the entire three weeks preceding Maria's marriage in disarming the sarcastic pity of her acquaintance.

'I know you thought, my dear,' she was wont to say with apparent frankness, 'that I was setting my cap at my sweet Marie's fiancé; and she and I had many a laugh together over it. The truth is I was for ever sounding my little friend's praises into his ears.' And she repeated this so often, that in time she half-believed that it was so, and prided herself not a little on having brought about the match.

And as neither Mr nor Mrs Heavysides cared to contradict her, it came to be an accepted fact

in Wychford that it was by Mrs Melrose's agency that Maria had so comfortable a home; and many a bashful mother wished she knew a Mrs Melrose to do the same for her daughter.

ILLUSTRIOUS HANDWRITING.

'EVERY man,' says Lord Chesterfield in one of his Letters—'every man who has the use of his eyes and of his right hand can write whatever hand he pleases.' Lord Chesterfield was in his own day 'the glass of fashion and the mould of form,' and wrote an excellent hand himself; but his dictum is far too sweeping. For, though

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learnt to dance,

there are some people who find good handwriting unattainable in spite of the most persevering efforts. For instance, Byron's penmanship was rude and unfinished in youth, and in later life it became wretched. Macaulay, too, though he polished his periods with the greatest care, wrote an unlovely scrawl. It may be supposed that Dean Stanley had 'the use of his eyes and of his right hand,' but his 'copy' was so illegible that the printers charged half-a-crown a sheet extra for setting it up. The late Lord Houghton, however, put them all in the shade; his handwriting was so ineffably bad that it was often a sheer impossibility to read it.

In olden times the doughty barons of England wielded the sword and the battle-axe with prodigious vigour, but disdained the pen as fit only for monks and priests. Even kings were sometimes lamentably ignorant. Henry I. had indeed some taste for literature and lampreys; but his great-grandson, King John, of unhappy memory, was not similarly blessed. The original 'Magna Charta,' which may still be seen in the British Museum, does not appear to be signed by the king or any of his barons with their own hands. Possibly some of them may have been reluctant to remove their steel gloves; though there is no doubt that many a proud noble of that age was unable to sign his name. Later on, however, it was not considered a disgrace for the sovereign to know 'the three Rs.' Henry VIII. wrote a firm, bold hand, as might be expected from his temper. Queen Elizabeth wrote a pretty hand in her youth, but as she grew older it became more angular and irregular. The chirography of Mary, Queen of Scots, was like herself, elegant and graceful. Cromwell's hand was bold and determined: the conqueror of Naseby and Worcester, of King, Lords, and Commons, was not likely to hold a hesitating pen. Charles II. wrote quickly and carelessly: he was too fond of pleasure to take pains. George IV.'s hand was large and flowing—a credit to 'the first gentleman in Europe.' Queen Victoria's writing shows the effects of age, but she still makes a capital signature.

Napoleon I. was never distinguished for excellence of penmanship. When he became Emperor he used to sign his name—'Napoleon'—at full length, though the signature was even then not remarkable for beauty. Later on it dwindled to 'Nap.' Still later, a crooked hieroglyph, bearing

some distant resemblance to an N, was the Emperor's sign-manual. His writing was indeed so hopelessly bad that Josephine is said to have taken one of his letters from Germany for a map of the seat of war! The Third Napoleon wrote a good legible hand.

As a rule, great generals have been but indifferent scribes. Washington, however, wrote a good hand; and so did Wellington in early life, but in his old age it became practically undecipherable.

Poetic handwriting is of various degrees of excellence. Moore, Rogers, Coleridge, and Wordsworth all wrote a fair hand. Gray took almost as much pains with his caligraphy as he did with his 'Elegy,' which cost him seven years' labour. Addison wrote a large, clear hand, the letters well formed, but each too proud or too coy to touch its neighbour. Burns wrote a large, bold, manly hand: there is vigorous independence in every stroke of the pen. The Ettrick Shepherd's writing was crooked and ill formed. Leigh Hunt wrote his charming essays in a charming hand. Thomas Campbell's writing was sloping and not graceful: it lacked the force and fire which one would expect from the author of 'Ye Mariners of England.' W. C. Bryant wrote a small, carefully finished hand; while N. P. Willis wrote his 'Pencillings by the Way' as if he were always in a hurry. H. W. Longfellow's writing was upright, round, open, heavy—a boon to printers. Bayard Taylor wrote a very fine hand. Lord Tennyson polished his poetry with the most loving care. So fastidious was he that he had his poems set up in type, to see how they looked in print before sending them to the publisher. His handwriting corresponded to his poetry in elegance, beauty, and finish. Henrik Ibsen, the Norse poet, writes a round, clear hand, sloping backwards. Miss Olive Schreiner says of him that 'he and George Meredith are the only men of modern times who understand women.' Nevertheless, Ibsen's portraiture of the ladies is sometimes the reverse of flattering.

Notwithstanding the lapse of time, Sir Walter Scott still occupies a commanding position amongst our novelists. In early life he wrote a legible hand, though, being

A clerk foredoomed his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza when he should engross,

his stanzas displayed more character than his chirography. Towards the close of his career, when the great mind became obscured, his manuscript was crabbed, blurred, and altered so as to be almost unreadable. Fenimore Cooper appears to have written his numerous novels with a burnt stick. Nathaniel Hawthorne's handwriting was irregular and indistinct. Dickens says he never copied, always sending the original draft of his works to the printer. The printer, however, would have been better pleased if Dickens had copied; for his manuscript is written in a galloping slapdash style, frequently blurred and altered, and very difficult for the compositor to set up. W. M. Thackeray's manuscript is entirely the reverse. It is free from blots and erasures; the writing is clear, neat, regular, and nearly upright, the words well apart: in short, a pleasure to read.

Generally speaking, our statesmen have been pro-

ficient in penmanship, though Lord Brougham's writing in his old age became nearly illegible. Pitt, Fox, Canning, Peel, Lord Derby, Earl Russell, all wrote a good hand. Lord Palmerston was distinguished among his colleagues for the beauty of his calligraphy. In his earlier years Mr Gladstone's writing was clear and regular; and age has not withered the variety of his mind or deprived his right hand of its cunning.

Voltaire and Rousseau were both remarkable for clear and beautiful calligraphy. 'Junius' wrote a fine, flexible, suggestive hand, though it failed to suggest the writer's identity. R. W. Emerson wrote a careless, irregular scrawl. O. W. Holmes writes a neat, clear, dainty hand, whose beauty the wear and tear of time have not destroyed. The genial Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, who has lately given us 'Over the Teacups,' has written with the same gold pen for the last twenty years; and may that good gray head continue for another twenty years to enrich our literature and our lives with its noble thoughts!

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, ladies wrote a large, round, open hand, not much unlike the Italian. As the century grew older, the light, angular style of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers came into vogue. Feminine handwriting was then painfully uniform; individuality was almost unknown. Latterly, however, our girls have asserted their independence in this direction, as in so many others, and the Civil Service style is now much affected. Among ladies distinguished for the beauty of their penmanship—or penwomanship—was Charlotte Brontë, who wrote a very small, very delicate, and carefully finished hand. Mrs Hemans wrote in a free, flowing style. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's manuscript was very neat, and carefully punctuated, the writing being distinct and legible, though the letters were not well joined.

In 1833 a Baltimore literary paper offered two prizes—one for the best tale, and one for the best poem. The adjudicators attracted by the beauty and distinctness of the writing on one of the papers sent in, unanimously decided that the prizes should be paid to 'the first of geniuses who had written legibly. Not another manuscript was unfolded.' So says Rufus W. Griswold in his biography of that wayward American genius, Edgar Allan Poe. According to Mr Ingram, however, this is not only erroneous, but absolutely false; and indeed it seems on the face of it incredible that a number of cultured gentlemen and leading citizens should dishonour themselves by deciding the merits of papers they had not examined. Mr Ingram has succeeded in unearthing the published award, and therein it is stated: 'Amongst the prose articles were many of various and distinguished merit; but the singular force and beauty of those sent by the author of "The Tales of the Folio Club," leave us no room for hesitation.' So, after all, Poe did not owe his success to his penmanship, exquisite as that undoubtedly was.

Some years afterwards, Poe, in a series of 'Papers on Autography,' maintained that a man's character may be discovered in his handwriting. This thesis he enforced and illustrated with marvellous ingenuity. His genius was decidedly analytical, and the inferences he drew from the

specimens he gave were very often accurate. While admitting that there is much truth in Poe's theory, it is equally true that handwriting is in many cases no certain index to character. The weather, the health, the nerves, feeling, passion, may agitate the mind and make the pen forget its wonted firmness.

If individual character influences individual handwriting, national character should influence national handwriting. Authorities tell us that such is the case; that the art of the Italian, the pride of the Spaniard, the vivacity of the Frenchman, are all displayed in their penmanship. It may be so; but, as a rule, it would take an expert or an enthusiast to tell the difference between the writing of the shrewd Scotsman, the staid Englishman, and the lively Irishman. German handwriting, however, is truly indicative of the national character: it requires nearly as much patience to read it as to write it. On the other hand, one seeks in vain to discover the temper of a Jew from the dots and points of Hebrew, or to decipher the character of Mr Pitman from the phonetic alphabet.

In China, printing and writing are always respected, and the autographs of high dignitaries are revered. Upon ceremonious occasions a great man is attended by his servant, who hands him a small piece of paper every time he wishes to blow his nose. To use a pocket-handkerchief would be a Western innovation, and a shocking derogation from the dignity of a Mandarin. Printed or written paper is, however, never used for this purpose, being considered too sacred. The use of red ink is forbidden to all but the Emperor, who signs official documents in this flaming colour. An autograph of Kang Hsi, the contemporary of Louis XIV., has been sold in Peking for more than forty pounds. The Chinese seem to have anticipated the fashions and foibles as well as the arts and sciences of our own day. Their golden youth, with long pigtailed and almond eyes, sat at competitive examinations when the conquering Norman was riding roughshod over our Saxon forefathers. Verily, there is nothing new under the sun!

IN AUTUMN DAYS.

In Autumn days, when leaves are shed
In eddies, amber-tinged and red,
Along the coverts of the wold—
When ferns are turning ruddy gold,
And acorns patter overhead—

When in the shallows of its bed
The river sighs dispirited,
There is an ancient legend told,
In Autumn days:

A tale of one who has been led
Among the lilies, forest-wed,
To nourish memories of old,
Who wakes to find the nights are cold,
The birds have flown, the flowers are dead,
In Autumn days.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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BEYOND THE VERGE.

Two intrepid travellers have recently started on journeys of discovery, both having the North Pole as their ultimate bourne. Of the two, Lieutenant Peary has chosen the more prosaic route, across Greenland with dogs and sledges; he also took with him some Colorado donkeys, but these have already succumbed to storm and cold. Mrs Peary and one other woman accompany this expedition. Mrs Peary joined her husband in his first expedition to the north coast of Greenland in 1891, having been the first of the weaker sex to tempt the perils of Polar discovery.

Meanwhile, Dr Nansen, the brave enthusiast, leaving his young wife and child behind him, has started in his good ship the 'Fram' on a voyage which he believes will occupy at least five years, during the greater part of which he expects to be frozen up on a moving mass of pack-ice, and to be thus carried by ocean currents across the Polar basin and back along the coast of Greenland. It is a bold and romantic enterprise, and deserves success; but most geographers doubt the existence of the currents upon which Nansen relies, and shake their heads ominously as to the fate of the explorer. And indeed, should there be any truth in the theory of a certain American, neither of the explorers can ever reach the Pole, for the very simple and sufficient reason, that there is no North Pole to reach.

Americus Symmes, the son of a well-known but eccentric father, in order to show his filial piety, according to the 'San Francisco Chronicle,' is organising an expedition to follow the wild animals across Greenland to 'Symmesonia,' an imaginary land, with a delightful climate, and teeming with enormous herds of reindeer, musk-oxen, and other animals, which he believes to exist in the centre of the earth, in a region which he hopes to open out for emigration!

The theory of Symmes's father was, that the earth is a hollow sphere, habitable, and inhabited in the interior; and that, after passing eighty degrees north latitude, vessels cross what he

denominated 'the Verge,' and sail southwards into a cup-like hollow leading into the interior of the earth. This quaint and altogether untenable theory caused considerable amusement at the time it was first propounded, in 1818, by its originator, Captain John Cleves Symmes, of the United States Army, who sent out a circular to all the learned Societies in Europe and America couched in the following terms: 'To ALL THE WORLD.—I declare the earth is hollow and habitable within, containing a number of concentric spheres, one within the other, and that it is open at the Poles twelve or sixteen degrees. I pledge my life in support of this truth, and am ready to explore the hollow, if the world will support and aid me in the undertaking. . . . I ask one hundred brave companions, well equipped, to start from Siberia in the fall season with reindeer and sleighs on the ice of the frozen sea. I engage we find a warm and rich land, stocked with thrifty vegetables and animals, if not men, on reaching one degree northward of latitude eighty-two degrees. We will return in the succeeding spring.'

But Captain Symmes could not get together his one hundred trusty followers; and after lecturing for years and petitioning Congress many times in vain for aid, he died in 1829, and his project sank into the limbo of forgetfulness, excepting that his grave is still marked by a hollow globe of marble with the inscription: 'Captain John Symmes was a philosopher, and the originator of Symmes's Theory of Concentric Spheres and Polar Voids. He contended that the earth is hollow, and habitable within.'

One would have imagined that with the fuller knowledge of the Arctic regions acquired since the death of this eccentric philosopher, the belief in 'Symmes's Hole' would have entirely died out; but, on the contrary, it seems to be reviving in America; and his son, who must be an old man, is even now preparing to lead an expedition, for which he says he has had seventy or eighty volunteers, in order to prove the truth of his father's theory. 'The expedition,' he says, 'is for

no other purpose than to follow the wild animals out of Greenland into Symmesonia—the name given to that country by my father. Where the animals go, we can certainly follow, as we will go prepared for snow and ice travel as well as land; and we will have a boat to cross rivers, should we have to do so. No doubt we can live in a great measure off the animals on our travels. They will soon lead us into a mild climate, where the soil must be rich and productive. The only reward that we expect is that, if we are successful, it will immortalise the whole party, and will open up a new world for emigration.

The earth, according to Symmes, is constructed somewhat on the plan of those concentric balls so ingeniously carved by the Chinese, at which we have all marvelled: there are spheres within spheres, divided from other spheres by very light gaseous matter, the water of the ocean in places percolating right through to the centre or great mid-plane; and in like manner the earth in certain parts connects the separate spheres, and holds them together. Around the great central hole north and south, the ice and snow are accumulated, forming what we know as the Arctic and Antarctic Circles; and these are denominated 'verges,' and are supposed to occupy twenty-five degrees of latitude. But this icy barrier once passed, Symmes imagines an open Polar Sea, dipping gradually into the centre of the earth, and forming the happy breeding and feeding place of myriads of fish, from whales to herrings, the surrounding land enjoying a delightful climate, and teeming with so-called Arctic animals—reindeer, foyes, hares, &c., all finding therein shelter from the cold, and ample space for grazing on the rich verdure supposed to abound there.

Unfortunately for this hypothesis, Lieutenant Lockwood, who, in Greely's expedition, passed beyond this supposed verge, and attained to latitude $83^{\circ} 23' 8''$ north, and should therefore have entered upon Symmes's charming Polar Under-world with its myriads of fish and terrestrial animals, found even in May nothing but ice and snow, with here and there a scanty vegetation, just sufficient to sustain a few hares, ptarmigan, and snow-buntings, which, with lemmings, bears, and foxes, seem to have been the only animals seen during sixty days' march; whilst the mean temperature was below zero Fahrenheit during forty-five days, and that in April and May, when in those latitudes the sun would be above the horizon almost continuously. Looking out over the ocean towards the Pole, no fine open sea, teeming with whales, seals, and shoals of fish, presented itself, but, far as the eye could reach, 'a vast expanse of snow and broken ice.' Nevertheless, crustaceans were dredged up, tracks of wolf and fox found, and hares and ptarmigan met with—showing that life probably exists even to the Pole, although wholly insufficient to supply with food even a single sledge-party; so that Lockwood and his companions were obliged to return earlier than they wished, in order to avoid starvation, having eaten only at intervals of fifteen, twenty-four, and nineteen hours, to enable them to travel farther; whilst their dogs were reduced to desperation by famine, and could not

be kept from thieving and gnawing everything, even to the ammunition.

So far, therefore, there seems in actual fact nothing to support the theory of Symmes as to the open cup-shaped hollow of the Polar Sea, and the abundance of life therein and on the coasts adjacent. Still, traces do exist of open water in the Polar seas, especially in a great tide-crack, as it is called, which varies from a few feet to several hundred yards in width, and in the moving ice which has been seen and felt by many Arctic voyagers.

It is this movement of the Polar ice-pack drifting always southwards, thus proving the existence of Arctic currents, which has encouraged Dr Nansen to attempt the hazardous feat of reaching the Pole by allowing his vessel to be frozen up near the New Siberian Islands, where the 'Jeannette' was sunk in 1881, believing that the moving ice-pack will carry him and his vessel across the ocean close to the Pole, and bring him down south, along the coast of Greenland, after the lapse of three or four years, as seems to have been the case in regard to some relics from the 'Jeannette' which were picked up on the coast of Greenland three years after the loss of the vessel.

Mr Seebohm, in his presidential address to the Geographical Section at the late meeting of the British Association, which with its six polar charts illustrative of the temperature, vegetation, &c., of the Arctic regions is of great interest, pointed out very clearly the more substantial reasons for Nansen's faith in Arctic currents. Not only do the Mackenzie and the great Siberian rivers flow into the Polar basin, but the Gulf Stream three or four hundred miles wide, enters it between Spitzbergen and Finmark, supplying the Norwegians at Hammerfest with driftwood from the Gulf of Mexico, whilst to compensate for this immense influx two return currents from Arctic regions pass one on each side of Greenland, bringing the Eskimos firewood from the forests of Siberia.

Mr Symmes will do well to await Dr Nansen's report before starting on his quixotic expedition. Nansen had at least some reason for his belief, and the support of two or three names well known in Arctic research, and he did not start with any unfounded hope of delightful climate and abundance of food supply, but prudently took with him everything necessary for his support during his long and untried voyage of discovery; and if he fails, it will not be for want of forethought. He knows from experience the difficulties and dangers which await him; and we all trust his courage and enthusiasm may be rewarded with the success they deserve. Meanwhile, we can but marvel that the wild, bleak, and desolate regions surrounding the Poles should have called forth so many daring adventurers to endeavour to probe the mysteries which lie at the 'Back of the North Wind.' The attraction doubtless lies in the unsolved mystery, which gives scope for much speculation, varying in character according to the religious or philosophical bias of the speculator. Hence, whilst Symmes and his followers expect to find a cup-like hollow at the Poles, leading into the interior of the earth, another American, Dr W. F. Warren, writes a book to prove that the Garden of Eden was situ-

ated at the North Pole. He shows by many quotations from ancient authors of various nationalities, that a mountain, which he places at the North Pole, was regarded as the abode of the gods: the Olympus of the Greeks, the Mount Meru of the Hindus, the 'Mountain of the World' of the Akkadians, the Pearl Mountain of the Chinese, the Mount Sion of the Bible; and that upon this mountain, at the very apex of the world, was supposed to stand a pillar, which he identifies with the earth's axis, and which in legendary lore connected the earthly with the heavenly paradise, and was symbolised as a tree, by which the faithful ascended to the abode of the blessed: the Tree of Life of Moses, the Yggdrasil of the Scandinavians, the Sacred Tree of many other ancient races, the Bean-stalk of the nursery tale.

Dr Warren, like Symmes, believes in a delightful climate and an exuberance of life at the North Pole; but he is content to assign these to the Miocene period of geologists. In this he is in accordance with verified facts, for the discovery of large seams of coal, and of fossil trees including magnolias, both in Greenland and in Grinnell Land, testify to the former existence of a semi-tropical climate, where now all is ice and desolation; but Miocene man is at present only a dream of anthropologists; and to consign Adam and the Garden of Eden to the North Pole in Miocene times is to place them very decidedly 'Beyond the Verge.'

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XIV.

The sun of love shines on her; all the air
Is warm with adulation; only she
Like marble statue flushed and made more fair
By very radiance, still stands cold and free
From sign of yielding.

EMMA RHODES.

'You won't expect me to-morrow,' Maurice had said when he parted from Sage, the evening of the private view. 'I have some business to see after in the morning; and in the evening I have promised to dine with that cousin of mine, Mrs Copleston, in Brook Street. I met her yesterday morning in the Park, and she made me promise to come, though it's a horrid bore. I think if I get a chance this evening, I shall tell her about you and me, Sage. She's such a jolly old girl, and I'm sure you'd like her. She's not a bit stuck up or fine, though she's very well off, and knows all sorts of nice people. I'll take you up to lunch one day. I should like her to know my little girl.'

And Sage agreed, as she would to any proposal that ended like that—only, in her heart of hearts, she wished that Maurice's friends were not all so fashionable; it complicated the future prospect of the little suburban house and the economies to be practised there.

After the exquisite enjoyment of the day before, the ordinary routine of home-life seemed rather dull; and she felt the separation from Maurice ever so much more now that he was in

London, when every footstep outside might be his, or knock at the door announce his coming. It is often more difficult to endure a slight separation than a greater one, parting for a day than for a year, the distance of a few hundred yards than that of a continent. Perhaps this is because the heart has not time to learn the sad lesson of patience, and in the greatest separation of all—though, is it indeed the greatest?—when death us do part, there often springs up in the bereaved a strength of resignation you would not have looked for in some clinging, exacting nature, that could not till then bear her loved one to be out of sight.

And so Sage was crosser that day than the boys had ever known her, and Will was quite electrified at her disgust and indignation at finding his pocket-handkerchief hung to dry in front of the fire, and the energetic way in which she bundled the Pink un and all his belongings out of the way.

Maurice, too, was not perhaps in the very best of humours that day. He had seen the sudden look of disappointment on Sage's face when he had said that she must not expect him next day, and had felt an odd little mixture of compunction and irritation. The former impelled him to say that perhaps he might come for half an hour in the afternoon; the latter prevented him from doing so. It really could not be expected that he should go every day to Dalston—it was such a pilgrimage from any habitable part of London. Sage was the dearest, best of little girls; but, of course, a man had something else to do, and the best of girls are apt to forget this and grow exacting.

As a matter of fact, he had nothing else to do; and he felt remorseful, and perhaps also a little dull, as he sat alone smoking in Ludlow's studio, for Owen had not come back yet, and Maurice had Collins's house to himself; and though it appeared to Sage that he had so many fashionable friends and relations in London, he really had very few, having been abroad so much of his time.

More than once during the day, he was inclined to cast overboard the masculine dignity and prestige of having something else to do, and go and find Sage, being sure—that is the worst of men, they are always so sure, and the annoying part is they are generally right!—that there would be no need of explanations, but that her face would light up with glad welcome; and that she would believe with humble gratitude that he had given the go-by to important business all for her sake.

But he did not yield to this temptation, but took a nap and another pipe, and then it was time to dress for Mrs Copleston's dinner. There is something particularly exasperating in dressing; but when once evening clothes are donned, the temper generally improves; and by the time Maurice reached Mrs Copleston's house, his usual amiability was restored, and her pleasant, cordial reception of him was very agreeable.

'You are a good boy to come,' she said. 'You seemed so very uncertain yesterday as to whether you had not some other engagement, that I began to suspect a stronger attraction elsewhere. I have been expecting a note or telegram all day with your excuses; and I don't think I could

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ever have spoken to you again. But as you have come, I am going to reward you by sending you down to dinner with one of the prettiest girls of the season. Yes; and one of the richest, too, and as far as is known, heartwhole at present; so, if you play your cards well, Master Maurice, there is no knowing what may happen.'

Maurice was among the earlier arrivals in the pretty, tasteful drawing-room, where the soft light from pink shaded lamps fell on exquisite flowers, and on all the easy, indescribable elegance that pervades some people's rooms, and to which others cannot attain, however much money and thought and pains they bestow on it.

Colonel Coppleston received him as kindly as his wife had done. He was generally known among his acquaintances as Mrs Coppleston's husband, and was well content to play that part in life, having a most unbounded admiration for his more brilliant wife, and no wish to assert any individuality of his own, independent of her.

Maurice was standing talking to him as the other guests arrived, and, being in the recess of one of the windows, did not observe the rest of the company till dinner was announced, and a tap from Mrs Coppleston's fan summoned him to be introduced to the lady he was to take down to dinner. 'Miss Lester, Mr Moore.'

It was Pomona, and Pomona so much the more like her picture as the evening dress of the present day is more classical than the out-of-door morning costume, the hair being dressed in almost exactly the same style, with the big loose knot behind and the soft curls on her forehead.

As they passed down-stairs, Maurice said: 'I had the pleasure of meeting you yesterday at the private view, I believe?'

'Do you mean that you met me myself, or saw this wonderful likeness that my friends tell me one of the pictures bears to me?'

'Both,' he answered. 'I could not fail to observe the likeness.'

'Isn't it a very curious thing? There is something quite uncanny about it, for, do you know? I have never seen the artist. I do not even know his name. Some people think he must have painted it from a photograph of mine; but I do not photograph at all well, and have never had a satisfactory one taken; and the picture is certainly more like me than my photographs are; though, of course, it is very flattering.'

'I do not think that,' Maurice said, looking down at the sweet bright face, whose changing expression no picture could do justice to.

'I did not say that to draw out a compliment. But I should so like to find out more about it. Captain Mostyn has promised to find out who this Mr Ludlow is.'

'I think I can save him the trouble. He is one of my oldest friends.'

'Is he really?' She turned to him with such a delighted look of interest, that Maurice felt he was one of the most fortunate of men, and hoped that the other men at the table saw it and envied him. 'Oh, do tell me about him.'

'He is a splendid fellow: there is no one like him.'

'Is he young?'

'No: fifty, I should say.'

'Where does he live?'

'Generally down at Scar, a little seaside place in Dorsetshire.'

'I don't think I have ever been in Dorsetshire since I was a baby.'

'He has been in London lately.'

'Then do you think he could have seen me?'

'No; I am quite sure he has not, for he must have seen the curious likeness to his picture; and it is all the more curious as I know he had begun painting the central figure more than ten years ago.'

'Really! Are you quite sure of that?'

'Perfectly; for I saw it ten years ago in California, where I was with him something like six months.'

'Then that is conclusive that it was not taken from me, for I was quite a little girl then. Do you know who was his model?'

'No one, as far as I know. I believe he drew it entirely from memory.'

'Of some one he had known?'

'Yes—some one he had known, and who had died.'

'Were all the figures painted from memory?'

'No; the others were from models, and painted more recently.'

'Do you know,' she said, 'that some of my friends are not satisfied with finding the likeness to me, but declare that the girl in the right-hand corner bears an extraordinary resemblance to some of the portraits of our family? But I think this is imagination on their part. I don't mean the little, rosy-cheeked girl; but the pale one in a dull green dress. They never can make out any likeness between me and the Lesters; and I am not sure that I care about it very much, as some of them are decidedly plain.'

'Then I should not think there could be any likeness.'

'Thank you,' she said with a laugh. 'But do not trouble to be so complimentary.—Was the girl in green taken from a regular professional model?'

'Oh no; she was a young lady that Ludlow met down at Scar last year.'

'Do you know her?'

'Yes, a little.'

In looking back in days to come, Maurice wished he had not spoken so indifferently. Without being effusively communicative, he might have conveyed the impression that he knew Sage well; but these coolly spoken words seemed to commit him to appearing merely as a slight acquaintance of the girl he was going to marry.

But at the moment he spoke, how could he tell that he would ever meet that beautiful Miss Lester again, or that it would matter what she thought the relation between him and Sage to be?

'Do you know,' she said, 'there is one remarkable thing in the matter which many, even of my friends, do not know?'

'May I know it?'

'I have a very curious Christian name,' she said.

'I think I heard that lady opposite address you as Mona.'

'Yes,' she answered; 'that is how I am generally called; but it is not my whole name—that is Pomona.'

And here the ladies rose to leave the dinner-table; and in the drawing-room Maurice had no further opportunity of conversation with her.

(To be continued.)

A HERMIT NATION.

BURIED deep in the heart of Asia, and separated from the burning plains of India and from the populous regions of China by stupendous ranges of snowy mountains, there lies a wonderful land. This land is Tibet. Its physical features are most remarkable, for the country seems to consist of a vast central plateau, the greater portion of which lies at a higher elevation than the top of Mount Blanc, and from which descend on all sides great valleys, traversed by the Hoang-ho, the Yang-tsze-kiang, the Brahmaputra, and the Indus. The Tibetans themselves are a morose and gloomy race, and, sunk in poverty and filth, seem to be degraded members of the human family. But perhaps it is the religion of the Tibetans which is the strangest feature of the country, for the Tibetans are Buddhists of a most extraordinary character. All over the mountains in the inhabited portions of Tibet are scattered the convents of the Lamas, which are full of monks and nuns, and are ruled by abbesses, and by Lamas in red and yellow robes, with mitres on their heads, and with tridents and praying-wheels in their hands. Multitudes of pilgrims traverse the roads which lead to the holy city of Lhassa, the capital of the country; and in the great temple at Lhassa, which is splendidly adorned, the Buddhist priests and monks chant the service, in the presence of crowds of devout worshippers.

Another wonderful thing connected with Tibet is the jealous way in which it is guarded by its inhabitants, and the extraordinary care taken by them to prevent Europeans from entering the country. On the side of India every mountain-pass is carefully watched, and any European who attempts to enter Tibet from this direction is instantly turned back. On the side of China the frontier is guarded with equal care, and so perfect is the cordon in this quarter, that although the borders of Tibet may be reached, they cannot be passed.

Sir Joseph Hooker travelled for many days through the forest-clad mountains of Sikkim towards the Tibetan frontier; but his coming had been announced, and a guard of Tibetan soldiers met him and his attendants on the frontier, and compelled them immediately to retrace their steps. Dr Andrew Wilson passed the Tibetan frontier, but was stopped at the first village by a crowd of Tibetan women, who refused to allow him to pitch his tents; and as the women were supported by the men, he was compelled to turn back.

The Indian Government has lately trained Hindu Pundits to travel in Tibet and make scientific observations; but even this has to be done with great secrecy, and their scientific instruments have to be carefully concealed. On the frontier, these Hindus are strictly examined by the Tibetans, and are frequently turned back. Often, however, they are successful; and after traversing unknown portions of Tibet, they return to India and report their discoveries to the officials

of the British Government, by whom they are rewarded. The most remarkable journey undertaken by these trained Hindus was performed by the Pundit Nain Singh in 1874. He entered Great Tibet from the west, and leaving the headwaters of the Indus, ascended to a vast table-land, divided by a range of mountains from the Brahmaputra on the south, and stretching away for an unknown distance towards the north. Having reached Lake Namcho, he crossed the snowy mountains which rise along its southern border. Then he entered the habitable portion of Tibet, with its towns, convents, and monasteries, and ultimately made his way into Assam, and thence to Calcutta.

In 1889 two French travellers, M. Bonvalot and Prince Henry of Orleans, undertook to enter Tibet from the north; and they have given us an interesting account of their wanderings in a book lately published—*Across Tibet*, by Gabriel Bonvalot. They started from Semipalatinsk, in Siberia, in June 1889, and made their way to Kuldja, an important town just within the Chinese dominions. Here they made the acquaintance of Father Dedeken of the Belgian Mission, who agreed to join them, as he was returning to Europe. Leaving Kuldja, they first crossed the snowy chain of the Thian Shan, the giant peaks of which, known as Bogda-Oola and Tengri-Khan, reach an elevation of twenty-one thousand feet; and traversing a barren country in which the vegetation was limited to the banks of the streams, they arrived at the little Chinese town of Kourla, and here their troubles began. The governor of Kourla professed friendship, but secretly informed the Chinese leading official of the district concerning the European travellers. Shortly afterwards, an order arrived from this great man saying that the Frenchmen must be turned back; but M. Bonvalot and his companions refused to retrace their steps. Chinese soldiers then arrived to stop them, and orders were sent in all directions for the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts to report in what direction the Europeans were journeying, so that they might be turned back. The travellers, however, bravely set out; and although the governor of Kourla threatened to use force to drive them back, he shrank from carrying out his menace, and the travellers proceeded on their journey.

They now descended into the basin of the Tarim, which is a wilderness, and is being slowly buried beneath the sands which are drifting over it from the desert of Gobi. Vegetation and agriculture are limited to the banks of the stream, and these are fast drying up. The Tarim as it runs to the east becomes narrower and shallower, until at last it loses itself amidst a great swamp of reeds which once was called Lake Lob. Even this swamp is drying up, and the aspect of the whole country—which is being fast buried beneath the sand—is melancholy in the extreme. Great towns formerly existed here, but the drifting sand has buried them, and the whole of this part of Asia presents a melancholy spectacle of decay and desolation. The wild camel is found in this neighbourhood. It was formerly abundant near Lake Lob and along the slopes of the Altyn Tagh; but it now exists only in the desert east of the Tarim. It runs rapidly, and is very sagacious;

and the natives hunt it, and sell its skins to travellers.

At last, on November 17, 1889, the adventurous Frenchmen left all signs of human dwellings and human occupations behind them, and bidding adieu to the little town of Tcharkalik on that day, they plunged into the wilderness in which they were to wander—amidst fearful privations—for a long and dreary period.

They first ascended the Altyn Tagh or 'Golden Mountains,' which constitute the southern boundary of the basin of the Tarim, and form the first and lower rampart of the great Tibetan table-land on the north. Great gorges, and barren slopes covered with stones, and sandy ravines devoid of vegetation, spread out on all sides. Still, though winter fast closed in upon them, the explorers pushed on, and at last found themselves deep in Tibet. Their sufferings now became most severe. They were in a wilderness of gigantic mountains, which was totally uninhabited. The snow-storms raged around them day after day, and so awful was the cold that Fahrenheit's thermometer often marked twenty, thirty, and even forty degrees below zero, and on one occasion it actually sank to forty-eight degrees below zero!

Notwithstanding the horrors of the climate, the travellers saw many wild animals in these Tibetan solitudes. Myriads of antelopes careered over the desolate plains; great wild-sheep with splendid curved horns stood on the summits of the rocks; foxes and hares ran about the ravines; and wolves frequently made the lonely nights resound with their dismal howlings. The great wild yak was often met with. Sometimes a single one was seen standing on the top of some rocky eminence gazing fixedly at the travellers, and on other occasions great herds of these magnificent animals were discerned on the mountain sides. The wild ass was also plentiful, numbers of them galloping over the barren wastes, and often congregating in troops. Nor were birds absent: partridges were heard calling on the mountain sides, crows flocked around the camping-places, and great eagles soared overhead. Man alone was totally absent from these solitudes.

As the expedition advanced it attained a higher elevation, and at length a mountain range was crossed the height of which was estimated at twenty-six thousand feet, while the plains around were from seventeen to eighteen thousand feet above the sea. In the midst of this icy wilderness, M. Bonvalot and his companions discovered several extinct volcanoes, from which descended great beds of lava and cinders. One of the volcanoes they named Mont Elisée Reclus, and another Mont Ruysbruk; whilst in the midst of the lava-fields which flowed from these volcanoes they found a beautiful lake. Another sign of volcanic action was the hot springs and geysers which were often encountered. Some of the geysers rivalled those of Iceland in size, but were fast frozen by the intense cold. Lakes were often met with, some of which were salt; in fact, salt lakes fast drying up were continually discovered; and a plain crossed by the travellers was found to be covered with salt a foot in depth.

And so for many a dreary week the travellers struggled on, going ever towards the south, but apparently only getting deeper into the awful wilderness. Their camels and horses died one

after another; and at last death fastened upon their attendants. A camel-driver was the first to perish. Unable to resist the fearful cold, he gradually sank; and his body was buried in the ice, in the midst of a blinding tempest of snow. It was the first death in the caravan, but unhappily not the last. The only hope of saving the lives of the remaining members of the little company now lay in their pushing on as rapidly as possible, and in meeting with some human beings, whom they now longed to see. But New-year's day approached, and still no signs of Man. In fact, this part of Tibet is quite uninhabited during the winter; and it is only in the summer that the pastoral tribes bring their flocks and herds to graze on these great plains, which on the approach of winter they abandon for the milder regions farther to the south.

Presently, the hopes of the travellers were raised by their seeing the remains of human encampments which had not been long abandoned, and they cheered themselves with the thought that they should soon see human beings. At last, on the 31st of January, one of their attendants came running to M. Bonvalot and his companions in a state of great delight, and joyfully declared that he had seen a man! It was even so. A Tibetan was approaching, and he was the first human being—except the members of the caravan—whom the travellers had seen for nearly two months; and worn out as they were with hunger and exhaustion, the sight of a man was truly delightful. Several Tibetans came up and conferred with the travellers; but nothing definite was gained from them. On the next day more Tibetans arrived, riding on shaggy mountain ponies; but they were reserved and suspicious. They at once tried to turn the travellers back, and their chiefs declared that they would be punished if they allowed the Europeans to proceed. M. Bonvalot and his friends were determined to go on; for to return in their condition would have been certain death; and so they pressed forward as fast as their exhausted frames and dying horses and camels would permit. The country seemed to be getting less savage, but it still consisted of great snowy mountains and open plains without the least cultivation, on which the black tents of shepherds rose here and there, and herds of wild asses were roaming to and fro. At last, on February 3, 1890, the travellers gained the summit of a lofty range, and looking to the south they saw the great Lake Namcho—the Holy Lake of the Tibetans—lying beneath them. It was a glorious spectacle. The broad expanse of the lake stretched away like the sea; promontories ran out into its bosom, and islands rose from its surface in many places. On its southern shore rose the great snow-clad mountains of Ningling-Tangla, whose towering peaks attain an elevation of twenty-five thousand feet, and are looked upon with awe and veneration by the Tibetans.

By this time the neighbourhood was thoroughly aroused; messengers had been sent to Lhasa, and horsemen were observed in all directions on the plains, and they surrounded the travellers on every side. These latter were now so weak that farther progress seemed impossible; and the Tibetans would neither give nor sell them any-

thing, and seemed determined to let them die of starvation. Their meat was frozen so hard that they had to chop it with a hatchet, and all their remaining beasts were dying. And now another of their attendants fell ill, and rapidly grew worse. In the darkness of the wintry night the survivors watched round the sufferer, but could do nothing. As the wolves howled round the camp, the dying man felt his end approaching, and calling his comrades round him, he bade them all farewell; then he fell backwards, and his spirit fled. They buried him at the dawn of day, and raised a pile of stones over his grave.

At this critical juncture when the caravan seemed doomed, an *amban* or petty Tibetan magistrate arrived from Lhasa, and peremptorily ordered the travellers to retrace their steps. This they refused to do, and they declared that they would rather die than return through the awful wilderness. The *amban* was perplexed, and declared that he would be put to death if the Frenchmen did not turn back. Ultimately, he agreed to write to his superiors at Lhasa for instructions. Time passed on, and by-and-by a great caravan, containing the leading Tibetan officials from Lhasa, arrived at the place where the travellers were encamped. These important personages—who were the religious and civil governors of the country—proceeded to encamp in great state; and at a solemn conference they ordered the Europeans to leave Tibet by the road they had entered it. M. Bonvalot and his companions still refused to go back a single step, and matters began to look very critical. At length the Tibetans gave way, and granted permission to the travellers to go to Batang, and thence to Tonquin. They also agreed to supply the Frenchmen with provisions and beasts of burden, and to furnish them with a guide to the frontier. These terms were willingly accepted; and shortly afterwards, provided with horses, yaks, servants, and provisions, the Europeans bade farewell to the Tibetan officials, and started in an easterly direction for the Chinese frontier.

They journeyed along the southern edge of the great Tibetan table-land, now ascending to its broad expanse, and now descending into the deep chasms by which its southern front is furrowed, and through which flow the headwaters of the great rivers of Siam and Cambodia. It was now spring, and the weather was much warmer, while grass and bushes were seen on all sides. Often great views were opened up to north and south; and it was observed that while the mountains to the south were precipitous and heavily snow-clad, those which rose to the north on the great table-land were rounded, and only slightly streaked with snow. At last, on the 14th of April the travellers caught sight of a house, the first they had seen for five months! Shortly after, they had a glimpse of cultivated fields, which they had not seen since they had entered Tibet. The hillsides now were—on the lower slopes—covered with bushes and with fir-trees, the villages were surrounded with cultivated fields, and the dwellings of Buddhist hermits were often seen perched on the tops of the towering crags.

On the 8th of June the travellers reached Batang, on the great river Yang-tze-kiang, and shortly afterwards they arrived at Ta-tsen-lu,

the frontier town of China. Here they had trouble again with the Chinese authorities, and had to submit to many insults. Fortunately, they met at this place Mr Pratt, an Englishman, who undertook to convey their natural-history specimens to Shanghai. Once more they started; and at length arrived safely in Tonquin, and embarking at Haiphong, they reached Hong-kong, and from thence were carried to Marseilles.

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

CHAPTER III.

'GRACIOUS! Harry. Wonders never will cease. Here is actually an invitation to dinner from the old hermit.' And Kitty flourished a dainty note in her brother's face.

'What old hermit? This sounds interesting and out of the common,' replied her brother, looking up from the breakfast table.

'Why, Phyllis, of course! At least her father. The note is from Phyllis. Listen! "Papa is most anxious to ask Captain Benson's opinion." Well, really! I do hope you feel flattered. Never shall I forget the old gentleman asking my opinion once! I feel hot whenever I think of it.'

'And what did you do?' asked her brother lazily.

'Never gave him the opportunity of asking another, and never shall, either!—The invitation is for Thursday. Phil won't be home, and I am engaged to dine somewhere, never mind where. So you are the only victim.—Stay; what is over the leaf? "P.S.—I have just remembered Mr Huxtable will not have returned home by Thursday; but do come, Kitty. Captain Benson will be bottled up all the evening with papa, and we can have a long chat."—No, no! Phyllis. Much as I enjoy your society, a long dinner seated next your revered parent would be quite beyond my powers of endurance.' So saying, Mrs Huxtable whisked up her letter and disappeared into her boudoir.

Captain Benson leaned on the mantel-shelf, a frown on his bronzed open face. 'She has never taken the least notice of the lines I sent, though I am sure they were pointed enough. She never seems to see; and for the life of me, I daren't "put it to the touch, and gain or lose it all." Three months' more leave, with a possible extension of three more. It's not a great deal of time. Still, it is a point gained to get the entrée of the house. "Lose it all!" Never! I'd wait three months, three years, or thirty, sooner than that should happen.'

And Captain Benson leaned his head on his hand, and gazed meditatively into the fire.

The eventful evening arrived. The three intervening days had been spent by Phyllis in various ways, and in more than one attempt to recover her lost letter. Several times she had taken the opportunity of her father being engaged elsewhere to prow round the study. She had investigated the paper basket, peeped

into many neat little elastic-banded heaps of notes; but without result. The letter had mysteriously disappeared. Of one thing, however, Phyllis felt certain. Wherever it might be, her father's eyes had never rested on it; and in that thought she took comfort.

Never before had she seen her father so interested. The pile of manuscript notes he unearthed would have occupied many evenings only to glance through.

'Any one would suppose papa expected Captain Benson to stay three weeks instead of three hours. I am afraid when they meet, papa will be a good deal disappointed. I can't imagine his taking a *real* interest in such fustiness!'

Arrayed in a white dress of some soft clinging material, which appeared to have been gracefully draped on to her slight supple figure, Phyllis descended the wide oak staircase, her candle held high aloft. She glanced back at a tall 'coffin clock' that stood in a nook of the staircase.

'Dear me! I am dreadfully late! It is on the stroke of seven!' And she hastily blew out her candle, and setting it on the hall table, turned to the drawing-room.

'Oh! how you startled me! I had no idea you were here!' And Phyllis, blushing, held out her hand to a tall figure, which at that moment was emerging from the drawing-room door.

'I must apologise, both for startling you and for being before my time.' Captain Benson held aside the *portière* for Phyllis, as they passed into the drawing-room. 'Kitty had an engagement to dine with the McKenzies, and dropped me here *en route*.'

At that moment Mr Marsden appeared, with a cordial welcome. If he was in any way surprised by the early arrival of his guest, he was far too well bred to show it; and the interval before dinner passed easily and cheerily.

During the meal, Mr Marsden spoke little, and the ball of conversation was kept rolling by Phyllis and their guest. Many reminiscences of the pleasant weeks spent in the summer were reproduced and laughed over; and Phyllis felt quite regretful when, dessert ended, she had no alternative but to leave Captain Benson and her father to entertain each other.

'He really is nicer than any one else!' mused Phyllis, as she sat on a stool and leaned her head against the side of the chimney-piece. 'I think papa *must* like him, even if he is disappointed in his cleverness.'

'No, thanks! I don't care to smoke. I would far rather set to work at once;' and Phyllis heard the study door close on her father and his guest.

Half an hour later, the study bell rang.

'Papa is going to have coffee in the study. I suppose I had better go there.'

She rose. The study door stood open. Robins had just entered with a tray. Phyllis stood on the threshold, transfixed with astonishment. On the cleared table was spread an enormous map; Captain Benson was leaning over it in an excited manner, tracing out a route with his forefinger; while Mr Marsden—Phyllis could hardly credit her eyes!—was leaning over him, one hand placed on the shoulder of the younger man, and a delighted, interested expression on his face. Phyllis had never seen there before.

'Just as if they had known each other all their lives! I am certainly not wanted there!'

Phyllis retraced her steps, saying as she did so: 'You can bring me some coffee in the drawing-room, Robins.'

Nine o'clock, ten struck; and still the two men sat on, eagerly discussing the literature, manners, and customs of the country each was so interested in. Anecdote succeeded anecdote, adventure followed adventure; till at last Captain Benson, taking out his watch, said: 'It is almost too late now to settle to steady work; isn't it, sir? But you will let me come again—won't you?—and go through these poems with you. I can come round any evening that suits you.'

'Come as often as you can,' answered his host cordially. 'You have made me feel ten years younger.—But stop a minute! I had quite forgotten one thing.' A curious look of perplexity overspread Mr Marsden's face. He stopped short, and looked at his guest with an almost piteous expression in his eyes. Then, taking out a bunch of keys, he opened a drawer in his writing-table and took out a paper.

Captain Benson watched him curiously.

'I had quite forgotten in the pleasure you have given me that I had another reason for wishing to see you to-night. It is better I should be quite honest with you.' He looked steadily at his guest. 'Captain Benson, I don't like that!' So saying, he placed the open letter in his hand.

If a thunderbolt had fallen, Captain Benson could not have felt more astounded than when he recognised in the paper in his hand his own letter to Phyllis. His bronzed face flushed crimson; but his blue eyes met Mr Marsden's fearlessly.

'I presume Miss Marsden gave you these verses?' He looked inquiringly at his host.

'No. She does not know I have seen them. They came into my possession by accident, among some papers she was copying for me, and'—answering a look in the other's eyes—'I had seen them before I realised they were of a private nature. The letter was folded as you see it now; I could hardly flatter myself the verses were addressed to me.' Mr Marsden smiled grimly. 'When I turned the sheet, I saw they were addressed to my daughter.' He paused, as if expecting Captain Benson to offer some explanation; but none being forthcoming, he went on.

'You have interested me greatly; but if you continue to come to my house, it must be distinctly understood that there is to be no more of this sort of thing.'

'What is your objection to me?' inquired Captain Benson.

'Objection! I don't think I object to you. On the contrary, I like you much.'

'Then I don't understand the difficulty.'

'My daughter is very young; and—and—we know so little of you!' faltered Mr Marsden.

'Time will remedy the first of your objections; so we can put that aside,' replied Captain Benson. 'For the second, I cannot agree with you. Miss Marsden and I were staying, as you doubtless remember, for six weeks in the same house; so our acquaintance can scarcely be called superficial. It is true I have not had the pleasure of knowing you before this evening. But that is through

no fault of mine; for I repeatedly asked Miss Marsden to allow me to call on you when I returned to town, and she invariably told me it would be useless, as you never saw any one.' He glanced inquiringly at Mr Marsden.

'It is quite true. I have been very wrong,' Mr Marsden replied, humbly.

Captain Benson was touched as he looked at the bent figure and the grieved expression with which his host made this confession. He moved his chair nearer. 'Let us talk this over,' he said, leaning forward. 'You say you have no objection to me personally. That is well. I hold a good appointment. I have ample means. I have youth, and excellent health; and, last though not least, I love your daughter.' Captain Benson coloured as he added this last recommendation.

'I did not know it had gone so far,' murmured Mr Marsden helplessly.

'It has gone so far that I cannot possibly withdraw, as you suggest, with honour. I have done everything in my power to make your daughter like me, and to show my love for her, short of actually asking her to be my wife; and I should have done that before we left Dunveith, but that she seemed so unconscious, and I feared to startle her by being too abrupt.—Of course,' he continued, finding Mr Marsden did not speak, 'if you, knowing all this, forbid me your house, I shall have no alternative but to respect your wish. In a few months I return to Persia for three years. At the end of that time, Miss Marsden will be of age; and I warn you I shall then leave no stone unturned to win her for my wife.'

'And I shall have all this to go through again, I suppose, and very likely Phyllis will be unhappy in the meantime!' sighed Mr Marsden. 'And to think of this going on and my never knowing it. I thought Phyllis quite a child.'

Captain Benson smiled. 'I fear you would miss her terribly if you gave her to me.—But why not come out yourself to Persia, and revisit some of your old haunts?—Come, Mr Marsden: you will not now forbid me the house. Let me come to-morrow, and'

'And read the love-poems,' put in Mr Marsden. 'Well, perhaps it will be the shortest way out of my difficulties. I expect Phyllis has gone to bed.—No; the light is in the drawing-room. You can bid her good-night.'

Reader, shall we leave them? Nay, let us rather exercise our privilege, and for an instant draw aside the curtain of the future.

On the deck of a Peninsular and Oriental steamer lying off Gravesend all is bustle and confusion; for in a few minutes the bell will ring, the tender will put off, and the last of the passengers will be on board. On deck, those on board are waving a last adieu to their friends on the tender. One group only interests us. Standing apart is Phyllis—the same bright, merry Phyllis—but with a new love-light in her eyes; and bending over her a tall, handsome soldier, also an old acquaintance. But who is this?—the last person to leave the tender. Surely not—but, yes; it is Mr Marsden, alert and active, with binocular slung across his shoulders. Six months of the bracing presence of his son-in-law had acted as a marvellous tonic; and he is now proceeding to Persia, he would say for six

months, and Phyllis and her husband humour him.

The last whistle! the last adieu and waving of hands! The great steamer is under way. Let us wish them God-speed!

PIRACY IN FAR EASTERN SEAS.

PROBABLY every school-boy who was ever worth his salt, at some early period in his teens has sighed because the decadence of piracy as a regular profession necessitated his selecting some more prosaic career in life. Without in any way wishing to encourage his youthful aspirations to emulate Blackbeard or Captain Kidd, or the other worthies of the Spanish Main; and, on the other hand, without desiring to arouse the fears of those of his elders who contemplate running over to Calais, or up to Scarborough, or even across the Atlantic, it may be very truthfully pointed out that piracy is still more or less regularly pursued as a business by thousands of people in various parts of the world. Execution Dock is no longer decorated with dangling gibbets, it is true, and the successor of Tangier's terrible Dey now relies on voluntary visitors for part of his revenue; but the *loup de mer* still infests many a sea, and nowhere does the genus flourish as it does in far Eastern waters.

The Peninsular and Oriental, the Messageries Maritimes, and other China-bound great lines, all expressly stipulate in their charters and bills of lading and agreements with passengers, that they shall not be held responsible for loss caused by 'fire, pillage, or piracy.' Piracy, forsooth, on a five-thousand-ton vessel, speeding at eighteen or twenty knots an hour, along familiar courses, through waters policed by the navies of a score of civilised nations! Yet the condition is not superfluous, even in these end-of-the-century days. For instance, a very serious case of piracy occurred near Hong-kong, on the steamer 'Namoa,' in November 1890, when a crowd of Chinese passengers shot the captain and another European dead, wounded several officers, and looted the vessel, escaping in junks, which sailed up when the victorious signal was hoisted. But although the engine had been disabled, the boilers emptied, and the side-lights thrown overboard, the engineers got the vessel headed for Hong-kong before dawn. The writer had the felicity, a few months later, of seeing a number of the piratical gang made a head shorter. The scene—with its background of rugged hills, the gunboats in the middle-distance, and an evil-smelling beach lined with nineteen dispirited, haggard, unkempt wretches, waiting till the mandarin gave the signal to begin—which signal was delayed until half-a-dozen amateur photographers had obtained a satisfactory focus—the scene, I repeat, was one which will take long to efface from the memory. One of the condemned wretches, in particular, made an unpleasant impression. He was alleged to be the leader of the attack on the 'Namoa;' and as he

was brought to the village Aceldama trussed like a fowl and squatting on a basket, he raved vain-gloriously about his crimes in pigeon-English and Chinese alternately. 'I shall come back in eighteen months and haunt you all,' he threatened. The allotted time is now long past; but Mak Aloï has not yet revisited the pale glimpses of the moon.

China is peculiarly the pirate's happy hunting-ground, and nowhere does he flourish more, strange to say, than in the neighbourhood of the most civilised centres in the south, such as Canton, Amoy, and Foochow; and this, too, notwithstanding the existence of a fleet of small but swift gunboats specially detailed to patrol the rivers, in order to suppress freebooters and smugglers. Comparatively the other day, a steam-launch belonging to a resident at Canton—an English ex-naval officer—was seized by a dozen of these desperadoes under the very nose of the authorities, in broad daylight, and used for a while in pillaging some of the myriad craft which navigate the West River, being ultimately left derelict. Even in Hong-kong, within sight of Government House, these water-wolves have established a regular colony. They refer to their excursions euphemistically as 'going East;' and many an instance of their boldness and cruelty could be given if space permitted.

Although the Japanese are to a great extent a maritime people, and by no means wanting in courage, they are rarely found resorting to this method of livelihood. But on the other side of the Chinese Sea, along the Cochin-China coast, every other native follows it. Although British gunboats have destroyed hundreds of their junks, burnt scores of villages, and hanged a host of men, sailing into Hong-kong harbour time after time with a pirate dangling from every yard-arm, within the memory of comparatively young men—notwithstanding this, and the intermittent efforts at repression made by both the Chinese and French Governments, the shores of Tonquin and Annam are still a terror to navigators, owing to the hordes of well-armed and desperate natives whose canoes are hiding in every creek. Safe in their shoal-girt fastnesses, aided by spies, they swoop down on rich cargoes, or kidnap well-to-do merchants with an audacity that is incredible.

Coming nearer home, we find piracy still very far from a myth. The corsairs of the Malay Peninsula long ago gained a bad eminence; what novel is complete without its chapter on the becalmed brig, assailed by a fleet of praus in the Straits of Malacca or Sunda, massacring the crew previous to carrying off the hero and heroine into a gilded captivity? It is not in romance alone that the Malay pirate exists. One of the best-known figures in Singapore to-day is that of a Chinaman whose arms have been cut off above the elbow, and who lives on the charity of a few residents. A few years ago, the 'Hong-kong,' or cargo-boat of whose crew he was a member, was

attacked just outside Singapore harbour. He and his mates jumped overboard; and when he tried to save himself from drowning by clutching the rudder, the merciless marauders severed his arms with a couple of blows. Fortunately for him, an English pilot was cruising about not very far away in a launch, and steamed up on observing the disturbance. After picking up the men who were in the water, he arrested the six Malay pirates; and a few weeks later they were satisfactorily hanged, the armless Chinaman being provided with a special seat among the spectators in front of the gallows!

It is hardly within the province of an article on piracy to refer to the seizures of vessels in harbour, such as that of the 'Hok Canton' at Achéen in 1885; but whilst in these equatorial latitudes, mention must be made of a British pirate, once the terror of navigators in Eastern seas, who died in 1886 or 1887, at a ripe old age. He had been a man of herculean frame, though old, poor, and racked by rheumatism, when the writer knew him. One of the Scottish Stuarts, he must have taken to evil ways early in life, for tradition attributes to him exploits over half a century ago to which only the pen of Robert Louis Stevenson could really do justice. But no one knows the details. He was not unnaturally reticent on these matters; and it was only by calculating on his violent temper, and 'drawing' him by artfully worded references to some alleged outrage, that anything could be got out of him. Often have I heard him cry querulously, 'I never hanged a woman in Siam!'—and then he would launch out into a narrative of what he had done—how he had been a captive of the Cochin-China authorities, carried about naked in a bamboo cage for nine months; how he had been twice sentenced in Singapore to imprisonment for life, and released through the influence of his brother, an officer high in the East India Company's service, and—this with a boastful air, at which, nevertheless, one scarcely cared to smile—he had never been anything but a pirate!

Only quite recently a paragraph went the round of the papers, announcing a terrible tale of piracy. It was reported from Penang, that the Dutch vessel *Rajah Kongsee Atjeek* had been taken possession of between Penang and Achéen in July of this year by her Achéenese passengers, who murdered the captain (an Englishman), two English mates, and twenty-two members of the crew. The chief mate was a native of Aberdeen. The cargo was left intact by the pirates, whose leader was the Achéenese supercargo. Seven of his accomplices went aboard at one of the ports of call after the Customs officers had examined and left the steamer. This irregularity probably led to the disaster, which resulted in the pirates securing five thousand guilders as booty. Obtaining this, however, they also killed twenty-four passengers and wounded twelve, while eighteen others who escaped in a boat were drowned by the craft capsizing owing to overcrowding. Nineteen passengers and thirty-two of the crew were unarmed. The man at the wheel was first cut down with a sword,

then the chief mate was killed, and next the captain was slain in his cabin, these murders being followed by a general slaughter in the saloon.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE most important scientific event of the past month has been the meeting of the British Association at Nottingham, which, while it has not brought forward any great discovery or invention of a sensational character, has been full of interest to those desirous of keeping themselves posted with regard to scientific progress. Full reports of the addresses to the various sections appear in the *Times* and many other papers, and a perusal of these will give the reader a fair idea of the work of some of our best men. Some of these addresses are of a highly technical character, while others trench upon matters of more popular interest. The next meeting of the British Association will take place at Oxford, when the Marquis of Salisbury—whose scientific attainments are well known—will take the presidential chair.

Among the more popular items brought before the meeting at Nottingham was the address in the Mechanical Science Section, in which the subject of locomotion on land introduced the cycle. Of this modern vehicle the speaker, Mr J. Head, spoke in the highest terms, and said that by it the most wonderful increase to the locomotive power of man on land was obtained. One mile had been cycled at 27.1 miles per hour; 50 at 20, 100 at 16.6, 388 at 12.5, and 900 miles at the rate of 12.43 per hour. Comparing these speeds with the speed and endurance of horses, Mr Head referred to the recent race between German and Austrian cavalry officers, which gave rise to so much comment in the press. The winner performed the distance, about 388 miles, in 71.33 hours, equal to 5.45 miles per hour, and his horse has since died. Mr L. Fletcher cycled from Land's End to John o' Groat's house, 900 miles, in 72.4 hours, equal to 12.43 miles per hour, or more than double the distance that the winner of the cavalry race rode, and at above double the speed. Here is indeed a triumph for the cyclist, who has the farther advantage of reflecting that in a long-distance ride he is guilty of no cruelty to an uncomplaining beast.

At the Congress of Journalists recently held in London, many most interesting papers were read, and among these was one of especial interest, by Mr W. L. Thomas of the *Graphic*, who took for his subject illustrated journalism. After tracing the history of this phase of journalism, the reader of the paper, who has been associated all his life with writers and artists, and is therefore in a position to speak with some authority, prophesied that in the future 'the increased power of faithfully recording pictures of current events, will be by the aid of increased discoveries in photography and electricity.' This prophecy is based upon the instrument recently invented by Professor Elisha Gray, called the *Telautograph*, specimens of the

work of which were exhibited before the audience. The telautograph faithfully reproduces at one end of an electrical circuit a line drawn at the other end—save that the reproduced lines are slightly thickened in the process.

Before jumping to any hasty conclusion as to the value and probable utility of an invention like the telautograph, it is as well to look back into the past in order to see what has been done by others in the same direction, and in such a case reference to old textbooks is invaluable. Thus we learn that half a century ago Bakewell's telegraph was able to transmit a drawing executed in the first instance on tinfoil by a varnish-like ink. Later on this form of instrument was much improved upon, and later still Cowper's *writing* telegraph made it possible for a man to transmit his autograph—under certain limitations—by electric wire. So that the advance in the instrument now introduced by Professor Gray is not so great as it would seem at first sight to be. What is really wanted is the means of doing for the eye what the telephone and phonograph have accomplished for the ear. Such an instrument does not seem outside the range of possibility, but it will need a genius to work it out.

One of the greatest and most important monopolies ever created by the patent laws of Britain expires this year. The period of fourteen years for which the holders of the incandescent electric lamp patents were, very rightly, protected comes to an end, and the manufacture of the glow lamps which are now in use in so many thousands of buildings is thrown open to the world. The profit on the manufacture has hitherto been enormous, a lamp costing only ninepence retailing at from three shillings and sixpence to four shillings. Aladdin's lamp itself could hardly bring more profit to its owner than has this little glass bulb inclosing a carbon filament. The price will now come down, for competition is not only threatened from home manufactories which are ready for immediate work, but from Germany and America. But the consumer will do well to guard against the purchase of too cheap a lamp. It will clearly be more worth his while to pay say a florin for a lamp with a life of seven hundred hours, than to purchase two for the same amount, having a combined life of five hundred hours. The present manufacturers will yet be able to kill competition if they reduce the price to a reasonable figure, and will at the same time guarantee a lamp of the old efficient kind.

Messrs Fletcher, Russell, & Co., of Warrington, have introduced a new method of colouring iron-work, which, it is said, entirely prevents rust, even though the metal be brought to a red heat. Indeed, they are treating the gas stoves of their manufacture with the compound. The preparation can be made to assume any desired colour, either dull or polished, and all tints are said to be quite unchangeable. The value of such an invention cannot be overestimated, and it is one which will be welcomed by the decorative designer as well as by the engineer.

Many persons find a difficulty, when looking through a microscope, in keeping the unoccupied eye closed, or if they keep it open, in ignoring the image which it receives of external objects. Dr L. B. Hall of Philadelphia has invented an attachment to the microscope eyepiece which obviates

this difficulty. It consists of a vulcanite shield which can be brought over the eye not in use, so as to darken it for the time being. Skilled microscopists by practice attain the power of keeping both eyes open while at their work, and at the same time concentrating their attention upon the image received by one only. A little practice enables one to do this with the telescope also, and the muscular strain of keeping one eye closed is thus got rid of with great comfort to the observer.

The Corinth Canal is now open to the passage of ships. The work of construction was begun as long ago as April 1882, but it has been interrupted for financial reasons more than once—and the rock through which the channel is cut offered difficulties both in its hardness and height. The canal, for the most part, represents a waterway with a perpendicular wall of rock on either side. It is not quite four miles long, and has an average breadth of one hundred feet. Steamships bound for Constantinople from the Adriatic will save eighteen hours by traversing the Corinth Canal, and Marseilles steamers will in like manner save eight hours.

Any busy man who has experienced the annoyance of waiting at a telephone while the wire he wants is occupied, as he learns through the exchange, by another person, will be inclined to welcome the introduction of an instrument called the Telephonometer. This instrument will register the time of each conversation at the telephone, from the ringing up of the exchange to the conclusion of the conversation. Talking would thus be charged for, like gas, by meter, and garrulous beings would have the wholesome check of expense before them. The Telephonometer has its origin in the German telephone department, where for the future it will control the duration of telephonic conversations, and determine their cost.

It is estimated that in London alone twenty-five thousand horses are employed in the carrying trade, and that their value is a million and a quarter sterling, or fifty pounds per horse. Their food costs eight hundred thousand pounds per annum, and is calculated in rather a curious way, the amount of forage consumed by each animal being based upon its height. The rule is that a horse should cost to feed as many shillings per week as he stands hands high.

It is probable that in the near future horse traction in our streets will be superseded to a great extent by electricity. An omnibus driven by storage cells has frequently been seen of late successfully steering its way through the heavy traffic of some of the principal London thoroughfares. A company at Chicago have placed upon the market an electric carriage which is constructed to carry four persons at the rate of seven miles an hour, and another form of electrically driven vehicle has been introduced in Italy. In each of these cases a small electric motor is employed which receives energy from battery cells carried on the vehicle.

A new system by which smokeless combustion of coal is rendered possible, has been adopted by the North German Lloyd and the Hamburg-American Packet Companies as the result of some successful trials at Berlin. The system is briefly as follows: The coal is in the first place reduced

to powder in centrifugal disintegrators, and is then conveyed by a jet of steam or compressed air into pear-shaped combustion chambers lined with fire-brick. This combustion chamber takes the place of an ordinary furnace, and the coal dust brought within it by the steam or air jet is dispersed over the whole extent of the chamber and becomes at once ignited. Moreover, as each particle of coal is separated from its neighbour and held in suspension, the oxygen necessary for complete combustion attacks it on all sides, and no wasteful smoke escapes. After the initial combustion of the dust, the air or steam jet can be reduced and regulated according to the amount of dust necessary to produce the required quantity of steam. If air be used, it can previously be heated by waste gases, and thus present an element of economy.

The recent coal strike will have the effect of calling renewed attention to the use of liquid fuels, and this will be particularly the case with our railways, which are put to enormous expense and inconvenience when any stoppage of the coal supply occurs. The Great Eastern Railway are already fitting up twenty-five locomotives with Holden's liquid fuel apparatus, which will burn almost any kind of crude oil or tar. At present these liquid fuels can be had in any quantities at a cheap rate, and it behoves all users of steam power to turn their attention in that direction for the probable solution of the fuel difficulty.

That unsavoury subject, the disposal of the Metropolitan Sewage, has occupied the attention of many thinkers during the last few decades, and we are glad to see that the last remedy adopted has been to a great extent successful in clearing what once was called the silver Thames of its pollutions. During the past twelve months the plan adopted has been to carry the sludge—or solid matter deposited by the sewers—far out to sea in specially constructed tank steamers, and there to discharge it—instead of allowing it as heretofore to putrefy in the river and upon its banks. As an unmistakable testimony to the increased purity of the Thames owing to this innovation, fish are once more ascending the stream. Whitebait, shrimps, and small crabs have come up the river as far as Gravesend and Erith, and according to Dr Günther salmon and sea-trout in the grilse state make their appearance at the mouth of the river, 'ready to ascend and restock the stream as soon as its poisoned waters shall be sufficiently purified to allow them a passage.'

Many serious and even fatal accidents have occurred from the passage of atmospheric electricity along telephone wires during a storm. Recently at Metz, during the progress of some target practice by a regiment of field artillery, a soldier who approached a telephone receiver at the moment that the conducting wire was struck by lightning, was killed, while a companion was paralysed by the shock. It has long been believed that if persons struck by lightning were treated by the artificial respiration system adopted in the case of the drowned, life might often be saved, but this treatment does not seem to have been tried in the case mentioned.

An Indian paper advocates the use of a coloured material for hats as a protection against

sunstroke, and a correspondent writes to say that he has had all the linings of his hats and coats made of yellow material for the past five years. To this simple precaution he attributes his immunity during that period from fever and sunstroke—often under circumstances of extreme exposure. Previous to the adoption of these yellow protectors, he was a victim to both forms of disease.

The Mammoth Cave of Kentucky is remarkable for the extreme purity of its air, and the curious physiological effect of breathing it for a period of twelve hours has been recently described by Dr Hovey, the geologist. He found that his perception of smell was increased to such an extent, that after emerging from the cave every tree, person, and common object seemed to be endowed with a distinct odour. This recognition of smells previously unrecognisable caused violent nausea, which lasted for about half an hour and then subsided. The effects are attributed to the extremely pure air of the cave, as well as to the absence for so many hours of anything to stimulate the olfactory sense. In other words the nose, being at absolute rest for so long a time, became extremely sensitive to odours which ordinarily make no impression whatever.

A correspondent of the *Lancet* points out that when sugar is partly burnt in a gas flame it is destructive to mice. He lately baited a trap with burnt sugar, and in the morning found within it a mouse quite dead, and another one lying outside the trap also dead, the sugar having disappeared. This is somewhat disquieting, for burnt sugar, or caramel, is used as an ingredient of many articles of food. May it not be possible that the gas flame may have conferred upon it poisonous properties?

DANNEL THE CARTER.

THE stable is quite dark and silent; the five great cart-horses stand motionless; only the mice are lively as they scuttle across the loft above, making a horse prick occasionally a drowsy ear. By-and-by streaks of red light begin to steal under the door, where the patient feet of the horses, passing in and out year's end to year's end, have worn the stones down. Gradually the shadowy forms of the horses grow out of the darkness; as the light gets stronger, they stir, and there is an air of expectancy about them; then all the ears prick up, and all the heads turn towards the door as a footstep is heard coming through the yard—a brisk, trotting footstep. The horses greet it with low, snuffling whinnies. The next moment the top of the door is thrown back, letting in a flood of light, and a man walks in. He is a little old man, clad in a white linen jacket and corduroys. His first act is to go up to each horse in turn and pat each head and firm strong shoulder; then he goes and leans his arms on the half-door and looks out for a moment or two. His withered face is so brown and wrinkled that it is like a walnut shell; he has a pinched nose, a pursed-up mouth, and small bright dark eyes. His whole expression is keen, honest, and obstinate.

There has been rain in the night, and the thick moss on the barn-roof is vividly green. Long

bright drops drip from the thatch; on the top of the cowhouse, a flock of sparrows are chattering and quarrelling; a long line of ducks march through the rickyard, stopping occasionally to paddle about in a puddle or dive their bills into a pea or bean rick. The old purple-breasted drake leads the way; his bright green glistening head is as brilliant as the wet moss on the barn-roof. They waddle off down the quiet road to the pond. How cool and greenly translucent the pond looks in the early morning light! The nut-boughs hang over it, and once in a while a nut slips its tawny husk and drops with a gentle splash into the water; or a yellow leaf floats down, and settles so softly as to cause scarce a ripple. There is a dragon-fly skimming across it, with a rustle and flash of glittering colours, a wonderful gleam of copper and purple, of emerald and turquoise. At sight of the cool green water, the ducks all rush forward, flapping their wings; then pause, when they have waded half in, to drink as greedily as though they had not stopped at every puddle on the way! There is no more still reflection for the little pond; the ducks splash and dive from one end to the other, till Daniel—or Dannel, as he is always called—the carter comes down with the horses and sends them quacking away. The horses hurry forward—Diamond, the old black mare, going in till the water laps against her deep strong chest. For a minute or two they stand drinking, drinking a long fill; then they slowly and reluctantly get out of the pond again. Doctor, the great brown, by virtue of his age and sobriety, is allowed to go without a halter. How he revels in this little bit of freedom! Stopping to eat a bit of the emerald grass growing along the gutter that flows from the pond, pulling a mouthful out of the hedge, going to look over a gate, and then coming along with a leisurely and independent gait, paying no attention to Dannel's shouts of, 'Hoot! Doctor!' as he stands holding the yard-gate open. The farmyard is all awake now; the cows are being driven into the milking-house, with a great deal of barking and excitement on the part of the rough old sheep-dog. A man is leaning against the stable wall, talking to the cowboy; he is a new-comer, just engaged as 'carter's mate.'

'What sort of a old chap be he?' he inquired as Dannel came in at the gate.

'Oh! he be middling enough, but a bit queerish; he can't abide the women!'

'Why's that?'

'Ah! he'll tell you that himself, sure enough; he be ter'ble fond of talking of it!' answered the boy, moving off, to allow the horses to enter the stable.

'Good-mornin', mate,' said Dannel civilly. 'If you'll come along o' me, I'll show you which be the horses.—This be Punch,' pointing to the roan at the beginning of the stable; 'and that next he be Poppet, and V'let, and Black Di'mond; and this here be Doctor. I'll warrant he be a good hoss, that he be,' said Dannel, passing his hand proudly over Doctor's shining flank. 'Treat un kind and he'll do anything fur you; but if you offers to hit un, he'll go through hedge w' you! That be all; and I'll be bothered if you could see a purtier lot anywheres! And now, I 'lows we'd better begin feedin' on 'em.'

There was a rope-ladder in one corner, leading

to the loft above, which Dannel ascended; and a moment or two after, a quantity of clover came tumbling into the rack above the horses' heads. When they had finished eating, the two men began to harness them. As they went out of the yard, Dannel glanced round and said: 'You be holdin' your whip wrong; you must hold un' as I holds mine!'

Jim shifted his whip with a half-smile, and they went on in silence till the field was reached. The sky was stormy; huge masses of cloud hung heavily, casting great purple shadows on the hills; the blue showed here and there between the clouds, and the sun shone fitfully. At this time of year everything has a softened look; most of the pale stubble-fields are yet unploughed; the trees are toned down with buff and brown tints; there is a haziness over the distance; and the hedges are gray with wild clematis; while a white dew lies over the grass. The flowers are gone, save where a dandelion still lingers, or a campion a little deeper pink than its sister-flower of the summer, or the tiny weed-flowers that creep about the fallows.

The two men harnessed the horses to the harrows and began to lead them up and down the field; another man and a boy joined them, and collecting the couch into heaps, set fire to it. A flock of sea-gulls came flying inland with a whiteness on their wings as of beaten silver.

'I'll warrant we be goin' to hae stormy weather, you,' said Dannel with a wave of his whip at them. 'When you sees they playgull gulls a-comin' in, you may be sure 'tis goin' to be rough.'

'Ah! And I seed the old sow a-carryin' about straw to make her a bed,' said Jim.

'There be a many ways o' tellin' what the weather be goin' to be,' said Dannel; 'but what you can goo by more nor anything, be they little red bird's-eye flowers; they shuts up so tight when rain be a-comin', I've often a said to my mate: "It be goin' to rain; they bird's-eyes a-shutting up;" and sure enough there'd be rain afore long; and then, when it be over, they'll open again, and look so innocent!'

'The moon looked queer last night; I thot we war goin' to hae a change,' said Jim; 'he was late last night.'

'Ah! he be allus three-quarter o' an hour later every night till he comes to the full.'

'Aw! I didn't know that; I thot he warn't particular whether he gained or lost, till he come to the full.'

'Yes; three-quarter; you ask anybody, he'll tell you that.'

There being no wind to blow the smoke from the couch-fire away, it hung white over the field. It was very still; the only sounds besides the rattling of the harrows were the voices of some children blackberrying in the distance, and tinkling of a sheep-bell from some sheep turned out in the fallow.

'Tis time we knocked off and had our dew-bit,' said Dannel at last, leading the horses off to the hedge; where the two men sat down and brought out their breakfasts, while the horses munched contentedly away at the hedge.

'Rev you bin here long?' inquired Jim presently.

'Forty-five years, man and boy. I come here

cowboy; then milkman; then carter's mate; then carter, same as I be now.'

'How come you to turn carter, if you began milkman?'

'There was an 'oman in that,' growled Dannel. 'Drat 'em, they be in everything!'

'What she got to do wi' it?'

'Why, 'twas like this yere,' said Dannel, settling himself as though for a long tale. 'There was me and a dairymaid—the finest-lookin' maid ever I set eyes upon! I can see her now as plain as I can you—a half-wistful expression came over the old man's face—'wi' her eyes as black as kickseys [sloes], and her cheeks like car-nations; but her heart was as hard as a Isle o' Wight cheese—that it were! And I was a gurt chap, halfways betwixt eighteen and nineteen. Half-past five I got up and got the cows in. There was six for she to milk, and six for me; but she'd be off every mornin' a-courtin' her spark—so I heerd arterwards—and left me to do 'em all! I thought I was keepin' company wi' she all the time, you sees! Lor, lor, lor! what a foolish errant she did send me on! He was carter's mate here, same as you be now; and one fine day off they went and got married! Dear, dear, dear, how the folks did laugh. I felt like a snail wi'out are a shell. But wold maister, he said they hadn't a treated me well sarvin' me so; and he didn't think much of him best o' times; so he gived 'em both the sack, and put me on in his place, fur I wouldn't hae nothin' more to do wi' milkin'; I was that soured, I'd hae turned the milk!'

'Be that why you be a single man?' inquired Jim.

'Yes, 'tis. If a hoss kicks me once, I'll warrant I don't go anearst his heels again in a hurry!'

Jim took a long pull at his tin bottle of tea, and said: 'Coz one 'oman med a fool o' you, weren't no call to think all on 'em would. Now, there be my missis; I don't know what I should do without she!'

'All I've a got to say be that there baint no trust to be put in 'em,' said Dannel doggedly. 'They be like a shyin' hoss—you never be sure on 'em. They've a hand in all the trouble as ever comes into the world.—Ah! I often thinks o' that young hussy Eve, when I be out in the fields a-harvestin' and a hay-makin' wi' the sun pourin' down fitten to melt you! 'Twas all along o' she as we've got to arn our bread by the sweat o' our brows!'

The sun came out as the day wore on, shining on the mellow tints of the hedge, where the maples had turned yellow, and the bracken russet. Sometimes a cart would pass along the road, and its driver shout a remark to Dannel, who would at once give Jim a long account of him, his family, past history, and place of abode.

When the other men went home to dinner, Dannel went up to the farmhouse, and presently reappeared with a large junk of bread, some cold pork, and potatoes. He sat down on a heap of straw in one corner of the stable and slowly consumed his dinner. The big black stable cat came purring round to share it. Dannel slept at the farmhouse, and was supposed to have his meals there; but he always preferred to take them away with him either into the fields or the

stable. When his dinner was finished, he lay back on the straw and had a peaceful nap till Jim came back again. As they were reharnessing the horses, there came a crowing, chuckling sound, and a little girl of about two years appeared. She stood laughing, and putting her small round head, which was covered with scant yellow hair like spun-silk, round the door as she peeped up at Dannel and called, 'Yannel! Yannel!'

The old man's face completely changed—it became positively illumined. 'Well, my dove, and what do you want?' he asked in the most blandishing tones his rough voice could take.—She toddled off towards Doctor.—'You wants a ride on Doctor, that's what you wants. Well, you must give wold Dannel a kiss fust!'—She at once laid her soft cheek against his hard brown face.—'You be artful, you be,' he said beamingly. Then he lifted her on to Doctor's great back and held her there.

'Who be she?' asked Jim.

'Oh! the little un up at the farm,' replied Dannel.

At this moment a sharp-faced, bright-looking, elderly woman appeared hurriedly. 'There—I knew she'd be here,' said she. 'Directly my back be turned, that bad maid be off to stable!'

'And why shouldn't she, if she've a mind to it?' said Dannel in a surly voice. 'Where you'd allus be off to, if you'd your way, would be to shop, a-squanderin' your wage on finery, makin' yourself look like a old sheep in lamb's guise.' He looked at her with a chilly and distrustful expression as he spoke. Dannel always was oppressed by a fear that every unmarried woman who came near him wanted to marry him.

'Be you going to keep that child here all day?' inquired Sarah blandly.

'Run away now, my lovey,' said Dannel, dropping his voice to a softly amiable tone again. 'And to-morrow, I'll take you out in cart.'

The baby went off, holding Sarah's hand, but still turning to gaze back at Dannel.

'I never know'd nothin' so knowin' as that maid be,' said he, watching her admiringly. 'She took to me from the first, that she did! I'll warrant I could stop her cryin' when nobody else could, when she war a little tiny baby!'

'I wonders you'll hae anything to do wi' she, considering as she'll be an 'oman one o' these days,' said Jim with a twinkle.

'Ah! but my maid be goin' to be worth the whole lot o' 'em boiled down!' said Dannel with conviction, leading the horses out of the stable as he spoke.

'His maid' was the only person to whom he ever unbent; she was the only one he never snubbed or snapped at. She always rode in the cart when he went to cut fodder for the horses, returning on the top of a load of sweet-smelling clover; or in winter, when he went for turnips or straw, she sat in the front of the cart carefully wrapped up in his coat. On Sundays he hung about round the kitchen door till she came out, when he would take her 'a-flowerin'' when the summer grass had grown long and golden with buttercups; or a 'bird's-nestying' in the spring, to see the horses when they were tethered out, or the cows milked. There was always something new and delightful.

Gray clouds were blowing up from the south

across a stormy yellow, when the last weeds were cleared off the harrows and put on the fire; there was a dull fiery red where the sun had just set, but opposite was a bit of clear pale blue sky with one quiet star. The reflection of the sunset sky cast a subdued light down one side of Dannel and the horses, as they went through the dark field beneath. In the distance, blowing up a great cloud of white smoke against the dark hills, was the couch-fire. Jim stayed to give it a final stir with his preng till it flashed up so red a flare that the paling glory of the sunset, the little white star, and everything round, seemed to go dark in a moment.

The stable was dark when they reached it.

'I must go up and get some caudles fur my lantern,' said Dannel.

There was a pleasant smell of new-baked bread filling the kitchen as he entered it, for Sarah was just pulling the hot loaves out of the oven.

'There's your tea ready for you over there,' she said, pointing to the dresser; 'but you'd better stop and have it by the fire, for it's a bit chillish out this evening.'

'No, thank ye,' said Dannel suspiciously. 'I'll take it with me. What I be come for be some caudles.'

Sarah reached up to the high mantel-piece for the candles, and in doing so, knocked off a candlestick and bent it. She picked it up and tried to straighten it.

'Here; give it to me,' said Dannel, taking it and putting it straight. 'Dear! how helpless the women be!'

'You're that conceited, Dannel, I've no patience with ye,' said Sarah, ruffled. 'I'll warrant there baint many things as you can do as I couldn't, if I tried.'

'Can ye sow?' asked Dannel with great contempt; 'or thatch, or mow, or plough?'

'I dessay I could if I tried to it,' replied Sarah undauntedly; 'and I've a sowed beans, and thatched our bee-hives; and I'll tell you what I've a done'—

'Your words, Sairey, comes out as fast as the chaff do when we be a-threshin', and wi' about as much sense in 'em as the chaff have grain.'

'There's good grain comes out, too, Dannel, when you be threshin'.'

'If there be any grain in the women's talk, I'll warrant it be mowburnt, and nothin' ever comes o' it!'

'If no good comes o' our words, 'tis because the men's minds, Dannel, be but bare and stony ground for 'em to fall on!'

Dannel could think of no retort to this, so he went off, saying: 'Dear! dear! how the women do talk!'

'Don't forget to bring some caudles for me, if you goes into town to-morrow,' called Sarah after him.

'Yes,' replied Dannel grumpily, and departed.

In spite of his dislike to 'the women,' Dannel never forgot any of the numerous commissions they gave him to do when he went into the market-town. He always put a series of knots in his great blue-spotted handkerchief; and when he got into the shop, he would draw it out and go through the different knots in an under-tone: 'This yere be the meat fur to-morrow's dinner; and this two reels of machinery cotton black;

and wicks fur the lamps; and a penny o' cough drops; and— Oh yes! this be it; this little titty tiny un at the end o' it!—Three pounds o' tea if—you—plaze!

On one occasion a rather eccentric aunt of the master's, staying at the farm, told him to go and order her a bonnet. 'And tell them, Dannel, it's to be a plain one!'

Dannel was just starting with a load of straw to the town. He looked rather sour, but said nothing. When he reached the millinery establishment, he drew the team up outside it. It was a snowy day, and he had his long greatcoat on, faded, by years of exposure, to a dull greenish brown. It was powdered white over the shoulders with snow. In one hand he held his big brass-mounted whip. He opened the door and walked sturdily in. 'You be to make Miss Dixey a bonnet,' he said in his strong rough voice; 'and you mind this—you baint to put none o' they cockelorum jigs on to it!' Having said this, he walked out of the shop, waved his whip to the team, and went on with his load of straw. The bonnet arrived in due course, and proved satisfactory!

He was a strange, obstinate, crusty, old man, living a solitary life, out in the fields all day, always in company with the horses, till such an understanding grew up between him and them that they knew every wave of his hand or whip, every tone of his voice. He took a wonderful pride in them; and in the evenings, when the other men went home, he would stay in the stable grooming them and plaiting their manes and tails with straw and ribbons. In the winter, when the wind was blowing in freezingly under the door, and the long icicles hung from the thatch, sparkling in the frosty white light of the moon, and the horses' hair was all ruffled up with the cold, he would be driven up to the house, where he would sit over the brewhouse fire reading his Bible by the light of his lantern. He always read aloud in a loud monotonous chant, raising his voice still higher if 'the missis' or Sarah came in, and choosing such parts as he thought at all applicable, such as, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches;' 'and everywhere else, says I!'

But one evening the 'little maid,' playing round the kitchen table, fell on the hard stone floor and cut her hand. She began to wail and cry pitifully, and a moment after, Dannel's head was thrust round the kitchen door. 'What's the matter with Polly?' he asked with an angry glance at Sarah.

'You needn't look at me like that!' she said indignantly. 'I han't done nothing to her. She fell down.'

Polly held out a small chubby hand with a bleeding palm to him.

'Wait a moment, my little maid, and I'll soon cure that,' said he, hurrying off to the stable, and reappearing with a large cobweb, which he wrapped round the wounded hand. The novelty of this so pleased Polly, that she stopped crying, and began to laugh, though the tears were still trickling down her cheeks.

'Got any picture-book, Sarey?' asked Dannel, picking Polly up, and carrying her off to the chimney corner.

Sarah produced a battered volume from the

table drawer; and Dannel turned over the pages and explained the pictures, till Polly becoming sleepy, Sarah carried her off to bed.

After that, Dannel often came into the kitchen of an evening, and would sit in the chimney corner and tell Polly stories of the different horses he had had under his charge, and of his own experiences as a little boy 'minding' the rooks. He was always very civil to Sarah on her own ground, and on one occasion he even went so far as to pay her a compliment. She had just been cleaning the kitchen, and the floor was snow-white, save where it took rosy tints in front of the blazing fire. The dresser had been polished till it shone again; the coppers under it twinkled with brightness. Dannel cast an admiring glance back at it, as he was preparing to depart, and said: 'The kitchen looks proper, Sairey! I 'lows you knows how to get round the table!'

Sarah was silent with astonishment for some time after; then she said: 'Well, there! I declare Dannel be like a Ribstone apple, he improves with keeping!'

DESERTED.

Will you remember, when, at close of day,
The crimson sun in alien skies is burning,
The eyes that see his rising far away,
Eyes dim with their long watch for your returning?

Will you remember, when, at last, at last,
These weary eyes are closed in dreamless sleeping,
How they would brighten for you in the past
Ere their long night of watching and of weeping?

Will you, perchance, when many days are over,
Come back, with broken heart, to die alone,
Find the old places, but no friend, no lover,
No home where once you knew them all your own?

Ah, then you will remember, sad and old,
This heart which loved you, and which you have broken—

The heart which would have blessed you and consoled,
And all the tender words I would have spoken.

You will remember then, and, slowly burning,
Old memories shall eat into your heart,
Of all my passionate hope, my hopeless yearning,
Surely at last you too shall bear your part.

Oh, I could curse you—if I did not love you!
You, who have made my life a heaven, a hell.
I hate that passionless sun that shone above you,
Yet—for he looked on you—I love him well.

D. R.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE FIRST ORATORIO.

By J. F. ROWBOTHAM, Author of *The History of Music*.

A PERSON visiting the Crystal Palace on the occasion of a Handel Festival, and observing the four thousand singers crowding in multitudinous throngs the orchestra, the five hundred instrumentalists ranged in a portentous band beneath them, and finally the great organ, reared like some huge mystic superstructure behind—beholding all this array of voices and instruments, and then suddenly hearing them pour fourth a stentorian chorus from the 'Messiah' or 'Israel in Egypt,' which rolls in vast and endless volume through the enormous building—a visitor to this scene for the first time could not but be struck, nay, overwhelmed by the mightiness of the spectacle and the harmonious magnitude of the sound, which he saw and heard before him, and might well be tempted to ask, What sort of thing was the First Oratorio, from which this is so stupendous a development? From what quaint and forgotten source did this mighty river proceed, whose waves now beat before me?

The answer to such a question is one not only likely to interest every lover of music, but every cultivated mind. Oratorios have been and are so popular amongst us, that we naturally have the same interest in them as in any other product of man's creative genius, which attracts attention and compels admiration.

In the first place, we may well imagine that if we could have travelled back a century or more in fancy to the time of Handel himself, or a little later, we should have seen a very different spectacle on the platform. The crowds of tenors and basses now arrayed in faultless dress clothes or garbed in the more common morning attire of to-day, would be replaced by men in full-bottomed wigs, reeking with powder, in bright red or green coats and knee-breeches, and wearing swords by their sides. The ladies would have worn powdered hair, patches, and furbelows. Already we are in strange proximities, and the oratorio as

seen in the reign of George III. looks very different from what we are accustomed to behold in it to-day.

But if we were to go back further still, we should find the singers not content with sitting and standing as they sang or were silent; but instead thereof, setting appropriate actions to their words, and endeavouring to depict by their gestures, and even by their dress, the sufferings of some persecuted apostle, the passion of some saintly martyr, or whoever else were the hero of the sacred drama.

The oratorio as we see it and know it is a spectacle deprived of all its romance, a drama divested of its acting, a piece of musical elocution bereaved of all the help which scenic display and appropriate dresses could afford the singers to portray the action which they are describing.

Like all developed things which are in the world around us, the oratorio has had a long history, and only by slow and laborious degrees has it attained its present pitch of perfection. If we would seek the source whence it came, we must turn back to the Mystery Plays of the middle ages. Out of this apparently so unpromising source the oratorio arose. Mystery plays used constantly to be provided with musical interludes and occasional songs, with which the characters relieved the monotony of their declamation. And this appendage of music to the sacred plays first suggested the possibility of applying it constantly to the development of the action.

The clergy finding people appreciate the stories out of the Bible, when they were enacted on the platforms of the mystery theatres, tried the experiment of introducing these performances into their churches. The first of the kind that we read of in medieval chronicles was the drama of the 'Ass,' which belongs to the twelfth century. It was played in church on the fourteenth of January every year. A beautiful girl was selected as the heroine of this strange drama, and she was seated on an ass, most elegantly caparisoned. She was intended to represent the Virgin Mary; and in order to make the resem-

blance the more complete, a young baby was placed in her arms, who was designed to represent the infant Jesus. In this guise she was led up the church, and dismounted at the altar, while the ass was tethered by her. The chancel, or part of it, was turned for the time being into the representation of a manger, and while the ceremony we have described was going on, the choir sang a long hymn or song descriptive of the ass and its mistress.

Not in one or two churches only, but in nearly every church in Europe was this strange little drama presented to the view of the congregation once a year; and in learning to admire and take an interest in this musical spectacle, our ancestors were learning their first lesson towards appreciating the oratorio.

From so simple a form as the above, the idea grew to more elaborate proportions. The story of the Conversion of St Paul—the very same subject which attracted the genius of Mendelssohn in the middle of this century—was sung with appropriate action at Rome four hundred years before. One singer represented the apostle, others enacted the parts of his companions. They moved along the church, when suddenly a flashing light was shown through the roof, and the singer fell down as if blind. The voice from the clouds was represented by a concealed choir, much in the manner wherein Mendelssohn elected to represent it. The journey to Ananias was then portrayed; and the whole was accompanied by strains of music, which were a mixture of snatches of the church service and of popular airs of the day—not a very promising combination for the prospects of future art.

The story of Abraham and Sarah was similarly represented at Florence a few years later; and this story seems to have been an especial favourite with the promoters of that sort of entertainments, since in the notices which chroniclers furnish us of these musical exhibitions, Abraham and Sarah occurs twice or thrice as often as any other religious drama.

But yet this was not oratorio proper, nor can the actual musical form be said to have begun until a considerably later period, when in a very singular way, and from an unexpected quarter, the first great impetus was given to the culmination of all these tendencies in a definite oratorio.

Among the great preachers of Rome, the most popular of his day was St Philip Neri. The eloquence of his sermons, the fervour of his religious zeal, the austerity of his life—all combined to increase his reputation for holiness and draw crowds to his church. Unlike many of the ecclesiastics of his day, he approved of all means of winning people to a religious life, and attracting them to church. He held that the end justifies the means; and among the most potent auxiliaries to the cause of proselytism was, he thought, good music. Accordingly, he introduced the

short sacred dramas we have spoken of as a regular adjunct to his services.

It was his custom to hold evening services in his church every day, for the purpose of giving the shopmen and labourers of Rome an opportunity of attending, which otherwise they would have been unable to do. The musical drama was divided into so many acts, and between each act the eloquent ecclesiastic preached a short sermon, commenting on that portion of the story which had just been represented, and explaining anything in it which seemed to require explanation. Great care was taken in rehearsing the dramas, and willing volunteers were found for the work, furnished with excellent voices, and sufficient skilled musicians to perform their parts with spirit and correctness.

So popular did these religious plays become, along with the services which accompanied them, that people flocked from all parts of Rome to hear them; and the good pastor had the pleasure of seeing many worldly people of fashion become 'very good Christians, by constantly attending the evening services and going through the form of prayers, until at last they became partakers of the spirit.'

Occasionally he varied the religious drama by substituting a number of hymns; but this was by no means such a popular method of proceeding. The people liked the scenery, the dresses, the action, the stage—for there was a stage in the chancel, on which the action of the drama proceeded—and declared that there was no church like St Philip Neri's for learning to understand the Scriptures, and reaping all the profit from them which they were capable of conceding. The church of St Philip Neri was called St Mary's in Vallicella, and the portion of the edifice where the plays were held was called the Oratory. From this reason the musical dramas began to be called 'the plays of the Oratory' or 'Oratorios'—a name which they have since retained.

For the purpose of furnishing a direct source of lineage to the modern oratorio, it was necessary, however, that the purely religious part of the service should be eliminated, and that only the musical and dramatic element should remain. This was not possible during St Philip Neri's life. His eloquence was so great and convincing that people would by no means hear of a divorce between the sermon and the drama. The two things remained in combination, and were found to be the most charming form of worship and amusement to be obtained in Rome.

But Neri died, and the performances were continued without any of his irresistible eloquence to recommend them to the public. What, then, was wanted was a more careful elaboration of the plot and a greater and fuller attention to the music. Emilio del Cavaliere, a famous musician of the day—it was in the year 1600—has the credit of applying these two desiderata to the musico-religious form of drama which St Philip Neri had introduced; and by this means

Emilio has gained the title of being 'the Father of the Oratorio.'

'The First Oratorio,' in the real and perfect sense of the word, was performed in St Philip Neri's Oratory shortly after the death of that celebrated preacher, and its joint-authors were a lady named Laura Guidiccioni, who wrote the words, and Emilio del Cavaliere, who composed the music. It was entitled 'The Representation of the Soul and the Body,' and was in a great degree allegorical in its spirit. The characters, which were enacted by Roman youths, were Time, Life, Pleasure, the Intellect, the Soul, and the Body. The dresses for these strange *dramatis personæ* were devised on the same lines of fancy which we indulge at the present day, when a lady goes to a fancy dress ball as 'Night' or 'Winter,' and may be easily conjectured without our pausing to describe them.

In addition to the principal characters there was a large chorus, which was responsible for the choral elements in the action and the music; and over and above the chorus the careful composer of the oratorio has recorded with patient minuteness the necessity of two youths among the characters who might declaim the musical prologue. To accompany the songs of these various performers there was a small orchestra, consisting of a harpsichord, a 'double lyre,' which we may perhaps identify with a viol da gamba or 'violoncello,' a large or double guitar, and two flutes. The orchestra is oddly composed and strangely balanced. A modern musician will be apt to ask, Where are the violins? There is no part written for the violin in Emilio's score, but he has added the quaint suggestion that the soprano part of the music could be greatly improved if a violin were to play in unison with the voice throughout. The monotony which would arise from such an arrangement does not seem to have struck him. His orchestra was carefully hidden from view; and in the excessive solicitude for their concealment Wagnerians may recognise an anticipation of Wagner's similar precautions. The Baireuth master required his orchestra to be hidden, in order that they might offer no interruption between the real and the ideal—the real was represented by the spectators in the house, and the ideal was denoted by the imaginative drama on the stage. We know not if Emilio del Cavaliere had so abstruse and fanciful a theory for the concealment of his orchestra. At any rate, he was as careful of the fact as Wagner was in the expression of the theory.

In lieu of a visible orchestra, he made another suggestion, which Wagner in one at least of his operas has likewise initiated and acted upon. In 'Tannhäuser' we all remember that the minstrels make great play with their harps, and the sense of reality is greatly heightened by the fact of our perceiving music to be made by actual instruments on the stage, instead of merely resounding from the invisible swell of sound pouring from the orchestra. The Father of the Oratorio has made a suggestion still more realistic than any occasional introduction such as the above. He recommends that all the characters in the oratorio should, wherever possible, carry their own instruments in their hands, and pretend to play their own accompaniments directly the music strikes up. Old Father Time

was thus to be furnished with a lyre; Pleasure, with a guitar; and the other characters with instruments adapted to their nature; and the whole of the *dramatis personæ* were to be, at least in appearance, musicians. We do not know if this requirement of Emilio's was carried out entirely as he desired it; we rather suspect that the managers of entertainments in those days were as ruthless as they are at present, and cut down the schemes of composers directly they exceeded the bounds of the *sine quâ non*.

An overture to the oratorio was first performed; but in place of an instrumental overture as at present, the prelude was delivered by a chorus, and was, in fact, a madrigal, although it received a more dignified name. The curtain then rose, and the two youths, specially designed for the office in the list of characters, delivered the prologue. At the conclusion of this, Father Time came on the stage and performed a long and elaborate solo. When his aria was finished, the Body made its appearance, and in the midst of an impassioned declamation threw away its golden collar and the feathers from its hat, presumably, we suppose, to indicate that it would have no more to do with worldly vanities.

The World and Life were then to have a duet, and, like the Body, were gradually to divest themselves of their gay and gaudy attire, until at last they were merely clad in rags, 'very wretched, and ultimately dead bodies.' The general idea of the piece, as may be gathered from this, was to show the transitory nature of all worldly grandeur, and its nothingness in comparison with the higher things of the soul.

But what must ever amaze us in the account of this 'First Oratorio,' is to discover that at certain points in the action all the characters joined in a dance. The fact of the performance taking place in a church does not seem to have suggested that there was anything incongruous in a dance. At any rate, not only did the spectators welcome the dances as a very essential addition to the entertainment, but the composer himself was very careful to denote the various kinds of dances which might be employed. He suggests the Galliard, the Courante, and one or two more, and recommends the four principal singers to 'embellish their dancing with capers.'

At first sight, we might imagine that the introduction of the dances was only occasional throughout the oratorio, but there is good ground for believing that at the end of every verse the singer performed a dance on the stage, during the instrumental interlude which separated one verse from the other. Let us imagine Mr Edward Lloyd giving his hand to Madame Patey at the conclusion of every section of his solo, and turning her gracefully round the platform before he commenced a new one, and we shall have a fair idea of the extraordinary nature of the entertainment, which at that time attracted the admiration of all Rome.

From this humble beginning, and by constant improvement, and abridgment of the elements of bad taste in the old form, the oratorio grew and developed to the chaste, sober, and magnificent interpreter of the religious impulse which we know it to be at present. But at first it was the quaint and almost ridiculous entertainment which we have just described. And those

who also admire its greatest achievement to-day, would hardly recognise the relationship between our nineteenth-century displays and 'The First Oratorio.'

POMONA.*

By the Author of *Laddie, Tip Cat, Lil, &c.*

CHAPTER XV.

Glad and well aware
Of the most genial brightness, as a tree
Expands its leaves to meet the noontide glare,
So basks she in love's light contentedly.

EMMA RHODES.

'HER ladyship's love, Miss, and she would be glad if you could go to her room.'

Mona Lester had just come in from her morning ride in the Row. It was a beautiful morning, early in May, and the Park looked green and bright, and the horse chestnuts were lighting up their tapers pink and white, and the laburnum's golden chains tossed in the fresh, little breeze which ruffled the glowing bravery of the lilacs.

Mona had had a very pleasant ride. The day was fresh and exhilarating; her new little chestnut mare was all that heart could desire, with a skin like satin, and a mouth like velvet, which, by the way, are contemptible similes, as most of the similes we use about nature are, for 'Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Mona looked, as most girls do, her very best on horseback; and without any vanity, or as little as human nature is capable of, there is a satisfaction in appearing to advantage. She had met a good many people she knew, and among them the Mr Moore she had met at dinner at Mrs Cuppleston's, and who had told her about Mr Ludlow and the picture. She had stopped some time talking to him; he was very pleasant, and she thought she liked him better than most of the men she had come across lately. He was not quite so much of the one uniform pattern; and he was certainly very good-looking. She would get mother to send him a card for their next 'at home.'

She was thinking this as, in consequence of the servant's message, she went, before changing her habit, to Lady Lester's room and softly opened the door. The room of an invalid, with light and temperature and sound and scent all subdued and softened down, and deprived of the pleasant inequalities and variations of healthy, every-day life; no sunshine or brisk breeze, or shrill birds singing, or wholesome smell of fresh-turned earth or salt-sea breath. The worn shadowy face that raised itself from the pillows as Mona entered, looked as if any sudden shock might take the feeble life out of it in a moment; and the pale hand that stretched towards her looked as if it had no strength even for that slight effort, but dropped to her side before Mona had crossed the room. No contrast could have been greater than that between the mother and daughter, who came in like a very incarnation of health and youth and life and energy.

'Dearest,' she said, 'you are not so well this morning?'

'There is nothing much the matter,' the weak

voice answered; 'only Dr Craddock has been here, and he has been urging me to go down to Beechfield with as little delay as possible.'

'Oh, mother, let us go!'

'Yes, that is just it.' There was the slightly fretful tone of an invalid perceptible in the soft persuasive voice. 'I knew you would say so; and I will not go if it means dragging you away from London at the very beginning of the season.'

'There is no dragging about it.' Pomona had tossed off her hat, and sat down on a low stool by her mother's sofa, where the invalid's hand could smooth the soft plaits or stroke the blossom-tinted cheek.

'I know that, my darling; but it will make me feel wretched and selfish if I let you do so. I want you to agree to my going down with Morris, and Lady Charter is coming up and taking my place. She is longing to come to town, and she knows all our set; and you like her, and she is very fond of you. You can run down for a day now and then, to cheer me up when there's nothing very delightful going on, or there's any engagement you want to get out of. Yes; I know it will spoil it all. I like to think that half the pleasure is sharing it with me; and it's mere selfishness on my part to make you stay, for I want to have a description of everything that goes on.'

'Mother, let me come!' Lady Lester's tired eyes closed wearily. 'You know I am perfectly happy at Beechfield. It will be lovely there now, and the nightingales singing, and the limes full of primroses; and I can drive you out with Tom and Jerry; and I have seen a lovely, little carriage that does not shake an atom—and every one would be away, and we should be all to ourselves. It would be a sort of honeymoon; and I would do everything for you instead of Morris, and sleep in your room.—Oh mother, let me come!'

She could not tell how alluring the prospect was to Lady Lester to have her darling all to herself. Though Pomona was her only one, it was quite curious how little she had had her to herself. Even as a baby, grand nurses and nursery regulations had come between them. She remembered how she used to envy the cottage mothers rocking their sunburnt babies to sleep at their open doors, or even gypsy tramps with little black-eyed babies tied on their shoulders, who could turn and kiss the dirty, little face nestling against their neck at any moment of the dreary day. Later on, education had interfered. All the most elaborate modern machinery of education must be brought to bear on the child. Lady Lester's friends said she had education on the brain; even the holidays were pervaded by the presence of holiday governesses. If it was not education, it was health, which is perhaps in these days a more important consideration than any other. In our modern Pantheon, the goddess Hygieia is the one who has the greatest number of worshippers, and at her bidding, people submit to banishment and torture, and live hard lives of self-denial and asceticism, such as they would hardly endure for any other cause. So it happened that perhaps at the very moment when Lady Lester and her little girl might have been happy together, the

mother would fancy that the child looked pale or languid, or was beginning to stoop, and she would be sent off to the seaside or to more bracing air away from home.

Then, when education was finished, and Pomona had grown as fair an example of beautiful health as heart could desire, society stepped in, and society is the greatest tyrant of all, who, though she does not exact such painful sacrifices as health, is a harder taskmaster than ever Pharaoh was, and keeps her slaves working night and day on the treadmill that we call pleasure.

And through the ceaseless round of society loomed the certain prospect of Pomona's marriage, which would separate them finally. Of course she would marry—of course Lady Lester wished her to do so, though her very heart bled at the idea. Already many times during the two years since she came out, this suicidal wish seemed likely to be realised. Pomona was much admired, and her large fortune showed off her attractions to the greatest advantage; but hitherto the girl had remained heart-whole, and had declined offers which most girls would have thought irresistible.

She enjoyed her life immensely; the admiration and homage she received was very gratifying to her; but it was quite as gratifying from one man as another; and directly it became too demonstrative, it grew tiresome.

'I wish they wouldn't!' she said one day, with the letter of one of her suitors in her hand. 'I liked this Captain Lupton so much, so very much. He danced perfectly, and was so amusing. Why couldn't he have been satisfied with dancing and talking? And now there is an end of it all.—I think I am too much in love with you, mother, the girl would say; 'I don't want any lover but you!' And Lady Lester, looking at the lovely face, could not be surprised that Captain Lupton and the others could not be satisfied.

But now Lady Lester would not be persuaded to gratify herself to her heart's content with this true love, and leave the noisy rattle and glare of London for the lovely quiet of Beechfield, where the tender green buds were opening, and the hawthorn snow covering the hedges, and the blue-bells in the coverts mimicking the sky, and the nightingale's long note softly touching the silence.

'You must not vex me, my darling,' she said, stroking with a caressing hand the soft cheek. 'I am one of those tyrannical invalids that must not be crossed, Dr Craddock says. I must not be worried, and it will worry me constantly if I think I am taking you away. I want you to help me, not to make it harder for me. I have seen Parry, and he is going to make all the arrangements for my going down this afternoon. It is a fine day, and I am pretty well; and I may not be so fit for the journey to-morrow; but I am a little bit tired now, and must rest.—But before you go, there is something I want to tell you, and something I want you to do, which I meant to do myself while we were in London; but I have not been well enough to see to it.'

'Don't trouble about it now, mother dear,' Mona said. She was sore and sad at her mother's decision, and a little bit hurt, though she would not show it, at its having been decided before telling her; and she feared that Dr Craddock

must think badly of her mother, to insist on her going home so immediately.

'I want to tell you now. It has been very much on my mind lately, especially these nights when I sleep so badly. There is a relation of yours, father's. I think it is a girl, but I am not sure. But I think she must be about your age.'

'One of the Lesters?'

'No. A sister of your father's married beneath her, and they were all very angry about it.'

'Oh! a sister of father's? Then she is my aunt?'

'She is dead; but there was a child. I never knew much of the mother. I think she was at my wedding; but when I went to visit old Lady Lester, this sister was not at home, and she never came to us.'

'Whom did she marry?'

'I think it was a doctor; but I forget. Sir John was dreadfully upset about it, unnecessarily so, I thought at the time. But he would not have her mentioned. She died a year after she married; and, I think, left a baby; but I was ill and unhappy just then myself, and selfishly taken up with my own affairs; so I never made any inquiries.'

'Did you say the daughter was about my age?'

'Yes; I fancy so.'

'Then it must have been just when I was born?'

'Yes; that year.'

'And you were unhappy?'

'Till I had you, my darling, not after that.'

'What was her name?'

'That I cannot recollect, even if I ever heard. But Mr Freestone, our lawyer, can tell us.'

'And what do you want me to do, dearest mother?'

'To find out about her, and be kind to her, for I cannot help thinking it is a girl. It has been very remiss in me to have let all these years go by without trying to find her; but at first it vexed your father to make any allusion to it; and then, never hearing anything of them, the whole matter seemed to pass away from my mind. It was very wrong of me; but, Mona, you will do your best to make up for my neglect. I have been thinking, too, that anything I have to leave should go to her. You will not want it, my darling; but if they are poor, it might be acceptable to them.—And when you have seen Mr Freestone, and found out about the girl, I shall get him to come down to Beechfield and add a codicil to my will.'

The girl's arms were round her mother's neck with the terror that is not confined only to the ignorant and superstitious, but comes to many at the thought of providing against the sad but certain emergency of death; for though setting the house in order does not hasten the coming of that solemn guest, it makes us listen for his chariot wheels.

So Pomona threw her young arms round Lady Lester's neck, entreating her not to talk of such things; there was plenty of time to think of it—years in which they might find out this young unknown cousin, and help and be kind to her.

'Give her as much as you like, but don't talk of leaving it to her.'

And then, with sudden remorse at the wan,

faint look in her mother's face, she laid her tenderly back on her pillows, dashing away the hot tears that had welled up, and smothering the impulsive words of love and protest against dreary anticipations on her lips.

'I will do just what you wish, dearest—only now you must rest and be quite quiet, if you are to be fit for the journey to Beechfield.'

THE HIGHER ATMOSPHERE.

On the 19th of September 1783, a sheep, a cock, and a duck were carried in a free balloon to a height of fifteen hundred feet. They reached the ground again without injury, except that the unfortunate rooster had his wing broken by a kick bestowed upon him by his four-footed companion during the excitement of embarkation. These were the first aerial voyagers.

The first human traveller through the air was M. François Pilâtre de Rozier, who gained the distinction, in the middle of the following month, by mounting in a free balloon. Although the honour of first using this new power in the cause of science must go to France, yet it was from experiments conducted in England that the most satisfactory results were obtained. In 1859 the British Association for the Advancement of Science met at Aberdeen, and appointed a Committee to organise the steps necessary for taking a series of experiments in the upper strata of the atmosphere by means of balloon ascents. Nothing, however, was done for two years, and then at Manchester the question was revived, and the splendid ascents by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell were the result. Four of these took place from Wolverhampton, and during one of them the intrepid voyagers attained an elevation of over seven miles. This is the highest point that has been, or probably will be, reached. The explorers were rendered unconscious by the great cold and the extreme rarity of the air; and no doubt the thirty-seven thousand feet to which they ascended marks the approximate limit beyond which it is impossible for human beings to exist even during the short limit of a balloon voyage.

Man is especially adapted to dwell at the bottom of the great aerial ocean that envelops the earth. He is intended to support an atmospheric pressure of about fifteen pounds on the square inch, and the outward pressure from within is so arranged by nature that equilibrium is maintained. But if he chooses to reduce this normal pressure by climbing a high mountain, for example, bodily distress must follow. The outward pressure of the bodily fluids have then little save the skin to keep them in check, and this they break through where it is weakest, and distressing bleeding is the result. The lungs, though painfully distended, cannot obtain a sufficient supply of the life-giving oxygen, and the slightest bodily exertion is attended with pain and difficulty. From the necessity of this exertion, the balloonist is to a great extent exempt; but though he may husband his vital resources as carefully as possible, the probability is that no human being can ascend above the height reached by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell, and live.

Modern science, however, by providing self-reg-

istering instruments that are but little removed from absolute perfection, precludes the necessity of any life-risk being incurred in ascertaining the temperature and pressure of that section of the higher atmosphere reachable by a balloon. By means of these and a specially constructed balloon, it has been found possible to obtain accurate information at the height of ten miles. To M. Hermite belongs the credit of the most recent explorations in this direction. A small balloon was constructed capable of carrying apparatus weighing some thirty-five or forty pounds. The material employed was triple gold-beater's skin highly varnished. Among the self-registering instruments which formed the freight of the balloon was a mechanism which distributed inquiry cards. It was hoped by means of these to trace exactly the course followed by the balloon in its aerial flight. This ingenious contrivance was worked by a fuse, which unfortunately died out when the rarer strata of air were encountered, no doubt through lack of oxygen.

When everything was ready, the captive balloon was released, and it immediately shot upwards with a velocity of eighty feet per second, and remained in sight for forty-five minutes. The lowest pressure registered was less than one-seventh of an atmosphere, and this would give an approximate elevation of over ten miles. The self-registering thermometer showed a minimum temperature of -51° Centigrade or 92° Fahrenheit below the freezing-point of water. At this time the balloon was just upon eight miles high. The self-registering barometer and thermometer now ceased to record, probably owing to the ink becoming frozen. When a further ascent of two miles had been made, they resumed duty, however, the direct heat of the sun having probably thawed the recording ink. The temperature rose to -21° Centigrade or 38° Fahrenheit lower than the freezing-point of water. This experiment confirms previous experience as to the alternation of layers of atmosphere of irregularly varying temperatures. It will thus be seen that there is little difficulty in obtaining reliable data as to atmospheric pressure and temperature up to a height of ten miles. The use of aluminium for the metallic portion of the instruments ensures that no superfluous weight shall be carried.

In the experiment we have described, the balloon and its freight weighed about fifty-five or sixty pounds, and everything was done to conduce to lightness without sacrificing strength. To obtain records at a height of fifteen or twenty miles is a problem which, though capable of solution, will entail an enormous expense. To begin with—the balloon, instead of being six yards in diameter, will have to be enormously larger, as also will the enclosing bamboo cage, if that method of protecting it is resorted to. All this means an increased weight, and of course reduces the advantage gained by increasing the magnitude of the balloon. At the same time, it is quite possible that the ever-increasing interest which is taken in the study of storms and weather problems may lead to observations being more frequently taken by balloons at moderate heights. Many students of weather-lore assert that the key to much that is puzzling in meteorological phenomena is to be found in the air-movements above the currents at the earth's surface. So that it is

possible that, along with the provision of high-level observatories, balloons may be requisitioned to a greater extent than they are at present in obtaining the data necessary to successful weather forecasting. But, after all, twenty miles is but a fraction of the distance to which the atmospheric envelope reaches. The fleecy bands of delicate cirrus cloud have been described by aerial navigators as being apparently as far removed when viewed at an elevation of five miles as they appear from the surface of the earth. The beautiful phenomena of the twilight proves that the atmosphere extends to a distance of forty-five miles from the earth. It is hardly possible to form any estimate of the extreme rarity of the air at this elevation. At such a distance from the earth, the attractive influence is weak; so that the existent air may be said to do no more than feebly dilute the ubiquitous ether which our theories of the transmission of light and heat conceive to fill all space.

The weight of the atmosphere is such that it would take 1,200,000 to equal the weight of the earth itself. At a height of three and a half miles the belt of atmosphere ascended through weighs one-half of the whole. At twice the elevation the barometer stands at between six and seven inches; while, as we have already seen, the atmosphere above the balloon floating at a height of ten miles, only exerted a pressure equal to one-seventh of that indicated at the sea-level. At a height of thirty-five miles, the outer-lying layer of air weighs only one-thousandth as much as the whole atmosphere. At twice this distance from the earth's surface, air that occupied at the sea-level a single cubic foot, would be expanded to fill a space one million times as great. Probably, air in an extremely attenuated condition exists to a distance of two hundred miles from the surface of the earth. There must be some line of demarcation approached by slight gradations of atmospheric intensity, beyond which there is absolutely no air whatever. The geographical position of this line it is impossible to locate; but it is comparatively easy to determine the conditions that must obtain there. Air, of course, follows the general law of gases, so that its particles repel each other: the earth, too, as it spins round on its axis tends to throw off its atmospheric encasement and scatter it into space. The force which binds the aerial mass to us is the earth's gravity—the attraction of gravitation, as it is commonly designated. When the point is reached where this force is equal to the two forces which tend to drive the air away from us, it is certain that there can be no air beyond. Where this point is situated, however, is another matter, for the simple reason, as the song puts it, that 'there's no one that knows.'

The investigations that have been made of late years into the question of meteorites, shooting-stars, &c., have thrown considerable light upon the question of the extent of our atmosphere. It is well known that what is commonly called a shooting-star is one of immense numbers of bodies which revolve round the sun. These our earth is continually encountering, though at certain seasons in much greater numbers than others. Altogether, it is estimated that an average of four hundred millions of these bodies come within the earth's influence daily. When fairly within the

sphere of the earth's attraction, they begin to fall rapidly towards us; and when they enter our atmosphere, the friction with the particles of air heats them to such an extent that they become luminous. This luminosity increases with the heat until, as it generally happens, the meteor is reduced to vapour, and disappears in a 'blaze of glory.' Now, it is clear that as these bodies are invisible until the atmosphere is entered, their light is due to the heat developed by friction. Consequently, if the astronomer can determine their distance from the earth when first they become visible, we are justified in assuming that the atmosphere extends to that distance. In the November meteor shower, in which the falling bodies are very small, it is estimated that they begin to burn at a height of seventy-five or eighty miles, so that we have proof positive that our atmosphere, dry and attenuated as it must there be, makes its influence very decidedly felt at that distance.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

By ERNEST FAVENC, Author of *The Last of Six*, &c.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

SUNRISE on the western plains of Queensland during the tropical summer-time has a peculiar character of its own. Probably the night has been calm and sultry; but as the hour of daylight approaches, light puffs of warm wind come sighing across the almost treeless expanse. There is no hesitation about the dawn, no long, lingering half-light. A streak of gray brightens in the east, widening quickly, and turning a soft, rosy pink; it blots out all the host of stars of lesser magnitude. Soon, none save the brightest are visible. The brilliant triple-jewelled belt of Orion, most perfect of all constellations; the Cross of the South lying horizontally near the earth, with the two steadfast pointers above; and, glorious over all, in pure, lustrous splendour, the Star of the Morning, surrounded with the opal tints of the fast-brightening eastern sky.

The far-stretching plain seems now to bound into sudden distinctiveness of detail, and on the horizon a tremulous shimmering is visible, foretelling another day of heat. The sun's upper limb appears, large, red, and glowing, and all the stars die out. Angrily it looms through the quivering haze, mounts until three parts of the disc is visible, then, seemingly, gives a sudden bound of two or three degrees above the horizon, and day has commenced.

A summer's day in December! For twelve unclouded hours the orb of fire will relentlessly blast, and scorch, and wither all the surviving vegetation that the past months have spared. Soon the cattle who have been feeding out in the open country during the night-time will come slowly stringing along in single file, to seek the shelter of the trees that fringe the banks of the river. Here, in such scanty shade as the vertical sun allows the thinly foliaged trees to afford, they will ruminate all day until the cooler hours of night again tempt them forth to feed. The river is no rushing, babbling stream; for the most part the bed is dry, sandy, or shingly, the water-holes being often miles apart. For the

three months of the wet season it is a deep uncrossable torrent; for the remaining nine, a string of isolated pools.

On the bank of such a river, opposite the end of one of these pools, two men are saddling their horses. There has been a prolonged drought, and what little grass remains looks dry and white; the horses show signs of having been ridden hard the day before, and are pinched about the flanks, as if they had not made a satisfactory meal during the night. The fire, beside which the men have slept, is still smouldering, and their tin quart pots full of tea are standing near it. The saddles put on, the two men hitch their bridles on to a neighbouring sapling, and sit down to discuss a primitive breakfast of salt beef and bread, washed down with tea sweetened with coarse brown sugar. Both are dressed in collarless Crimean shirts, moleskin trousers, and leggings; both wear the soft felt hat that has superseded the once typical cabbage-tree, and carry revolvers in their belts, for it is the early days of the seventies, and this is a newly settled pioneer cattle station, and as yet the natives are still dangerous. Although one is the owner of the station, and the other his stockman, no distinction is visible either in dress or appearance. They have been on a long excursion down the river after some truant stock, and have camped for the night to recruit their tired horses.

Their hasty meal finished, they are about to mount and start, when a noise on the opposite side of the river attracts their attention. A man, on foot, comes limping painfully down the bank, and on reaching the water's edge, throws himself down on the sand, and plunging his face in the pool, drinks thirstily and greedily.

'Who can that be?' mutters the elder of the two men, for the apparition is unexpected. They silently watch the new-comer until he lifts his head after his deep draught; then one of them shouts to him. The stranger has been too eager to attain the life-saving water to notice them; but at the sound of the voice he now starts and looks up, then eagerly waving his hand, commences to cross the dry bed of the river. When he reaches the bank, he wearily surmounts it, and throws himself down with a sigh of relief.

'You seem to have had a bad time of it,' says the man who had spoken before.—'Better put a quart on, Jim,' he goes on, nodding to his companion, who puts the fire together, unbuckles the quart pot hanging by a short strap from his saddle, and goes down the bank to fill it.

The tired man recovers himself somewhat, and answers faintly: 'Yes; I am just about done.' He certainly looks it. His sun-scorched face and arms are lean and gaunt with famine; his eyes are still bright and feverish with thirst; and his belt is drawn tightly round his pinched waist. In his hand he still holds a canvas water-bag, the dry collapsed sides of which evince that it is long since it has held water. Above all, he has, in his fixed gaze and nervous manner, the indescribable appearance that besets a man after a long, solitary struggle for life.

'Where have you sprung from?' says his interrogator, after a pause, during which Jim, who has returned, places the quart pot on the rekindled fire, and produces what remnants of their meal are left.

'I started out six months ago with the Pattens, the two brothers, to look for new country; there were four of us, accounting the black boy.'

'Your name is Burgess, then, I suppose? We imagined you must have made in for the Overland Telegraph Line, as you were so long away.'

'We should have done better if we had,' returns the stranger; 'as it is, I am the only one left.'

'Is it possible? How did you come to grief?'

'We lost a number of our horses on a patch of poison-plant country—that was the first misfortune. Then no rain fell all the time we were away; and coming back, we got on to a dry stage, and found that the water-hole we had depended on had been dry for weeks. The elder Patten and all the remainder of the horses died of thirst; but the younger one, the black boy, and I, managed to reach water in the Herbert River. There, the blacks got on to us; and as we had abandoned nearly all our ammunition, we had no show at all. The boy was killed, and young Patten so badly wounded that he died two days afterwards. That was more than a fortnight ago; and I have been crawling on ever since.'

'How far did you manage to get out?'

'A long way across the South Australian border. It was coming back all the trouble overtook us.'

By this time the quart pot was boiling, the tea made; and the famished man attacked the food voraciously.

'It is ten good miles to the station,' said Hopwood, the owner. 'Supposing you rest here, and I will send a man and a spare horse down, for you to ride up.'

The other nodded a weary assent. 'Leave me your pipe and some tobacco,' he said, 'and I shall be all right.'

The two men mounted and rode away; and the rescued man, after lighting the pipe with an ember from the fire, lay under the shade of a tree enjoying the welcome luxury. His smoke finished, he rose, and looked around on the lifeless plain. No living object was visible. Putting his hand in the bosom of his shirt he drew forth some folded papers and a small note-book; then seating himself in the best available shade, with his back against a tree, he commenced to write in the note-book with the small leaden pencil appertaining to it. He wrote slowly, like a man unaccustomed to use a pen much, and it was more than an hour before his task was completed; then he leaned back against the tree, lost in thought. The place where he was had evidently on many occasions been used for camping purposes; several empty tins that had formerly contained preserved meats or fish were lying about. Rising, he picked up an empty salmon tin, and after tearing a blank sheet out of the note-book, placed the book and the other papers inside. Next he scraped the ashes of the fire away, and on the site it had occupied dug a small hole with a stick in the sandy soil. In this hole he placed the tin with the papers; and having filled it up again, rekindled the fire over the place, thus hiding all traces of what he had done. He looked carefully at the different trees, many of which were marked with initials rudely cut with knives or tomahawks; these he noted down on the blank sheet

he had retained, then stepped the number of paces from the fire to the nearest tree and put that down. He folded the paper up and put it in his trouser pocket, threw the tiny pencil on the fire, and laid himself down once more under the tree to await the coming relief.

All the time he had been occupied, his face had worn a nervous, suspicious look; and several times he had glanced stealthily around, as though even in that solitude he feared that he was watched. This look left his face as he threw the pencil in the fire, and he quickly fell into a profound, untroubled sleep. He was a young man, with a simple, honest face, though somewhat undecided and weak—a man who gave you the idea that while he had plenty of physical courage and tenacity, he could be dominated by a stronger will and intellect.

About the middle of the afternoon, Jim Turner, the stockman, appeared, leading a spare horse; and the pair were soon on their way to the station.

The homestead, called Bendabar, which they reached just before dark, consisted of a couple of huts with mud walls and thatched roofs and verandas; and a rude stockyard and milking-yard.

Burgess was made as comfortable as circumstances permitted, and in a week or two had fairly recovered from his privations, and was well enough to travel east to Rockhampton and take steamer to the southern colony where his home was.

The story he retold with more detail was substantially the same as that he first related to Hopwood. Naturally, it found its way into the principal Australian newspapers; and after exciting the usual comment, died a natural death.

Hopwood received one letter from Burgess, notifying his safe arrival, returning the money advanced for his expenses, and thanking him for the assistance rendered.

Ten years have passed, and the cattle station that was is now a well-known sheep station; a comfortable house and all the necessary out-buildings have long replaced the primitive mud huts, and miles of wire-fencing radiate in all directions. The wave of settlement has swept on to the westward for hundreds of miles, and the solitude that witnessed the fate of the Pattens has been stocked and settled.

Only one evidence of the tragedy has come to light. The bones of the horses that perished on the poison-patch have been found; but no trace of human remains has been forthcoming. Bendabar, where Burgess arrived, had been sold and resold since that event, and the occupants had changed several times, so that the story of the man's rescue was now only a hearsay tradition.

One evening a stranger rode up to the homestead and requested an interview with the manager. After presenting a letter of introduction from the firm that owned the station, he briefly stated his business. His name was Patten; he was a younger brother of the men who had perished ten years before; he had lately received a letter from Burgess, not long dead, which letter was only to be forwarded after Burgess's death, informing Patten that the writer had buried

certain papers on the spot where Hopwood had picked him up, giving him marks and indications how to find the place, and winding up with a mysterious intimation that Patten did not just then specify. 'Can you show me the place, Mr Owen?' said the visitor in conclusion.

'I know the place, roughly speaking,' replied the manager. 'It still goes by the name of "Burgess's Relief;" but without Hopwood or Turner it would be hard to find the exact spot. The last big flood altered the position of the water-holes a good deal.'

'Burgess says in his letter that it had been often used for a camping-ground, and that several of the trees round about were marked with initials, of which he encloses a list.'

'Unfortunately for your purpose, we have used a good deal of timber from that part, and ten to one these marked trees have been cut down. However, I will drive you down to-morrow morning, and we will have a look.'

Early the following day, Owen and his guest drove down to the place. 'This,' said the manager as they pulled up, 'is the place known as Burgess's Relief; but the exact spot I cannot indicate. This used to be the end of the water-hole, so I should say it was somewhere about here. As you can see, the water now extends nearly half a mile farther.'

Patten took out a piece of paper from his pocket, and read: 'Five paces up the river from a gum-tree much marked; the initials A. F. H. over J. L. facing "the plant." Another gum-tree farther down, with R. O. and M. H. marked on it; and up the river a coolibah tree with a cross on it.'

'We had better turn the horses out and have a systematic search,' said Owen; 'that coolibah tree is the best clue, as it is not likely to have been cut down.'

The horses were unharnessed and hobbled out, and the two men went opposite ways up and down the river, examining all the trees. They returned and exchanged reports of their ill success.

'Without either Hopwood or Jim Turner, I am afraid I have not much chance,' remarked Patten.

'Did you make any inquiries about them?'

'Yes, as I came here. Hopwood is in New Zealand. Turner was last heard of three years ago, going out to the Northern Territory with a mob of travelling cattle.'

'Advertise in the leading papers.'

'That will be best, I think, and quickest.'

'How were the things buried?'

'In an old salmon tin; and that reminds me that Burgess said there were many lying about.'

'There are any amount of empty tins lying about now, for the splitters have camped all up and down this bank.—What was his reason for burying the papers?'

'That I am not at liberty to relate; but'—Patten went on, as if to make up for the abruptness of this answer: 'I may as well tell you that the two relatives of mine who were lost were only half-brothers, although I find they were regarded as brothers here. The youngest was my elder, and my own brother; the other, who was six years the senior, was our half-brother.'

Whether it was fancy or not, Owen could not decide, but he imagined there was a certain ring of dislike in his companion's voice as he spoke of this half-brother.

They caught and harnessed up the horses, and were about starting, when Patten said suddenly, and as though he had been thinking the matter over: 'I may as well trust you, if I ask you to keep it to yourself. I must find those papers, for I have reason to suspect foul-play, and the truth lies in them.'

'The truth of what?' said Owen, in surprise.

'How my brother died,' returned Patten.

'Did Burgess murder him?'

'No; but he knew who did. He told some of the truth, but not all the truth: my brother's wounds were not inflicted by the natives.'

'But if Burgess did not do it, who did? Your half-brother died of thirst beforehand.'

'Did he?' said Patten, as he stepped into the buggy. 'I have a strong belief that he is as much alive as you and I are now.'

THE STORY OF A PALACE.

STRANGE have been the vicissitudes of the famous building which is henceforth to be the home of the Royal United Service Institution. Originally a Royal Banqueting House, it degenerated at odd times into an arena for the sale of pictures by auction. Next, the stately chamber became sanctified as the Chapel Royal, Whitehall; now it is again secularised for the purposes of a Naval and Military Museum.

There is no building in London more sentimentally and historically connected with the life of the nation. Its varied fortunes are inseparably bound up with the eventful story of the Palace of Whitehall. How the name Whitehall originated, nobody seems able to tell with any certainty. Philip II., in a marginal note to a despatch, says: 'There is a park between it [the Palace of St James's] and the Palace called Hlytal; but why it is so called, I am sure I don't know.' One old writer points out that Whitehall was a name sometimes given by our ancestors to the festive room of their habitations. But the place did not always bear that name; it used to be called York House. This arose from the fact that the Blackfriars or Dominican monks in the thirteenth century sold the site to the then Archbishop of York for his town residence; and he bequeathed it to his successors in that dignity. Here Wolsey held brilliant state. At the height of the wily Cardinal's affluence and luxury, he reared, in the words of an old statute, 'many and distinct, beautiful and costly lodgings, buildings, and mansions; laid out a park environed with brick and stone; and devised and ordained many and singular commodious things, pleasures and other necessities, apt and convenient to so noble a prince, for his singular comfort, pastime, and solace.' On Wolsey's disgrace in 1530, the property passed into the possession of his master, Henry VIII., and changed its name. This is referred to by Shakespeare in the lines:

You must no more call it York-place, that's past;
For, since the Cardinal fell, that title's lost;
It's now the king's, and call'd Whitehall.

Under the new regime the Palace was enlarged and beautified; but it was not until the time of James I. that there was any idea of replacing it by still more ambitious designs. Towards the close of that reign, the famous architect, Inigo Jones, prepared elaborate plans. His scheme was a stupendous one, and altogether beyond the means then available to royalty. It would have covered twenty-four acres; whereas Hampton Court Palace occupies but eight or nine acres, and St James's Palace only four. Old Whitehall had occupied a large space of ground, having one front towards the Thames, and another facing St James's Park, intersected by a public thoroughfare from Charing Cross to Westminster, crossed by two gates. The Palace had a succession of galleries and courts, a chapel, a tennis court, a cockpit, and a banquetting room. The last-named feature was burned down in 1618; and the new Banqueting House, commenced in the following year, was the only portion of Inigo Jones's design ever carried out. It was completed in 1622 at a cost of about fifteen thousand pounds. As Surveyor-general, Jones had for salary eight shillings and fourpence per day, with an allowance of four pounds a year for rent, besides the wage of a clerk and some incidental expenses.

The ceiling of the hall is lined with colossal pictures representing the apotheosis of James I., painted by Rubens in 1635, at a cost of about three thousand pounds. Two years previously the Banqueting House had been the scene of a famous masque and anti-masque, for the performance of which the services of the best English and continental musicians of the day, with the richest costumes and accessories, were secured. In the days preceding the Civil War, the hall was often used for similar revelry. Although erected for purposes of feasting and pleasure, it is mainly associated in the popular mind with one of the most tragic episodes in the history of a stirring time, for it was through one of its front windows that King Charles I. was led forth to execution in 1649. It was a bitter morning in January, and, we are told, he put on two shirts, so that the cold weather should by no chance cause His Majesty to shiver. An unknown headsmen, with his countenance concealed by a crape visor, waited outside upon the scaffold, where the block was ready for the ill-fated monarch. The warrant decreed that he should be beheaded in the open street before Whitehall—that is, opposite the main entrance to what is now known as the Horse Guards.

In March 1657 the Speaker, at the head of the whole House of Commons, repaired to the Banqueting House to present to the Lord Protector the humble petition and advice of the House. Cromwell, attended by the officers of State, went there to receive them, listened to the address of the Speaker, and promised an early reply. The 'humble advice' was the proffer of the crown. A reply came in writing on April 3d, gratefully declining the regal honour. To the same hall, four years earlier, Cromwell had returned in State from the Chancery Court, where he had received the Great Seal and listened to the reading of the Parchment reciting the powers with which His Excellency was invested.

As the last dread moments of the late king were connected with the Banqueting House, so

the first hours of the reign of Charles II., so far as concerned his public appearances, were also associated with it, for on his arrival in London he went there to receive both Houses of Parliament. Through the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker, they conveyed their felicitations to His Majesty, and received from him those assurances of future conduct which were so soon forgotten. Pepys tells us it was in the same hall that, on the 23d of June, the king touched certain poor people as a cure for the king's evil, after they had waited all the morning in the rain. The quaint diarist did not himself remain long enough on that occasion to witness the ceremony, as he records having seen it for the first time in April 1661. He says that 'Charles did it with great gravity,' and adds, 'It seemed to me to be an ugly task, yet a simple one.'

It was from the top of the Banqueting House, in August 1662, that Pepys saw the return to London of the king and his wife from their honeymoon at Hampton Court. Sometimes the tide rose so high at Whitehall as to flood the kitchens of the palace. Pepys illustrates this by a curious story of the Countess of Castlemaine, when the king was to sup with her, soon after the birth of her son the Duke of Grafton. The cook came and told the imperious lady that the water had flooded the kitchen, and that the beef for supper could not be roasted. 'Zounds!' replied the Countess, 'you may set the house on fire, but the beef *shall* be roasted.'

A still more curious picture of the water rising at Whitehall is contained in a speech of Charles II. to the House of Commons in the Banqueting House at Whitehall on March 1, 1661. 'The mention of my wife's arrival,' said the king, 'puts me in mind to desire you to put that compliment upon her that her entrance into the town may be with more decency than the way will now suffer it to be; and for that purpose, I pray you would quickly pass such laws as are before you in order to the mending of the way, and that she may not find Whitehall surrounded with water.' Lord Dorset alludes to this periodical inundation in his well-known song, 'To all you Ladies now on Land':

The king with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than o'er they used of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall-stairs.
With a fa la, la, la, la.

In February 1688 both Houses of the Convention waited in full strength upon the Prince and Princess of Orange in the Banqueting House to offer them the crown. The Prince replied on behalf of the Princess and himself, accepting the offer. The same day William and Mary were publicly proclaimed King and Queen. It was in their reign that a great part of Whitehall Palace was burned down through the neglect of a Dutchwoman, who had left some linen to dry before a fire in Colonel Stanley's rooms. The fire raged for seventeen hours, and about one hundred and fifty houses were consumed, extending to the water-side. The Banqueting House happily escaped injury, as it again did in 1698, when most of the remainder of the Palace was destroyed. This second fire was caused by the carelessness of

a maid-servant, who, about eight o'clock at night, to save the labour of cutting a candle from a pound, burned it off, and threw the rest aside before the flame was out. It was in the Banqueting House that Prince George of Denmark was married, on the 28th of July 1683, to the Princess Anne. Evelyn mentions under date June 1693, that in the same room there took place a great auction of pictures, including many specimens of Van Dyck and Rubens, the property of Lord Melford. Ten years previously, the hall had been put to a similar use. It was then, by the king's permission, employed as a saleroom for the disposal of pictures lately belonging to Sir Peter Lely. Queen Anne permitted Sir John Vanbrugh to build from the ruins of Whitehall the inadequate premises in which the Royal United Service Institution has hitherto been located. Its style, or rather want of style, excited the scorn of Swift, as expressed in the lines:

One asks the watermen hard by
Where may the poet's palace lie;
Another of the Thames inquires
If he has seen its gilded spires.
At length they in the rubbish spy
A thing resembling a goose-pye.

With the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, the quondam Banqueting House assumed a new rôle, for George I. converted it into a Chapel Royal. The king himself presented a rich set of plate for sacred uses. In 1723 Oliver Cromwell's grandson was married there to a daughter of Sir Robert Thornhill by the then Bishop of London. Strange to say, although the place continued to be used during many years as a chapel, both for ordinary Sunday services and on State occasions, it was never consecrated. The chapel was closed for extensive repairs in 1829, and was not reopened until 1837. In the interval, upwards of fifteen thousand pounds was spent upon it. King William IV. and Queen Adelaide attended the reopening in state, that being the last occasion on which his majesty appeared in public at divine service.

During the present reign, the Prince and Princess of Wales attended service in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on two remarkable occasions. One was immediately after their marriage, when the late Archbishop Tait officiated as Dean, the late Dean Stanley preaching the sermon. The second was on the celebration of their silver wedding, when the Archbishop of Canterbury was present, and the Bishop of Peterborough preached the sermon. Their Royal Highnesses attended with all their children, accompanied by the Crown Prince and Princess of Denmark. The eagles and colours taken from the French in the campaigns in Egypt, and also in the Peninsular War, were for a time placed in the Chapel Royal. These trophies remained above the altar until the building was closed for repairs, when they were removed to the new Military Chapel in Birdcage Walk.

On every Maundy-Thursdays—the day before Good-Friday—the Queen's eleemosynary bounty—a very ancient charity, for which silver pennies and other coins are specially minted—used to be distributed in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, by the Lord High Almoner to a number of poor and aged men and women corresponding to the years

of the sovereign's age. These royal Maundy-Thursdays gifts are now bestowed in Westminster Abbey.

The Prince and Princess of Wales attended service in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on the Sunday of Her Majesty's jubilee, accompanied by the late Emperor Frederick and the Empress (the Princess Royal of England), when the Bishop of Derry preached the sermon. The late Duchess of Cambridge often worshipped in the chapel; and in it, during the present reign, Archbishop Tait, the Bishop of Peterborough, and other prelates, received consecration.

Several of the English nobility have of late years been married there by special license. The list includes the late Marquis of Conyngham, the Marquis of Tavistock, Lord Carrington, Lord Hastings, &c.

In design and decoration, the old Banqueting House was not well suited for a Chapel Royal; and it is no longer used for ecclesiastical purposes. In November 1890, a Gazette notice permanently closed the place for divine service; and in January 1891 the building was granted by the Queen to the Council of the Royal United Service Institution. On the 6th of June in the present year the Prince of Wales opened a fashionable bazaar in aid of this new departure, and laid the foundation stone of an extra wing designed to meet the requirements of the Institution. This extension is now well advanced, and will be completed before the end of the present year. It may be assumed that the new wing will be made as far as possible to correspond in style with the historic building which it adjoins, for that remnant is the only surviving link with the past splendours of Whitehall Palace.

THE ABSENT HEART.

By GEORGE G. FARQUHAR.

TOM OSMOND had been rejected; not, indeed, by the girl herself, but, what was likely to come to much the same thing, by the girl's father. Tom had inherited a good name, and little else, from his forebears. Add to this a good education, a smiling face, a taste, not culinary, for horse-flesh, a few odd debts in various quarters, a liberal hand—when infrequent circumstance did not stay its bounty—and there you have Tom Osmond in his means, propensities, and conditions. Mr Pentreath had put *pro* and *contra* into the scale before he issued judgment, with the result that *pro* kicked the beam viciously.

'Look here, Tom,' he had said. 'I'll speak plainly to you. Though it's her father that says it, no man breathing could wish for a prettier wife than Eva—yes, I see you admit that; and I can answer for it—here the old man slapped his trousers pocket significantly—'that she'll be a fit mate in other respects. What's more, her own ambition—no, I won't call it ambition, because there's no real ambition where there's no hill-climbing in front—but her own inclination works that way.'

'She has never given me to understand that,' interposed Tom.

'Perhaps not,' Mr Pentreath went on. 'But I've studied the child, and I see her true character

developing day by day. It's as I have said, Tom. As I've her happiness and welfare to look to, I've thought over these matters beforehand.'

'You are considerate, Mr Pentreath,' Tom said, a shade of bitterness in his tones. 'My hopes, as I now see, have been too sanguine. Although Eva and I have known each other from childhood, there has never been anything approaching love-passages between us. Yet I fancied—delusively, you say—that she did care for me. You have forced this confession from me, for of my own accord I should not—at any rate, just yet—have ventured on the subject.'

'I only wanted to warn you in time, both for your sake and for hers. I think I know you sufficiently well, Tom, to feel sure that you would not wish her to act on immature impulses. You perceive I grade you higher than I would a mere adventurer.'

'And your decision is final?' asked Tom, a slight flush overcasting his face.

'Circumstances being as they are, I am afraid I must say "Yes" to that.'

'And if circumstances altered? For instance, if I were rich instead of poor, should I then be considered worthy of her?'

'Well, then—um!' Mr Pentreath hesitated, eyeing his companion askance. 'But we'd better not consider a hypothetical case. I like you, Tom—I always did—but I've responsibilities and duties that must come before predilection—What!—are you off? I'm sorry I had to be so outspoken; but you must see it was wisest—for the best.—Good-night, Tom.'

Thus was Tom Osmond repudiated by the father before he had dared to lay bare his mind to the daughter.

The summer fast fled by; already the waning season had blotched tree and hedgerow with deeper tints. On the undulating downs above Combe Travis, frequent tussocks of long coarse grass flecked with brown patches the short, springy turf; the sweet scent of heath and wild thyme travelled on the breeze; and the brake waved cool and green as ever. Gray turrets of weather-stained granite—gaunt defences—edged the downs; in their niches grew wax-like bunches of bleached and parched sea-thrift. To seaward, the lazy waters slept unruffled. The ships making for the entrance to the Sound lay becalmed, their spread sails flapping idly. Only the swift-moving steamers, trailing lengthening clouds of thick reek across the horizon, disturbed with incongruous energy the quiet and repose of the day.

Over the hillock, close under the pinnacled cliffs, stood Eva Pentreath and Tom Osmond. It was not a clandestine meeting, as Tom had not been forbidden Eva's society. Mr Pentreath's prudence and insight into human nature would not permit him to go to that extreme. No; they met as a matter of course; it was part of their existence, part of the routine of life with them. The downs had been their rendezvous in childhood; and after Tom left college, the companionship had been renewed, naturally and mutually, as though it had never been intermitted.

Neither had spoken for some time. Eva's ringing laugh and sunny glances were held in abeyance. She stood there—a slight, girlish figure—her head downbent, so that the broad-brimmed hat hid the pretty face beneath it.

Presently, she looked up. For a moment, her eyes wandered from the little town, snuggled down by the cove, to the distant Tor, and finally rested upon the chalk-white road that wound in the coast curve towards Plymouth.

'I can scarcely bring myself to believe it,' she said at length. 'Have you really made up your mind to go?'

'Yes,' replied Tom. 'I have engaged a berth on the "Mercia," which sails for Melbourne on Friday. I only regret I didn't accept my uncle's offer when it was held out to me years ago. You see, I've done no good here; and I might have settled down to work, and have been of some use out there.'

'I'm sorry, Tom,' Eva said, in low tones. 'How we shall miss you!'

'Will you miss me?' asked Tom, taken aback at his own boldness.

'Of course I shall. No more walks together; no more delightful scamperings over the moor; no more—Why, I shall be dreadfully dull without you.'

'Yes, at first, perhaps; it will be quieter—for—you,' replied the young fellow, the light dying from his eyes.

'But you will come back?' Eva put in quickly.

'You are not going away for ever?'

'I hope not,' Tom said sadly. 'I may be away two years, five years, ten years; I don't know how long. But I shall come back, Eva—if there's anything to come back for.' He looked at her keenly.

She dropped her head again, fumbling with the sprig of heather in her hands; but she did not reply.

'You will have changed greatly by that time,' Tom hazarded, after the pause.

'Certainly, I shall. I shall be older, perhaps stouter, and most assuredly uglier,' Eva answered, the old smile coming into her face once more.—'Don't contradict! You know how I detest a flatterer.—And now, I must go back home, Tom. You will call on father to-night? Then both he and I will wish you good luck and a speedy return.'

Before the week was ended, Tom Osmond had left England.

From time to time Mr Pentreath had tidings from him. Eva was always allowed to read the letters, the more readily as they contained nothing that her father cared to suppress. They dealt exclusively with Tom's goings and comings, his life and vicissitudes. We rummage through the details to pick out the material points. The new life was laborious and trying; but Tom made light of hardships; his constitution was sound and vigorous, his thwews of steel. On reaching the up-country 'station' of his relative, he had successively been herder, stockman, and shearer, taking the rough with the smooth—and precious little smooth there was, too—till, some eighteen months after his arrival in the colony, he had been promoted to the overseership. In this capacity he had practically sole control and management of the extensive 'run,' his uncle being now too old to take an active share in the concern; while his cousin—a young fellow of about Tom's own age—was physically unfitted for the more arduous duties of supervision. Tom's later letters dwelt upon the varying health

of his uncle, and hinted—hinted vaguely only—at the possibility of the ranch being handed over to the two younger men in partnership. It may as well be known in this place that Tom never became a partner.

In the meantime, one or two events which it is necessary to chronicle had come to pass in Combe Travis. In the first place, Sir Everard Malton, having taken a lease of Combe Park, had moved into residence there; in the next place, he and Mr Pentreath became close cronies; and in the third place, Sir Everard's son, Harold, bade fair to fill up the hiatus in Eva's content caused by Tom Osmond's departure. Before Harold Malton came, Eva was just about sick of Combe Travis—sick and bored. But now her megrims fled; her vivacity and spirits returned with something of their old abandon. The mad races over the downs, the moorland walks, the fishing and shooting excursions, were again to the fore, Harold as trusty escort.

Mr Pentreath was content to let things slide; no need to spur a willing horse. Noting with approval, he remained passive. But observant as he was, one little incident never came within his ken. It occurred after one of the aforesaid gallops. For the last half-hour Eva had felt that the avowal was in the air; with diplomatic adroitness she had so far staved it off. While riding along the narrow, high-banked lane that led homeward, however, Harold leaned over his saddle and spoke. In a jumble of words he blurted it all out.

'Harold,' Eva replied softly, 'you must have understood that I did not want you to say that.'

'But you will give me an answer?' he rejoined anxiously. 'Is there any reason why I should not have?—'

'There is a reason,' Eva interrupted. 'I will tell it you when the horses are stabled. Please, do not say anything more now.'

They rode the rest of the way in strained silence.

'Now,' Eva said, when the horses were given into the groom's charge, 'will you come with me?'

She went into the house and up the stairs. Harold followed, wondering. Stopping at one of the doors, she opened it and passed in.

'This is my sanctum—my boudoir, museum, and library, all in one.—Yes,' as Harold hesitated on the threshold—'yes, you may come in.'

The room was attractively furnished and decorated. In one corner stood an open bookcase, crammed with daintily bound volumes; and on the opposite side of the window a buhl table was covered with knick-knacks and curios that had been picked up abroad. Pinned above these gewgaws, in the middle of the table, a frame of silver filigree-work held a small photograph.

Harold waited for Eva to speak again. At length she turned round, her slight figure in its well-fitting riding habit showing darkly against the window. He could not see her face distinctly.

'I did not know how else to tell you,' she said quickly. 'It is a confidence that I cannot—I dare not—put into words. But I can trust it to your keeping.' Pointing to the photograph, she added: 'That is Tom—Mr Osmond.'

Harold walked over and inspected the likeness. 'I understand now,' he said. 'I feared this.

Once or twice I have heard Mr Osmond's name coupled with yours; but your father assured me that the rumour was without foundation. Now I understand that even Mr Pentreath does not know the truth.'

'And you do not think me unfeeling—heartless?'

'Not wittingly. I myself am solely to blame. I have been mistaken; and I will respect your secret. It is safe with me as long as it pleases you to make a secret of it.'

'We can still be good friends, Harold?'

'I hope we always shall be,' Harold rejoined. 'I beg your pardon, Eva, for what I have said, and I pledge myself not to repeat an offence that pains and grieves you.'

'Thank you, Harold. You did not know.'

To outward seeming, their intimacy continued as heretofore; but essentially there was a difference. Neither of them could well have said in what the difference consisted. Maybe a shadow fallen between them—impalpable, yet ever-present—seemed to necessitate a cold, studied courtesy on Harold's part; and on Eva's, a wary restraint, which her father construed in his own way. Maybe it was a shadow; maybe 'twasn't.

Sir Everard and his son were dining at Mr Pentreath's one evening, when the two older men became engaged in a discussion which monopolised the whole of their attention. Harold contented himself with listening; Eva, sitting opposite him, had been strangely silent all through the dinner. Happening to glance towards her, Harold saw that her eyes were fixed upon him. She dropped her gaze, a vivid flush burning her cheeks, and tried to cover her confusion by asking some trivial question. He replied in a matter-of-fact way that belied the tremulous beating of his heart.

In the drawing-room the debate waxed hotter, and to settle a disputed point it became necessary to refer to a book in the library. Harold volunteered to fetch the volume. On his way down-stairs he passed Eva's boudoir, the door of which was half open. There was a light inside. Stealthily, as if he were in the act of committing a heinous crime—as indeed he was—Harold peered in. He started violently. Then, marching boldly forward, he strode up to the built table. Tom Osmond's portrait was gone. In its stead, that of Harold himself stared out from the frame of Indian metal-work.

'My promise!' he ejaculated. 'Never to speak of that again so long as it annoys or pains her. So long! Does she not now absolve me? Would it pain her now?'

Nearly three years had gone since Tom Osmond left England, and three more months passed before his last letter reached Mr Pentreath. That gentleman read the missive from end to end in his usual thorough and methodical fashion. This done, he leaned back and ruminated.

'Uncle and cousin both dead! Tom heir to his relative's wealth and property—a quarter of a million, I've been told. A tidy sum—a tidy sum. Tom's a lucky fellow. I'm glad for the lad's sake; I always did like Tom.—But how's this he finishes his letter?—"I have almost completed the arrangement of my uncle's affairs, and I have already engaged a passage for Plymouth by the

'Vulcan.' Again I will ask you a certain question. What will be your answer?" Umph—umph! Perhaps I'd better not let Eva read this. Ah, well, well.'

Eva never did read that letter, for there and then her father tore it up and flung the shreds upon the fire.

The 'Vulcan' steamed slowly up the Sound, past the breakwater. Her passengers, thronging the deck, hungered to get ashore and greet their friends. Apart from the rest stood Tom Osmond, bronze-visaged, the lines around his mouth deeper, and perhaps harsher, but otherwise little altered from the Tom Osmond of bygone days.

'I wonder if they'll be here to meet me?' he thought.—'No; that's expecting rather too much. Still, they might; I hope *she* will. How she would have teased if she could but have seen me in my beard. Ha, ha! However, that's gone, and I flatter myself I look something like a civilised being again.—Why, there she is at the end of the quay! I'll swear that's her blue dress, and— Pshaw! What am I thinking about? She'll have cast that aside years ago.—No; that's not Eva.'

Neither that nor any other. Tom landed amid a crowd of hustling strangers. Not a friend to meet him. He knew not one, nor was he known by any. Stay; there *was* one who recognised him; it was old Bilstow, Mr Pentreath's gardener.

'If you bain't Mr Tom, I'm grievous mistook,' he said.

'Why, Bilstow,' cried Tom, 'how are you, and how are they all at Combe Travis?'

'Oh, main gay an' spruce, Mr Tom. I've just come fro' the weddin'—a fine un too—up at St Andrew's.'

'The wedding?'

'Ay; Sir Everard's son, Harold, an' Miss Eva. They've just gone to the station. They're a-goin' to spend the honeymoon in Wales som'eres.—Hear that whistle? That's their train, I'll be bound. A bonnie couple they looked an' all.—Ay, but everybody'll be glad to see you again, Mr Tom.'

Tom felt a choking sensation at his throat; his heart sank. And this was his welcome home.

OYSTER-CULTURE IN FRANCE.

ARCACHON, in the department of the Gironde, is a favourite summer watering-place for the Bordelais, and a winter health resort for the whole of France. But apart altogether from its reputation as a health resort, it is famous for the supply of oysters which it yields to France and to the world. The oyster industry of France is the largest of its kind in Europe, and at Arcachon it is carried on in the most scientific and systematic manner. It was about the middle of the present century that the work of oyster-rearing was commenced here, a work which to-day gives employment to thousands of people, men and women, in the villages which surround the Bassin. The Bassin of Arcachon, with a circumference of about sixty miles, from its physical formation is peculiarly favourable to the rearing of the oyster, being a bay completely protected from the storms

of the ocean by a natural breakwater of sandhills, some of the highest dunes in the world. Were the entrance from the Bay of Biscay a deep and navigable channel instead of being, as it is, dotted with shifting sandbanks, the Bassin would form a perfect natural harbour. At low-water it will be found to be covered to a large extent by sandbanks, separated by numerous and deep channels; and it is on these sandbanks, called *crassats*, that the oyster parks are formed in a manner we shall endeavour to describe.

The site of a park having been determined upon, it is divided into rectangular portions which measure forty yards by thirty, and which are called *claires*. These are separated from each other by dykes of clay a foot in height by two feet broad, strengthened by planks resting on piquets firmly fixed in the sand. Around a group of *claires* runs what is called a *blindage*, a netting of galvanised iron wire, as a protection to the oyster against its numerous enemies, among which the crab is chief; but whelks, starfishes, and boring sponges are dangerous. Many oyster-rearers from reasons of economy form a blindage of the branches of a tall and strong heather which grows abundantly in the neighbouring forest. In addition to the protection from the attacks of ravenous fishes afforded by these two systems, they also serve to retain the oysters within their limits, and prevent their being carried by seaweed or other cause from one man's park to that of his neighbour. Another plan often adopted to ensure further protection to the precious mollusc consists in the formation around the *claires* of a line of *pignons* or young pine-trees, stripped of their branches with the exception of a plume at the top. The *pignons* are three yards in height, and at high-water, with their waving plumes, act as a sort of scarecrow, or, under the circumstances, as a sort of scarecrab.

The formation of the *claires* being completed, near them are deposited several wooden frames, like cages, to hold layers of tiles of a length of eighteen inches, the frames themselves measuring two yards long by two feet broad and one yard in height. The tiles have convex and concave sides, and are at first whitened in a bath of chalk and water mixed with a little fine sand; and after being well dried in the sun, they are laid in the frames, each of which holds eight or ten rows. Here they become covered by young oysters to the number of two or three hundred per tile. This takes place during the months of May and June, for it is in May that the spawn appear in the oyster as a liquid substance of milky appearance, and render it uneatable until the month of September. This fact gives rise to the saying, that oysters should be eaten only in those months whose names contain the letter *r*.

The tiles are left thus to be washed by the tides until October, when they are removed for the delicate process of *detroquage*, a process consisting in removing each oyster from the tile in such a manner as to leave a thin and small fragment of chalk adhering to each shell. It is performed by young women, who use a knife specially manufactured for the purpose, and requires the greatest care in execution, in order that the young and fragile oyster may not be destroyed. Those surviving this operation are next passed through two riddles, the meshes of

which vary in diameter, and being thus assorted according to size, are placed in cases called *ambulances*, frames of wood two yards by one, covered with a netting of tarred wire, to permit the free circulation of the water. These *ambulances* are firmly fixed in the sand at the park by means of well-driven piquets, and are the invention of a local culturist. In the ambulance, an oyster will rapidly increase in size, and attain in a few months a diameter of one or two inches. At low-water the *ambulances* with their contents receive a good watering at the hands of the *parqueurs*, and this in addition to the covering by the tides twice daily in the natural course. After a sojourn in the ambulance for some months, until sufficiently strong for the purpose, the oysters are scattered abroad like seed in the open *claire*, where they assume a flat form, and lie for several months until the harvest.

In order to watch the progress of much of the work before described, it is by no means necessary to cross the channel to the oyster parks lying in the centre of the Bassin. The *plage* or beach at Arcachon, La Teste, and the numerous villages on the bay, is at all times dotted with the *parqueurs*, busy in the various departments of their profession. Here is a group of men and women sorting the edible oysters just brought ashore into various sizes and prices; there, another group at work, cleaning and scraping or whitening the tiles, or detaching therefrom the young shellfish, each operation in its own season. There is no mistaking 'Madame la Parquense,' dressed as she is in her red flannel knickerbockers and long boots, sometimes with legs bare, and feet in large wooden sandals for more convenient walking on the sand. The men are, as a rule, dressed in suits of blue cotton, with scarlet sash, and head covered with the popular blue *béret*. The *plage*, too, is covered with the various implements of the fishery. Piles of tiles are everywhere to be seen; *ambulances*, broken and waiting repair; groups of miscellaneous articles, as baskets, rakes, spades, wheelbarrows, and wire; bundles of *pignons* and stacks of heather, ready for transportation to the park itself.

But it is necessary to take a boat and engage a man as guide, in order to see many of the most interesting scenes connected with the industry, among them being the gathering of the edible oyster, which is judged eatable by its size, nothing under an inch and a half in diameter being allowed to be sold. This harvest takes place every day except during that period from May to September when the fish are uneatable for the reasons already mentioned. A practice fatal to oyster-culture, and one which almost always results in the destruction of beds by over-fishing, and the removal of the breeding oyster—namely, the use of the dredge in fishing—is here unknown; and that its use at Arcachon is unnecessary is one chief cause of the success with which the culture is carried on, and the dimensions to which the industry has grown. Low tide is of course the time for fishing, for then the sea recedes from the *claires*, leaving only sufficient water to cover the oysters. The method of procedure is for a number of men and women to form a line at one end of a *claire*, and work slowly to the other, each carrying a rake, which

reveals the sand-covered oyster, and a wire-basket to hold the proceeds of the fishery. On the completion of one *claire*, another is commenced. At the end of a day's work, when the incoming tide will permit its continuance no longer, the results are carried ashore, and either deposited in the floating warehouses anchored near the beach, or transported by steamboat or railway to their ultimate destination. A large quantity of the finest oysters are transferred to beds in other places, to be fattened, as this process cannot be brought to perfection in the locality.

A strict watch is kept by day and night over the parks, so that no amateur may try his hand at oyster-gathering. For this purpose are the numbers of houseboats which are to be seen dotting the bay, their white roofs shining in the sun. These contain bed and board for the guardians of the parks. On the 'Ile des Oiseaux,' in the centre of the Bassin, are cabins for the same purpose.

Though hardly the place for a successful pearl-fishery, pearls have been found in Arcachon on rare occasions. The local museum contains as a curiosity three found together in one shell some years ago. The only other occasion we know of was quite lately, when the writer himself was the lucky finder.

Great as is the number of oysters exported from Arcachon annually, it is estimated at not more than two per cent. of those born; and this is comparatively a very large proportion, due to the elaborate manner in which the industry is carried on. It has been estimated that for every oyster brought ashore from the natural beds of Germany, more than one million die. The number to which a mother-oyster gives birth is so large as to be almost incredible, and of these only a very small proportion find their way to the chalk-covered tiles placed for their reception. Many of course are destroyed in the numerous processes through which they pass during the three or four years necessary for such perfection as is attainable in the locality.

Altogether, it is an interesting industry, and one in which the picturesque abounds. A pretty sight, the return of the boats on a full tide, after a day's work, when the many sails, white and terra cotta, dot the clear blue water under a clear blue sky, with a gray line on the horizon, the distant, pine-covered sandhills.

THE 'AWETO.'

THE Rev. C. Parish, Taunton, favours us with the following note on the above:

In an interesting article on 'Some New Zealand Peculiarities' in *Chambers's Journal* for the month of September, the writer mentions, as perhaps the most remarkable of them all, an object called by the Maoris 'aweto,' of which he says 'one is uncertain whether to call it an animal or a plant.' Perhaps the following explanation of this phenomenon may be welcome to some of the many readers of the *Journal*.

The strange object—and very strange it undoubtedly is—has been long known. It is a fungus—named 'Sphaeria Robertii'—which fastens on and grows out of the dead body of a caterpillar, which caterpillar retains its form in a

dried state at the base of the vegetable growth. It is well known that many caterpillars, notably that of the Gooseberry Sawfly, after feeding on the leaves of the plant they affect, drop on to the ground, and, there burying themselves, turn into the pupa or chrysalis stage, out of which, if no misfortune happen to them, the moth, or butterfly, or winged insect, be it what it may, emerges in due season, to recommence its cycle of depredation. The caterpillar in question, which undergoes the remarkable and unusual transformation mentioned by the writer of the article, is that of a New Zealand moth, 'Hepialus virescens;' and it feeds on the leaves of the 'rata' tree ('*Metrosideros robusta*'), which is correctly described as 'a kind of flowering myrtle,' for the tree belongs to the natural order Myrtaceae. When the caterpillar falls to the ground and buries itself, there fasten on to it what, for simplicity's sake, we may call the seeds of the fungus; and finding in its body a suitable nidus—as, once more, the writer correctly supposes—they permeate its substance, killing the unfortunate caterpillar in the process, and ultimately growing out of it into the fully developed 'plant,' eight to ten inches in height. But although this takes place at the cost of the caterpillar's life, the outward form of the caterpillar is preserved in a desiccated and hardened condition. A drawing of this singular production may be seen in Lindley's 'Vegetable Kingdom,' where he treats of the Fungal Alliance.

As for the difficulty of understanding how the species is propagated, there really is none. It is to be presumed that only a certain proportion of these buried caterpillars meet with this strange fate, and that at least a sufficient number remain unattacked by the fungus parasite, free, in the regular course of nature, to become moths and reproduce their kind. It is not only in New Zealand that a fungus plays this part; in England also a species of the same genus is found, 'Sphaeria entomorphiza,' though it is extremely rare, which, as its name implies, is parasitic on animal life, being found on dead larvae and pupae of insects.

Another species, if really another ('*Sphaeria sinensis*'), is sold in China, tied up in small bundles, being esteemed for its supposed medicinal properties.

SONNET.

I GRIEVE beside thee; yet I would not weep
So loudly that I might disturb thy rest;
I would not stir the silence of thy breast,
Nor break with distant dreams thy quiet sleep.
I would not any thought of me should creep
About thy heart to hurt thee—Pain so pressed
Upon thee, that I whisper: 'This is best,
So tranquil lying after anguish deep.'
Yet I have loved thee well—and Life grows drear
And dark for me, who hold my sobbing breath,
That so I break not on thy slumber, dear;
Heart-sick by thee, my love yet lingereth,
Careful upon thy brow to drop no tear,
Lest I should draw thee from the peace of Death.

MYRA.

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THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

WHERE is it? From a pleasantly placed window in an upper storey you can look across to the Queen's London residence, Buckingham Palace. Eleven months of the year its white blinds are drawn and the standard staff is flagless. Between lies the lovely lake in the park of St James's, teeming with tribes of fancy ducks, the rarest of them originally put there by Charles the Martyr—ducks of strangely varied plumage, flying ducks, and ducks that dive deep down for two or three minutes at a time. The children are watching these aquatic capers, and throwing morsels of bread and cake to their feathered playfellows. Then the bell on the little island rings—the ducks' dinner bell—and there is a quacking race with web and with wing for the feeding-ground. A gentle breeze stirs the foliage of a thin forest, some of whose trees watched the first Charles walk to his doom in Whitehall here. And there are flower-beds ablaze with the season's blooms, and the gardeners are sweeping the walks and mowing the grass. And the sheep are browsing on the green, undisturbed by here and there a tired workman, who makes his mid-day couch among them for a brief rest. Above the red and venerable bricks of St James's Palace and Marlborough House is fashionable Piccadilly, with the towers and turrets of its Clubs and town-houses. Then house-tops and spires and domes on every hand; and far away the lazy hills of Hampstead Heath and Harrow—one of the finest views of the vastness of regal London. We are here on the pivot of the Empire, and grouped around are the hoary buildings of the Admiralty, the Horse Guards, the Treasury, the Privy-council, ending in the straggling and sternly unadorned residence of the First Minister of the Crown. A wide survey that recalls echoes of the past, and cannot fail to impress the emissaries of foreign potentates who come to discuss the affairs of nations.

As for the business of the Foreign Office, it is peculiarly different from that of other departments of Government, as it is mainly occupied

with questions of State, and not with the affairs of individuals. From such a statement it might be supposed that all the Foreign Secretary does is to make himself all roundly agreeable in good French. But that is the mere playtime of his post; and his five thousand pounds a year is not a great lure for a wealthy Marquis or Earl to devote himself to a duty which compels him to scorn delights and live laborious days. We propose to show that any such popular theory of the Minister's leisure is wrong as wrong can be.

The office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was instituted in 1782. It has always been held by some hereditary peer, with two notable exceptions—Fox in three governments, and Canning in two. It is an office of titles and orders, on the principle that its functionaries may stand on equal titular terms with the Counts and Pachas and Señors who come to us. It is always Sir Somebody Something that is selected to answer for our foreign policy in the people's chamber of our legislature. But to the business of the office. It would not be inappropriate to describe the Foreign Office as the biggest newspaper office in the world, albeit its ways are not the common hazards of journalism. It is often slow, generally sure, certainly cautious, calm, and deliberate. For so prosaic an institution to have a motto is strangely surprising; yet, as a ribbon to the dome that overhangs the grand and gilded staircase, there runs round this legend: 'Let the people praise Thee, O God; yea, let all the people praise Thee; for Thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth.' Above this stand figures symbolically representing all the tribes remote or near with whom we have diplomatic dealings. These nations we in our own way have classified as First, Second, Third, &c., rate 'Powers;' and according to these classes are fixed the rank and the styles of our State representatives. The first-class powers are France, Russia, Turkey, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Spain. To these we send Ambassadors Extraordinary. We have not yet honoured the United States of America with one

of these highest dignitaries of State. The salaries paid to these ambassadors are as follows: Austria, £8000; France, £9000; Germany, £7500; Italy, £7000; Russia, £7800; Spain, £5500; Turkey, £8000. In addition to these salaries, the ambassadors have practically small palaces to live in; and they are also allowed special funds for the purpose of entertaining the dignitaries and the officials of the various Governments to which they are accredited.

To the powers of second rank we send Envoys Extraordinary, in number seventeen. Minor states have Ministers Resident; and the complement of the Diplomatic Service is made up of *Chargés d'Affaires*, Secretaries of Embassy or of Legation or of other grades, and *Attachés*. In all they come to one hundred and fifty.

Then come the Consular Corps. In importance of rank they are arranged thus: Agents-general, Consuls-general, Consuls, Vice-consuls, Consular Agents, and Proconsuls. All told they come to about nine hundred. The methods of the Celestial and Oriental nations call for special treatment, and so to China, Japan, &c., we send about a hundred more representatives. The rear rank of our Foreign civil army is composed of a few half-dozen Chaplains.

To look at the work done by both branches of this foreign service. The diplomatic body are engaged on purely 'State' matters. The Ambassador or Minister goes direct to the Government of the country where he is, with reference to any matter which the Foreign Office asks him to investigate or to arrange. In these official communications there is a very strict etiquette preserved; only those of correspondingly equal rank may address each other in correspondence. Bearing out the old maxim of '*littera scripta manet*,' no agreement or proposal is considered definite or conclusive until it is reduced to writing. It is a fixed rule of our Foreign Office that every document, down to the merest scrap of paper, shall be carefully preserved. The head of what is called the Librarian's Department is officially described as the Keeper of the State Papers. These papers are all sorted, '*précis*-ed,' indexed, and catalogued in such a way that at even a few minutes' notice any precedent or fact may be easily fingered. The last resting-place of the State Papers is the Record Office, and it is there that the writers of history go for first-hand authentic information. As has been said, there are two branches of our foreign civil service—the Diplomatic and the Consular. The members of a legation are engaged in sending home reports of the action of foreign parliaments, conversations with their colleagues of other nations, public opinion on various questions as exhibited in the country's press, the state of trade and commerce, and so on—in short, writing intelligently the history of each week and year.

The Consular officers have to deal with more limited spheres; but each one has to send home a strict account of his doings—whatever he has had to do with British seamen and shipmasters, the relieving of the unfortunate emigrants from his own country, local topics, the statistics of the trade of his district, and anything and everything that he may in his judgment deem to be of interest or importance.

A simple addition sum shows that we have

nearly twelve hundred correspondents all over the world in direct or indirect communication with the Foreign Office. Their despatches we shall speak of presently. The 'staff' required to deal with these is generally about one hundred and fifty. Ten special foreign service messengers are engaged in taking to and fro special despatches from various courts, and their business is no light work. A good story is told of one of these who had gone for a holiday to the Riviera. He received from London the following telegram: 'You are fast and dirty; return at once.—SALISBURY.' Full of wonder, he repaired home to find that the telegraph should have told him that he was 'first on duty.' Official caligraphy must be held responsible for the libel.

It needs very little reflection to calculate what a mass of correspondence has to be dealt with here. It is no unusual thing for an ambassador to send home a thousand despatches in a year. Some of these often run to fifteen or twenty foolscap pages. As definite figures can be made to do anything, perhaps it will be better to leave the multiplication to the imagination of the reader.

Despatches of special secrecy or confidence are always sent by a special messenger, or written in cipher. The handbooks of private cipher are constantly being compiled anew. To give a specimen of a cipher despatch: it would convey little to any one not possessed of the key to receive an instruction running, 00,100, 34,346, 07,084, 55,528, and so on. Or this: 'Chessboard, potato, elegant, donum, pert, sacrilege, merciless, toga.' Yet each of these words is a sentence in itself.

On the receipt of the despatches at the Foreign Office, it is the business of the resident clerks to sort them out and to send them to the different departments. In the distribution of business we find such headings as Political, Consular, Treaty, Commercial, Sanitary, &c. Each despatch bears on its back the evidence of its history—its date of sending and of arriving, a '*précis*' of its contents, the successive suggestions of those through whose hands it passes, and lastly, the red ink '*fiat*' initial of the Secretary of State. From each of the superintending secretaries of departments are sent every day to the Secretary, wherever he may be, despatch boxes with different coloured slips of paper—white, green, or red—according to the urgency of their contents. Every single one of these comes under the personal scrutiny of the Minister. The would-be historian who haunts the Record Office will not find one that has not the initial of a Wellington, a Clarendon, a Salisbury, or a Granville. To read and to know the letters of a thousand correspondents is in itself no easy undertaking. But there is more than this. Imagine the burden of communication with the Ministers of other countries, and with the different departments of Government here—Home, Colonial, War, Treasury, &c. The foreign ambassadors come and go incessantly—Frenchman and Dutchman, Swede and Spaniard, Turk and Tartar.

The last branch of the Secretary's occupation is to attend to the petty pestering of all sorts and conditions of people at home. One wants to know the state of the law on a special point in some foreign country. Another would like

inquiries made about the will or estate of some alleged relative who is supposed to have died somewhere. A third has a claim against a foreign country for the modest amount of a million sterling, and wants it collected at once. To each of these correspondents the reply courteous must be returned. All this literature is styled 'Domestic—Various.' It is painfully domestic, and charmingly various.

We have endeavoured to give some small idea of the work of our Foreign Secretary. The man who fills the post must be unusually careful, tactful, active, and alert. And withal he may fitly be described as the Atlas of the British Empire. Perhaps that simile may furnish an apology ample enough for his sometimes slow steps. At any rate his seat in the British Cabinet is the least easy-chair of all.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.

SHAKESPEARE.

A FEW days after this, Lady Lester's carriage was making its way through the crowded thoroughfares of the City towards Dalston.

Pomona had received all the information Mr Freestone could furnish her with, which was meagre enough. Miss Lester had married a Dr Merridew, who lived then, and, according to the Directory, lived still at 37 John Street, Dalston. The old lawyer told Pomona how greatly incensed the family had been at the marriage. Sir Hugh had come into the title ten years before, and the Dowager Lady Lester lived in the dower-house with this one surviving daughter, who was a good many years younger than Sir Hugh.

'Lady Lester made a great deal of this daughter, and spoilt her, I fancy; and from all I heard, I believe she was a wilful, headstrong, young lady, who had never been crossed in her life about anything; and when she took it into her head to marry the young doctor, nothing on earth would turn her from it. Sir Hugh stormed, and the Dowager coaxed; and I was even called in to reason; but I never in all my experience knew storming or coaxing, much less reasoning, turn a woman's mind one hair's-breadth to right or left—if you'll excuse me saying so, Miss Lester. I think the Dowager Lady Lester would soon have made up her mind to the inevitable if she had lived; but, poor lady, she caught a cold on her journey from Paris, and died after a few days' illness; and this increased Sir Hugh's resentment against his sister, as he considered—and perhaps rightly—that his mother's death had been hastened by trouble of mind and worry. And then, a few months later, we heard of Mrs Merridew's death; and not long afterwards came that terrible railway accident in which the two boys lost their lives; and the next year Sir Hugh followed them. He never got over the awful shock of their loss. They all of them went within eighteen months, the Dowager, her daughter, and Sir Hugh and his two boys.—Dear!

dear! the ways of Providence are very mysterious!' And the old lawyer shook his head gloomily; and Pomona sighed, with the very mitigated sorrow one feels for long past troubles.

'My mother says she is afraid they are not very well off.'

The lawyer smiled. 'A doctor in Dalston is not generally very wealthy.'

'Have they ever asked for assistance?'

'Never through me; and I do not fancy directly to her ladyship; so I conclude they have never been in great distress.—But I recollect hearing at the time that the doctor was an independent, high-spirited, young fellow—not at all the sort to come sponging on his wife's relations.'

'I wonder what the daughter will be like?'

'Would you like me to go and find out?'

'No. Lady Lester wants me to go; and I feel so curious about it myself. You see, she must be just my age; and, of course, being first-cousins, we may be very much alike.'

'I hope she may be, my dear.' The old lawyer looked with kindly, fatherly eyes on the bright, lovely face opposite him in his dusty, old office. It was not often that anything so fair to look upon sat in that worn leather chair, with the background of dull law-books setting off her fresh beauty. 'But you must not be disappointed if you find something very different. Of course, she has been very differently brought up from yourself. I daresay her father has not been able to afford much of an education; and, of course, she has never been into any society.'

Lawyers are not as a rule imaginative; but before Mr Freestone's mind's eye arose the vision of a common-looking, ill-bred girl, dressed with shabby smartness, with uncouth or vulgarly pretentious manners.

'If you will take my advice,' he said, 'you will be a little careful how you encourage anything like intimacy. People of this sort are sometimes rather awkward to keep in their place.'

She looked up at him with a little surprise in her clear eyes. 'You see,' she said, 'she is my cousin. There is no one so near me except my mother.'

Her heart was very full of the story as she drove away from Lincoln's Inn, trying to put herself in the place of that young, self-willed aunt, dead these twenty years, who had left everything for the man she loved. Pomona had read plenty of love stories; but there was a reality about this that brought it home to her, and set her wondering whether there would ever be any man in the world who would have any power over her to compare for a moment with the least feeble movement of her mother's hand. 'I don't believe,' she told herself, 'that if I loved a man with all the concentrated love extracted out of all the three-volume novels at Mudie's, with a dozen poets thrown in, and were married to him twenty times over, that, if my mother whispered, I could help going bundling home again.—She was an only daughter, too! How could she have done it? But I don't think other girls love their mother as I do mine, and I expect that is why I never seem to care about men, as other girls do.'

But here the carriage stopped, and the footman,

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coming to the door, announced that this was the address given.

'I don't think this can be right, William,' Pomona said, looking doubtfully at the shabby little house. Sage's home did not present itself so favourably to Pomona's first gaze as it had done to Maurice's. There was no charitable fall of snow to throw its kindly mantle over defects. Next door, the dust-bin was being emptied, and a very grimy man, with a basket full of ill-smelling rubbish on his shoulder, stood on the area steps gazing at the elegant carriage drawn up just behind his cart. 'This is John Street, Dalston, Miss.—Ain't it, Thomas?' the man answered, appealing to the coachman, who, perhaps, might have more acquaintance with the low parts of London than he possessed himself. The coachman having corroborated the fact by a sideways nod, William went on: 'And this is No. 37, Miss. Shall I knock?'

She bade the man knock; and when Sarah opened the door—and again Providence had not been kind in the matter of dirty aprons and gaping seams—she herself asked if Miss Merridew were at home.

Sarah was so appalled by the grandeur of the carriage and the height of the flunkey towering above her on the door-step, that the question had to be repeated before she could close her mouth gaping with amazement, to answer that she did not know, but would go and see. And then, remembering her manners, she requested the lady to step in, and ushered her into the sitting-room, where the fumes of Irish stew lingered powerfully, and where Sage's work-basket, heaped high with stockings for darning, was the only ornament on the table.

'Miss Sage'll be up-stairs,' Sarah said, lingering for another stare at the elegant dress and gracious face.

'She might abeen the Princess of Wales and all the Royal Family to look at her, and you wouldn't never ab'lieved as she wasn't a Duchess at the very least, or an Honourable, or something fine,' Sarah described to the woman at the green-grocer's round the corner, who was her special cronny. 'And would you b'lieve it; she were only just plain Miss, same as you and me, for she says, "It's Miss Merridew I want. Will you tell her Miss Lester is here?"'

Sage had been a little out of tune all day. She was somehow more inclined to these moods nowadays, than in the old serene days before she had tasted of the cup of happiness. She could not account for this at all herself; and she took herself to task very severely for selfishness and ingratitude, for was she not the happiest, luckiest girl in all the world, and Maurice the most ideal lover girl ever had?

This morning had brought her a great 'disappointment, though she protested bravely to her father that it was not so, and that she was very glad to stop at home. Owen Ludlow was coming back to-day from Scar, and Maurice had promised to come and fetch her that afternoon and take her up to Regent's Park to tea. And now, some other engagement had turned up that would take him out of town for several days. An old uncle of his in Sussex had asked his assistance over some business with which he was occupied; and as this uncle was well off and had no family,

it might be of advantage to stand well with him. Maurice said he felt it was quite a duty to go; he could not afford to lose any chance, now that he had his little lady-love's future to think of as well as his own.

But in spite of her declaration, Dr Merridew was not quite convinced; and although she was unusually cheerful over breakfast, he fidgeted about before starting on his rounds, as if he had something on his mind. 'Look here, Sage,' he said at last: 'if I look sharp and get my visiting done, I don't see why I couldn't get an hour or so free this afternoon to go with you up to Ludlow's. It seems a pity you should be disappointed.'

'Disappointed?—you dear, old goose, disappointed? I'm not a bit. I'd a great deal rather stop at home. I've heaps to do; and it was really quite a worry to think how I could get it all done if I went off this afternoon. And besides, don't you see? if I'd set my heart on going as much as you fancy, I could take Kitty, who'd be only too pleased, and needn't drag you all the way.—But it *was* good of you to think of it—only, you see, I don't really care to go.'

'With any one else,' Dr Merridew said to himself, with a little sore feeling at the heart.—'Well, well! fathers don't count for much when lovers come on the scene.'

And Sage, when he was gone, to prove conclusively that she was not a bit disappointed, leaned her head on her hands and sobbed. Then, with that perverse tendency many have to make matters worse, and if one thing happens to upset one's peace of mind, to upset everything else, and be thoroughly miserable while we are about it, Sage filled up the day with all the most distasteful occupations ingenuity could devise—unpleasant works of supererogation in the matter of turning out cupboards and tidying remote corners; and was just drearily washing her hands preparatory to a long afternoon of darning, when Sarah came up to announce that a young lady was in the parlour 'as come in a beautiful carriage and pair; and ain't you better put on your new dress as is hanging in the cupboard in master's room, and only wish as I'd had a moment to clean myself,' Sarah said, all in one snoring breath, regretfully contemplating the state of her apron; 'and my gound all bust out under the arms, too; but I was took all of a hop, and didn't know but what it was the rates as comes that imperent with a double knock.'

'What name did she say, Sarah?'

'I think it were Miss Lester; but I ain't sure, being in a flurry like.'

Who could it be? One of Maurice's fashionable friends come to look her over and criticise her? A sudden fit of shyness and shrinking came over her. Why should she go down? In fashionable circles she knew they thought nothing of saying 'Not at home,' not reckoning it a lie because it was so generally done. Why should she not do the same, and send Sarah down with such a message? Even in her embarrassment, she laughed at the idea of Sarah's amazement at being told to do such a thing, and the way in which she would execute such an order.

Miss Lester? She seemed to recall the name; but once or twice, when Maurice had described parties he had been at and people he had met,

she had been a little stiff and indifferent, and Maurice had dropped the subject. She wished now that she had been more sympathetic and interested. It would be so stupid if this were one of Maurice's friends, and she knew nothing of her, not even her name!

All these reflections flashed through Sage's mind as she went down-stairs, not having, as Sarah suggested, made any change in her dress, not even taking off the uncompromising apron which she had assumed preparatory to her mending labours.

Pomona was standing with her back to the window, and perhaps it was this and the shyness that prevented Sage from looking calmly at her visitor, and so kept her from seeing the likeness to the picture which had struck Maurice and so many others. She was only conscious of a very tall and elegant girl, beside whom she felt small and shabby and ill at ease; and who, in return for her somewhat formal, little bow, came towards her, holding out both hands, and saying, 'It seems so very stiff to call you Miss Merridew, as we are cousins; but, do you know? I don't even know your Christian name.'

'Cousins?' Even now Sage had a dim idea that this was some relation of Maurice's treating her as kin already, by virtue of her engagement to him.

'Yes; we are cousins. My father and your mother were brother and sister.—May I kiss you, dear?' And Pomona bent and kissed Sage's cheek. 'I am Mona Lester.'

And then Sage looked up into the bright, beautiful face bending over her. 'Pomona!' she said.

'Yes, dear, Pomona.—Ah, you knew my name, though I do not know yours; but you must tell me.—Sage, is it? What a pretty name! But, Sage, you look quite startled, and no wonder, with me pouncing down on you all of a sudden. Are you always such a pale, little cousin? Do you mind my looking at you? Do you know you are ever so much more like the Lesters than I am? There are several of the portraits at Beechfield very like you, and your face seems quite familiar to me.'

'But—Pomona'—

'Yes, call me so, if you like it. But I am always called Mona at home. Pomona is such a queer name—not pretty and quaint, like Sage.'

'But the picture?'

'Oh, have you seen it? Isn't it a very curious thing there should be such a likeness? And they say the painter painted it from the memory of his dead wife.'

'It was the picture I meant when I said your name.'

'Was it? That was curious! Then you had not heard of me any more than I had of you?'

'No. I remember once father saying there was a cousin I had never seen. The others have cousins.'

'The others?'

'Yes; didn't you know that father married again. There are Kitty and Nigel and Dennis and Will.'

'Oh, Sage, isn't it odd that you and I should have to tell one another all our history, just like strangers? But I don't feel like a stranger. I

have seen your eyes looking at me from a portrait of some Lady Lester in Charles II.'s time, ever since I was a little child.'

'And I knew your face quite well too, from the picture.'

'Have you seen it often, then?'

'Oh yes. Mr Ludlow is a friend of mine, and he painted me and Kitty in it.'

'Oh, Sage, how very extraordinary!—Yes, of course, that is partly how I know your face, though it is also from the Lester portraits. It really is a succession of the most wonderful coincidences—that I should have been painted without the artist seeing me, and under my very own name, and that my cousin should be painted in the same picture.'

'Do you know,' Sage said—she was recovering a little from the bewilderment into which Pomona's coming had thrown her—'do you know I was going this very afternoon to see Mr Ludlow? He has been away from London, and comes back to-day; and I was to have gone to tea with him, only the— the friend I was going with could not go.'

At Mrs Copleston's dinner party Maurice Moore had told Pomona that he knew Sage a little, and now Sage avoided mentioning his name. Well, well! it is no use going back on every lightly spoken word, and tracing to it the first hairbreadth deviation that ultimately alters the whole course of life. How should we ever dare to speak if we could calculate all the widespread effect each word may produce?'

'Where does he live?'

'In Regent's Park. It is a long way; we generally go by omnibus.'

'Yes.' For the first time Pomona felt a little bit shy. It seemed rather showy and pretentious to mention the carriage and nice pair of horses waiting outside. She would have liked very much to go with Sage in an omnibus, and to have appeared as if such means of conveyance were quite familiar to her.

'I should so like Mr Ludlow to see you,' Sage went on. 'You know he painted Pomona from his memory of his wife who died years ago; so you must be very much like her. He was so very fond of her, even now, after all these years, he keeps her little work-basket always beside him when he paints, and he is always thinking of her. I am sure it would be a great pleasure to him to see any one so like her. But, do you know, the likeness goes off after the first? I can see quite well now that it was not drawn from you. I can see'—

'Well, what can you see?'

'That you are far more beautiful.'

'What a flattering, little cousin it is, and looking so truthful, too, with those big, Lester eyes.—Sage, I must take you some day to see my mother. She is ill, you know, or she would have come herself; and the doctor has sent her off to Beechfield because London was too much for her. I wanted dreadfully to go too; but she would not let me. You will like her so, Sage—every one does, and she will be so fond of you. I shall dress you up one day in some of the old costumes up in the chest at home, and turn up your hair over a cushion and powder it. They dressed me up once like that for a fancy ball. I thought I should look like one of the old Lester portraits;

but I didn't one bit. They can't make a Lester out of me anyhow.'

'I want Mr Ludlow to see you.'

'Well, why shouldn't I drive home that way with you this afternoon? I should like to see him to.'

And so it was settled; and Pomona went up with Sage while she changed her dress, and sat by with that simple, sunny good-breeding that takes all sense of awkwardness away, so that Sage did not feel till afterwards that the room was shabby, and that Pomona's maid most likely had a better one, and that her cousin never had to hunt in a drawer for one thing and in a box for another, much less sew a button on her boot with her own hands.

They were just two girls together; and if Pomona criticised at all, it was rather to envy the greater freedom her cousin enjoyed without a maid fussing about and interfering, and the easy, picnic sort of existence of doing everything for one's self.

MODERN SAILING-SHIPS.

A MODERN sailing-ship replete with labour-saving appliances is a veritable triumph of the naval architect's art, and an excellent object lesson on man's power over the forces of nature. If Christopher Columbus could revisit our planet from the shades, he would doubtless be astounded by a critical comparison between the tiny wooden caravel with which he discovered a New World, and a leviathan four-masted steel sailing-ship, now navigated in comparative comfort to every possible port where freight is obtainable. Wooden cargo-carrying craft impelled by the unbought wind are surely diminishing in numbers; and in the near future it is not improbable that a stately sailing-ship will be as seldom seen on the waste of waters as a screw steamship was half a century ago. Even looking leisurely backward down the imposing vista of the last thirty years of the Victorian era, it will be readily perceived with what marvellous mastery iron and steel have supplanted, not only wood in the hulls, masts, and yards of sailing-ships, but also hemp in their rigging.

A radical revolution has been effected in the form, size, and construction of these cargo-carriers during such a relatively insignificant interval, and the end is not yet. The old-fashioned type of wooden merchantman remained practically invariable for more than a hundred years; but change is all-powerful at present, so that a vessel is almost of a bygone age before she shall have completed her maiden voyage. It would appear, however, that the limit of size has been reached. Ship-owning firms and shipbuilders will probably soon be compelled to keep the modern steel sailing-ship within more moderate dimensions. Vessels of exceptionally large carrying capacity are in demand owing to the fact that experience proves them to be the best kind for affording a fair return to the capital invested. Salvage appliances and docks do not keep pace with the requirements of such leviathans; so that underwriters evince an increasing dislike to big ships, and the premium for insurance rises accordingly, to compensate for extra risk.

Many mariners and some shipbuilders were at one time quick to express a pronounced opinion that it was quite unnatural for an iron ship to remain afloat. Wood was made to swim, but iron to sink, said these sincere but mistaken admirers of the good old days. Their misgivings have proved to be without foundation in fact, for iron ships have ousted wooden craft almost utterly from the ocean-carrying traffic. Iron has also reached its meridian altitude, and steel is rapidly rising above the horizon of progress. The ship-building yards of Nova Scotia, Canada, the United States of America, and British Columbia, however, still launch wooden sailing-vessels, although in decreasing numbers, and, as a rule, of inconsiderable tonnage.

It seems scarcely credible that only as recently as 1870 there were not more than ten sailing-ships afloat of two thousand tons register and upwards under the red ensign of the British mercantile marine. To-day we have more than that number of splendid steel sailing-ships, each having a register tonnage in excess of three thousand. During the twelve months of 1892 there were turned out from one yard alone on the Clyde, that of Messrs Russell & Co., no fewer than thirteen huge sailing-vessels, varying in register tonnage from two thousand three hundred to three thousand five hundred! One of the largest wooden sailing-ships afloat in 1870 was the 'British Empire,' of two thousand seven hundred tons register, which, under the command of Captain A. Pearson, was an ark of safety to the families of European residents in Bombay during the Indian Mutiny. She had been originally intended for a steamship, and this will account for her exceptional dimensions. The shipbuilding firm of A. Sewall & Co., of Bath, Maine, U.S.A., have probably launched the largest wooden sailing-ships. In 1889 they built the 'Rappahannock,' of 3054 tons register; in 1890, the 'Shenandoah,' 3258 tons; in 1891, the 'Susquehanna,' 2629 tons; and in 1892, the 'Roanoke,' of 3400 tons register.

Several cities claim to be the birthplace of Homer, and there exists similar rivalry with respect to the first iron ship. This at least is certain, that the first iron vessel classed by Lloyd's was the British barque 'Ironsides,' in 1838. She was but 271 tons register; and we shall proceed to indicate the gigantic strides that have been made since then in iron and steel shipbuilding. The Clyde stands *facile princeps* in this most important branch of industry. Vessels built on the banks of that river are rendering a praiseworthy account of themselves on every sea and under every flag. A concise statement of last year's output will serve our purpose admirably. Messrs Russell & Co. launched twenty-six large steel sailing-ships, or exactly one a fortnight, having an average register tonnage of 2086. The smallest was 1400 tons, the largest 3500. Messrs Barclay, Curle, & Co. completed five, averaging 2373 tons; Messrs Duncan & Co., five of 2348 tons; Messrs Scott & Co., three of 2250 tons; Messrs Mackie & Thomson, two of 2825 tons; Messrs Hamilton & Co., five of 2095 tons; Messrs D. & W. Henderson, one of 2386 tons; Messrs Stephen & Sons, one of 2086 tons; Messrs Connell & Co., twelve of 1980 tons; Messrs Rodger & Co., seven of 1674

tons. At Leith, Messrs Ramage & Ferguson launched one of 3137 tons; on the Tay, Messrs Thompson & Co., one of 2942 tons; and Messrs Stephen & Sons, one of 2857 tons register. Germany built three similar ships during the year, having a register tonnage of 2400, 2700, and 2895 respectively. No other country launched any iron or steel ships of 2000 tons register or above, but preferred to obtain them from our shipbuilding yards. The so-called protection of native industry principle prevailing in America precludes ship-owners over there from taking advantage directly of the cheapest market. Several of the large sailers, however, built on the Clyde in 1892 were for citizens of the United States, but are necessarily sailed under the British, Hawaiian, or some flag other than that of the country to which they actually belong.

Several of the brand-new sailing-ships specified above have been lost or seriously damaged within a few months of their launch. The 'Thracian,' 2154 tons register, was capsized in a heavy squall off the Isle of Man while towing round in ballast from the Clyde yard to Liverpool in order to receive her first cargo. Not one of her crew was saved, as the vessel and all hands disappeared so suddenly that help from the tugboat was impossible. The Shipmasters' Federation called upon the Board of Trade to inquire into the cause of this appalling catastrophe, but without avail. The 'Crown of Austria,' 3137 tons register, would not answer her helm properly while making a passage, went ashore on the coast of Brazil, and became a total loss. A fire broke out on board the recently launched barque 'Auchmountain,' as she lay at anchor ready to sail on her first voyage, and she blew up in a few hours, the fire having reached some explosives in her cargo.

The number of seamen carried per one hundred tons in the modern four-masted sailing-ship is cut down to the uttermost limit consistent with safety; and, as a consequence, dismasting and tedious passages are not infrequent. The 'Hawaiian Isles,' 2097 tons register, a United States ship under a foreign flag, bound to California with a cargo of coal, found it impossible to weather Cape Horn by reason of violent westerly gales. She was turned round, ran along the lone Southern Ocean, before the 'brave west winds' so admirably described by the illustrious Maury, now gathered to his rest, and eventually reached her destination by the route leading south of Australia. She was one hundred and eighty-nine days on the passage, and no fewer than sixty guineas per cent. had been freely paid for her re-insurance. A similar ship, the 'John Ena,' carrying a substantial cargo of 4222 tons of coal from Barry to San Francisco, also encountered bad weather, made a long passage, and twenty guineas per cent. was paid on her for re-insurance. Another new ship, the 'Achnashie,' 2476 tons register, got into still more serious difficulty under like circumstances. She had to put back to Cape Town, damaged and leaky, after attempting in vain to contend against the bitter blast off Cape Horn. There, her cargo was discharged, and she went into dry dock for the absolutely necessary repairs. The 'Austrasia,' 2718 tons register, was almost totally dismasted near the island of Tristan da Cunha, in the South

Atlantic, on her maiden passage, while bound from Liverpool to Calcutta with a cargo of salt. By dint of sterling seamanship she was brought to Rio Janeiro in safety, returned to Liverpool under improvised masts, discharged her cargo, refitted, took in quite a different cargo at London, and sailed for California. The 'Somali,' 3537 tons register, the largest sailing-ship launched in 1892, has been dismasted in the China Sea. Everything above the lower masts had to be made for her on the Clyde; yet, within fifteen days of the order being received by Messrs Russell & Co., the spars and gear were completed and shipped for passage to the 'Somali' at Hong-kong. Underwriters suffer severely with such ships.

Then, again, coal cargoes of about four or five thousand tons seem specially liable to spontaneous combustion. The 'King James,' 2305 tons register, bound from New South Wales to California with coal, was compulsorily abandoned from this cause, and only a few of her crew were rescued after enduring terrible privations in open boats. Another of these leviathans, the 'Cedarbank,' 2825 tons register, met with a precisely similar misfortune on the same route. Fortunately, however, for all concerned, the fire was successfully kept under until she reached San Francisco, although there had been several slight explosions in the meanwhile.

All the above-mentioned ships were launched in 1892; but several vessels of huge dimensions, launched just previously, have also come to grief. The 'Honresfeld,' with 4570 tons of coal; and the 'Rappahannock,' with 3990 tons, have been totally destroyed by fire. Several others of about the same tonnage have had their coal cargoes dangerously heated. The 'Durkerque,' 3094 tons; the 'Perseverance,' 2511 tons; the 'Nation,' 2401 tons; the 'Romsdal,' 2000 tons; the 'Ashbank,' 2174 tons; and the 'Eleanor Margaret,' 2327 tons register, have all disappeared, without leaving a trace, as utterly as though they had never been. Better seamanship is required to-day than ever before from masters and officers of these large floating warehouses, exposed to danger both from within and without.

Auxiliary steam-power was once used for the purpose of forcing a sailing-ship through regions of calms and light variable winds, but proved a dismal failure. The marine engineer has not been idle since that day, with the result that increased steam-power is now possible by the employment of smaller engines at a decreased coal consumption. Cargo-space being gained and expenses lessened, ship-owners have been tempted to give this auxiliary screw system another trial. The 'Maria Rickmers,' an enormous five-masted sailing-ship, built on the Clyde for the large Bremen firm of Messrs Rickmers, was thus fitted, and gave rise to great expectations quite recently. She carried nearly 6000 tons of coal from Barry to Singapore, apparently not without grave danger from dismasting or capsizing in a heavy squall, and utterly disappeared with all hands and a cargo of rice on her first homeward passage from Saigon. The forebodings of seamen were in this instance only too well founded. It was wrong to expect that the small crew could handle so large a ship in a case of emergency. A smaller auxiliary barque, the 'Severn,' an American

vessel under British colours, also built on the Clyde, has so far fared well; but the growing tendency of the age is to keep sail and steam quite apart. Twin screws and pole masts are the order of the day.

The largest sailing-ship afloat is the French five-master, 'La France,' launched in 1890 on the Clyde, and owned by Messrs Ant Dom Bordes et Fils, who possess a large fleet of sailing-vessels. In 1891 she came from Iquique to Dunkirk in one hundred and five days with 6000 tons of nitrate; yet she was stopped on the Tyne when proceeding to sea with 5500 tons of coal, and compelled to take out five hundred tons on the ground that she was overladen. There is not a single five-masted sailing-ship under the British flag. The United States has two five-masters, the 'Louis' of 830 tons, and the 'Gov. Ames' of 1778 tons, both fore and aft schooners, a rig peculiar to the American coast. Ships having five masts can be counted on the fingers of one hand; but, strange to say, the steamship 'Coptic,' of the Shaw, Savill, & Albion Co., on her way to New Zealand, in December 1890, passed the 'Gov. Ames' in fourteen degrees south, thirty-four degrees west, bound for California; and two days later, in six degrees south, thirty-one degrees west, the French five-master, 'La France,' bound south. Passengers and crew of the 'Coptic' might travel over many a weary league of sea, and never again be afforded two such excellent object lessons in the growth of sailing-ships in quick succession. The largest three-masted sailing-ship is the 'Ditton,' of 2850 tons.

Sailing-ships sometimes spend long intervals at sea without raising a sail of any kind above their ever-changing horizons. Hence the unique experience of the 'Lorton' and the 'Cockermouth' is well worth recording. They left Liverpool together; and arrived at Astoria, Oregon, within forty-eight hours of each other. Throughout this long passage of over fifteen thousand miles they were not widely separated at any given instant, and for forty days were actually in close company. Captain Steel and his family of the 'Lorton' went dine on board the 'Cockermouth' on one Sunday; and Captain McAdam and his wife of the 'Cockermouth' would pay a return visit to the 'Lorton' on the following Sunday. Life might be made more worth living on sailing-ships, remote from the land, were such an interchange of courtesies always possible.

Some large sailing-ships experience a decided difficulty in obtaining freights that will repay expenses, even ignoring a margin for profit. At San Francisco the 'Agenor' waited for a cargo from October 1891 to July 1893. The 'Auchencairn' arrived at that port in March 1892; the 'Argo,' 'Bothwell,' 'Dunfermline,' and 'Glenlui,' in February 1892; the 'Bardowie' in January 1892; and the 'Netherby' in April 1892. Not one of these ships had obtained a charter up to the commencement of July 1893. Shareholders will scarcely find that shipping is a remunerative investment. At times, however, the charterers stand to lose considerably. Two British ships, the 'Minister of Marine' and the 'Alexander Yeats,' arrived at Manila in 1889, under a charter to load hemp. The charterers speculated for a falling market, which did not happen, kept the two ships idle in port for nearly ten months,

and eventually sent them home with sugar cargoes under new charters. The claims for demurrage were paid regularly to the shipmasters day by day, in accordance with the law, and reached the following exceptional amounts: 'Minister of Marine' £5028; 'Alexander Yeats,' £4986. On the other hand, in ordinary circumstances, both loading and unloading are carried out with a celerity that defies description. Not long since, the 'Commonwealth,' a sailing-ship from San Francisco, discharged 3000 tons of golden grain at Liverpool, and was ballasted ready for sea again in twenty-seven hours. Last June the 'Cressington' took in a full cargo of 3180 tons of coal at Newcastle, Australia, and sailed for Valparaiso, having occupied only fifty-three hours from the time of entering port till her loading was completed. Nevertheless, we are reluctantly compelled to confess that the days of sailing-ships are almost numbered. The cry for huge sailers is an evidence that steam is determining the dimensions of the most modern cargo-carriers under sail.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER II.

THE Pattens came of a squatting family. The father had been the owner of a compact and paying sheep station in the south-west of New South Wales. He died shortly after the death of his two sons in Queensland; and the youngest son, who had lately visited Bendabar, now held possession of the property, owning a half-share, and managing for his mother and two younger sisters who inherited the other half.

It was some three months after his northern visit, and he sat in the small veranda room that did duty as an office, regarding a letter he had just received from New Zealand. The letter was from Hopwood, in reply to one from Patten, Hopwood having forwarded his address on seeing the advertisement that had been inserted. The writer described the position of the place to the best of his memory, but candidly stated that, after such a lapse of time, and the alteration entailed by cutting the timber, and the effect of the flood, he did not suppose he could do more than go approximately near the spot, even if he visited the locality.

From Jim Turner there had been no response; and Patten moodily thought that his only plan would be to go back and turn up about half a mile of the bank; and even then, with the utmost care, such a small article as a salmon tin might easily be missed.

The whole affair had an atmosphere of mystery about it that was depressing. In the first place, Burgess, when he returned, had managed to evade a personal interview. Both Patten and his father had been naturally anxious to see him, and hear from his own lips the account of the tragedy; but although Burgess had written several letters, he always managed to miss any appointments, and finally disappeared without leaving any address. Young Patten was then bent upon going up to Queensland and personally searching for the remains; but his father was breaking up—he could not be spared from the station; and

so he had perforce to remain until it was too late to do any good.

The years rolled on, and he had almost forgotten the fancies that had troubled him when he first heard of the catastrophe. He and his half-brother, who was the only child of the first wife, had always mutually disliked each other, and Robert Patten, the younger, had strongly objected to his brother's going on the trip. The eldest son had always been of a morose, passionate nature, and had systematically bullied his young half-brothers until they were old enough to resent it. This, the youngest one, did more than his brother, who was of a quieter disposition. In consequence, it was with rather a prejudiced mind that Robert now turned over the various circumstances that had lately cropped up concerning the deaths in the west of Queensland.

In the first place, he had met an old friend, who said to him: 'By the way, I always understood that your eldest brother died in the bush in Queensland.'

'So he did, I am sorry to say.'

'Well, I saw either him or his ghost in Adelaide about two years ago.'

'Nonsense, man!—a case of mistaken identity.'

'It is *you* who are talking nonsense, my boy. Why, I know your brother Alf Patten better than I do you.'

'Did you speak to him?'

'No. In fact, to tell you the truth, he seemed to avoid me.'

'It must have been a ghost, then.' If it had been my brother, why should he have avoided you, and why has he not come home?'

'Well, it was a wonderful likeness. I was on my way home to England at the time; and I certainly told several people on board, who knew him and had heard of his death, about it.'

Patten was naturally disturbed by such a piece of information. If his brother was alive, he owned the whole of the station, and all the property left by his father, for the will, made shortly before his father's death, only left it between his mother, sisters, and himself, contingent upon the deaths of his two brothers being confirmed; for, owing to the strange reluctance shown by Burgess to a personal meeting, the old man had been impressed with the idea that Burgess had deserted his companions, and, in reality, knew nothing of their fate. Under these circumstances, why should his brother stay away, if alive?

Not many weeks after this, the letter from Burgess arrived, enclosed in one from a brother, stating that the writer was dead, and had requested that on his death the enclosed should be forwarded as directed. Burgess in his letter merely said that he had buried certain papers belonging to his brother confided to his care, and gave a description of the place. He made no explanation of his motive for concealing the papers, nor for his conduct in avoiding an interview, but wound up with the ominous sentence: 'In those papers you will find the true account of your brother's death.' It was noticeable that he only referred to one brother, although he had stated to everybody that both were dead.

Patten mused dejectedly for some time, then wrote a short letter to Hopwood, thanking him for his letter.

'Blanche,' he said that evening to his eldest

sister, whom he had to a certain extent taken into his confidence, 'I have already told you that I have reason to believe that Alf is still alive. Now, I want you to communicate this belief to the others, for I should not be surprised to see him turn up any day.'

'Surely, Bob, you have not heard from him, have you?' she returned, in surprise.

'No; but I have reason to think that the only obstacle to his reappearance has been removed. If he is alive, as I believe, I am pretty confident that we shall see something of him shortly.'

'But it will make an awful difference to you, will it not? In the station, I mean.'

'Certainly; it all belongs to him. Our mother will have a third by law, which will be enough for her and you girls; but I shall be asked to leave, you may be sure, as soon as Alf comes in possession. Fortunately, I have made a little money on my own account during the last ten years, so shall not be quite penniless.'

His sister left him; and Robert remained smoking on the moonlit veranda. Like a flash of light, it had suddenly illumined his mind that the reason Alf did not reappear was because of Burgess. Once he heard of Burgess's death, he would not hesitate to come and claim his heritage. There was now no doubt in his mind. Burgess had been either a witness or accomplice in some deed that would not bear the light of day.

He turned to go inside the house, when the tread of a horse approaching made him look round. Instinctively, he knew who was coming—the supposed dead man had returned to his own place.

In the bright clear moonlight he easily recognised the rider, who dismounted, and hung his bridle on the picket fence that surrounded the garden, then approached the gate that led to the house.

Robert called to his sister: 'Blanche! our expected visitor has come; and strolled down the path to meet his half-brother.'

'Well, Bob,' said the latter as they met, 'I suppose you hoped never to see me again?'

'On the contrary, Alf,' said Robert quietly, 'I have been expecting you for some time. What have you been keeping up this farce so long for?'

'That I will tell you presently. Are we to go back on the old terms, although ten years have passed? Have you got neither word nor hand to welcome a fellow?'

'Let's have a mutual explanation first, both with regard to Sam's death and your silence.'

'Very well. Evidently, you are not pleased at the boss coming home. Will you tell one of the fellows to turn my horse out? and then we will see if the others of you are a little warmer in their welcome.'

Robert called one of the men, who took the horse; and the two men entered the house.

Mrs Patten and the girls received the wanderer with at any rate an assumption of cordiality. They knew nothing of the graver doubts that tormented their brother, and, with womanly tenderness, endeavoured to make the unexpected arrival feel that he was welcome to his own home. The ten years of absence had not altered him much, save that, to Robert, he seemed coarser and rougher in his manner and conversation, as though

his time had been passed amongst inferior associates.

He at once told his stepmother that he was going to have a long talk with his half-brother, and explain his absence; and taking the hint, the women soon retired and left the two men together. Both smoked in silence for a while, then Alf suddenly remarked: 'What did that hound Burgess say when he got in?'

Robert had anticipated the question. He handed his brother one of the old newspapers containing the printed account.

The other read it through in silence. 'A tissue of lies, with a word of truth here and there,' was his comment when he came to the end. 'How did you think I was alive, after such a statement as that?'

'Old Broadhurst saw you in Adelaide over two years ago.'

'Did Burgess tell you any more than he has done here?'

'I never saw him. For some unaccountable reason, he dodged me always, and I could not get a personal interview with him.'

'Now I will tell you what really happened,' said Alf. 'In the first place, the statement that we were successful in getting beyond the South Australian border for some distance is true. On our return, we camped near a patch of poison-plant, and lost a number of our horses. That also is true.'—

'The bones of the horses have been found,' interjected Robert.

'But no human remains?' said the other, somewhat hastily.

'No.'

'Of course, because there were none to find—at least, there. We got on to a dry stage, and found the water we depended on, dry. That is true. Now come the lies. We stopped at that dry hole, dead-beat, and debated what was best to be done. Before us were about fifty miles of dry country, and at the end of it, an uncertainty. Behind us were thirty miles of dry country and the water we had left, a certainty. We decided to turn back after taking a few hours' rest. We had only five horses left. Two of them were fairly strong, and the other three weak and knocked up. That night, while we slept, Burgess sneaked off with the two strong horses and nearly all the water and rations, and left us to our fate. No wonder he would not meet you.'

Both men were silent after this disclosure.

'What happened then?' said Robert at last.

'When we awoke and found Burgess gone, we could do nothing but tramp back to the water we had left. There we arrived more dead than alive, with two out of the three horses, the other one having died on the road. We decided to make for the Overland Telegraph Line. This, to make a long story short, eventually we did; but I was the only one who reached it. The black boy died, I cannot say of what. He gave in, and lost pluck. Sam was speared by the natives on a creek about a hundred miles east of the line, and died in about an hour. We had used up every cartridge when they tackled us, or it would not have happened.'

Robert started at these words, for they seemed such an echo of the story told by Burgess; and yet, according to this version, Burgess could have

known nothing of the fate of the men he deserted.

'I got to the Line, and luckily came across a repairing party, and they took me in to Barrow Creek Station.'—

'And with the telegraph right at your hand, you never wired our father a word of either Sam or yourself?' interrupted Robert.

Alf got up, and impatiently walked about the room. 'To tell you the truth, I had not the heart. I blamed myself right through. I had no business to persuade Sam to come and risk his life. I would rather you thought us both dead, than have to come home alone; I felt that I had been the cause of his death.'

'What did you do then, Alf?'

'We had seen some good country on our way across; and when I got down to Adelaide, I took up the lease of it and sold it very well. I fell in with some men going to South Africa; and as I had a roving fit on me, I joined them, and was there five years. I volunteered for the Zulu War, and saw a good deal of it. Then I came back to Australia, and went up to the gold rush at Kimberley. Everywhere I did well, just because I did not particularly want it, I suppose. At last I got tired of knocking about, and determined to come home and declare myself. I may as well tell you that I had seen the notice of the old man's death in a Sydney paper; and you know as well as I, do that after his death there is not a soul here who would not prefer that I had never returned. I am not, and never was, a favourite with my father's second family. As it is, I suppose that I appear to oust you; but I have no intention of doing so. There is enough for us all. I could never play the part of the modern squatter.'

'It is late, Alf,' said Robert, rising. 'I have much to think of. Believe me, that nobody here is sorry to see you back; but you must admit that your silence and absence under such circumstances as the death of Sam were peculiar. Is it not so?'

'Perhaps; but I presume you are satisfied as to my own identity?—Tell me,' he went on, as his brother halted for a moment at the door, 'has little Kate Rudder grown up as pretty as she promised to be?'

'Miss Rudder,' returned Robert coldly, 'has grown up as pretty and good as she promised to be.—Now, good-night. Your old room is ready for you; you know the way.' He closed the door almost as he spoke.

Left to himself, Alf smiled somewhat grimly. 'I touched Master Bob on a tender spot, seemingly. Evidently he has his eye on Kate Rudder.' He turned the lamp out and went to his room.

It was quite true Alf Patten had touched upon a tender spot when he mentioned Kate Rudder's name to his brother. The Rudders owned the neighbouring station, and the two families had always been on the most friendly footing. Kate, the youngest, and only unmarried girl, was now a brilliant and beautiful young woman of one-and-twenty, with half-a-dozen aspirants for her hand. Robert was sorely smitten, and had reason to believe that he had some chance of success; but his brother's remark gave him some troubled thoughts that night. Robert Patten, the owner of half the station and a good deal of other

property, and Robert Patten beginning life afresh on a small and limited capital, were two very different men. He had no reason to think the girl mercenary or capricious; but his nature had a warp of distrust in it which often led him to suspect the motives of other people without cause; and in the present instance influenced him against accepting the liberal speeches of his returned relative without large discount.

TATTERED VOLUMES.

THE manner in which books are regarded by literary workers is a somewhat curious subject, and a short account thereof may possibly prove not uninteresting.

Among those who have won more or less fame by the pen may be counted many different specimens of the book-lover, from the genuine bibliomaniac to the voracious and tasteless reader who regards a book as mere leather and paper—a collection of material for the acquisition of knowledge. It is scarcely necessary to remark that there is often a wide discrepancy between a man's tastes and desires and their fulfilment. Many a book-lover lacks the wherewithal to approach in any way to his idea of a suitable covering for his favourite volumes. Sometimes one has to turn amateur bookbinder. Even Southey occasionally bound a volume himself. He once presented a copy of his 'Madoc,' in quarto, to a neighbour and friend in the Lake District, and the volume is still in existence, with the following inscription:

Mr Stranger, from the author.
This book, binding and all,
Is the handiwork of Greta Hall.
R. S.

Leigh Hunt, speaking of Matthias Corvinus, who bound his books in vellum and gold, says: 'Not being a king of Hungary, nor rich, nor having a confessor to absolve us from sins of expenditure, how lucky is it that we can take delight in books whose outsides are of the homeliest description! . . . We should have liked to challenge the majesty of Hungary to a bout at bookbinding, and seen which would have ordered the most intense and ravishing "legatura," something at which De Seuil or Grolier himself should have "sigh'd and look'd and sigh'd again;" something which would have made him own that there was nothing between it and an angel's wing. Meantime, nothing comes amiss to us but dirt or tatters, or cold, plain calf, school binding—a thing which we hate for its insipidity and formality.'

Charles Lamb, careful enough as to the insides of what he called his 'midnight darlings,' was unable to clothe them all in decent attire. In his delightful 'Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading,' he says in his quaint and paradoxical style: 'To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of russia or morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably recloth the my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymond Lully to look like himself again in the

world. I never see these impostors but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.' Yet he contended that 'in some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding.' Crabb Robinson describes the library of his friend the 'gentle Elia' as 'the finest collection of shabby books I ever saw; such a number of first-rate works in very bad condition is, I think, nowhere to be found.' On being once asked how he knew his books, Lamb replied: 'How does a shepherd know his sheep?'

Burton, in his 'Book-hunter,' gives an amusing account of De Quincey's famous collection of books. 'Some legend there is of a book creditor having forced his way into the Cacus den, and there seen a sort of rubble inner wall of volumes, with their edges outward; while others, bound and unbound, the plebeian sheepskin and the aristocratic russia, were squeezed into certain tubs drawn from the washing establishment of a confiding landlady.'

The famous reviewer Jeffrey treated with disdain the bookbinder's delicate art. Books were merely meant to be read, he contended, and he was quite satisfied so long as the words were visible. Lord Cockburn laments the fact that Jeffrey's library was, 'for a lover of books, and for one who had picked up a few, most wretched; and so ill cared for that the want even of a few volumes never disturbed him.' Carlyle, in his *Reminiscences*, describes the study of his brilliant countryman as 'a roomy, not overneat, apartment on the ground-floor, with a big baize-covered table loaded with book-rows and paper bundles. On one, or perhaps two, of the tables were book-shelves, likewise well filled, but with books in tattery, ill-bound, or unbound condition.'

It is pleasant to find that a greater Scotsman than Jeffrey, Adam Smith, paid particular attention to the outsides of his books, and sought relief from his researches into the mysteries of the 'dismal science' in the choice of leather and decorations. 'I am a beau,' was his remark, 'in nothing but my books.'

Jeffrey, in describing his introduction to Scott, says he found him 'in a small den, on the sunk floor of his father's house in George Square, surrounded with dingy books.' From what has already been said of his own library, it would be interesting to know the exact meaning he attached to the word 'dingy.' Years afterwards, Lockhart thus described Sir Walter's collection: 'The walls were entirely clothed with books, most of them folios and quartos, and all in that complete state of repair which at a glance reveals a tinge of bibliomania.' He also adds that 'the old bindings had obviously been retouched and regilt in the most approved manner; the new, when the books were of any mark, were rich, but never gaudy—a large proportion of blue morocco—all stamped with the device of the portcullis, and its motto, "Clausus tutus ero"—being an anagram of his name in Latin.'

It was Burton's opinion that in this respect 'poets are apt to be ragamuffins.' Wordsworth holds a high position in the ranks of those gentry. His library was once described as 'the most wretched thing that ever went by the name—a mere litter of tattered old volumes on a few shelves.' De Quincey, by no means inclined

towards bibliomania, describes the books of the great Lake poet as 'ill-bound or not bound at all—in boards, sometimes in tatters; many of them imperfect as to the number of volumes as well as mutilated as to the number of pages.'

James Thomson also belonged to the brigade of ragamuffins. It is said that he used to cut the leaves of books with his snuffers. There is a good story of the poet in Burton's Book-hunter, which deserves to be given at length. 'He had,' says Burton, 'an uncle, a clever, active mechanic, who could do many things with his hands, and contemplated James's indolent, dreamy, "feckless" character with impatient disgust. When the first of the "Seasons"—Winter it was, I believe—had been completed at press, Jamie thought, by a presentation copy, to triumph over his uncle's scepticism; and, to propitiate his good opinion, he had the book handsomely bound. The old man never looked inside, or asked what the book was about, but, turning it round and round with his fingers, in grateful admiration, exclaimed: "Come, is that really our Jamie's doin' now?—Weel, I never thought the cratur wad hae had the handicraft to do the like!"'

Goldsmith was as careless with his books as with his money; and though his library at one time contained many curious and rare books, he never hesitated to tear out a leaf to save either time or trouble. Sir John Hawkins relates how, when engaged on his historical researches about music, Goldsmith told him some curious things one night at the club. Hawkins asked him to put them in writing, and promised to call for them. Of course, Goldsmith was not ready when his friend called, but he quickly took down a book and tore out six leaves containing the information. In Mr Austin Dobson's poem, 'The Book-plate's Petition,' is the following reference to another great man who was occasionally rough on books:

This was a scholar, one of those
Whose Greek is sounder than their hose;
He loved old books and nappy ale,
So lived at Streatham, next to Thrale.
'Twas there this stain of grease I boast
Was made by Dr Johnson's toast.

A CHRISTMAS AT THE RIDGE HOUSE.

WE were just four at the Ridge House: Richard Hardy (that is my father); John Warne, my husband; the two-year-old babe called 'Little Dick'; and myself. The Ridge is a desolate place: it is just a bank of sand and shingle, some eight or nine miles long; in front, there is the sea; and behind the house, the river and the marshes. In winter-time the marshes are often flooded, and then there seems to be naught but water all round one. I have lived there nearly all my life, for my father has been tideman many a long year. Just by our house are the flood-gates; and when the water in the marsh dikes is above a certain height, we have to open the gates at the ebb-tide and let the water down through a great iron pipe into the sea. But the gates must be shut ere the flood-tide runs back, for that is higher than the marshes; and if once the salt water ran through, all the good grass would be rotted; not to speak of what

might happen in rough weather if once the strong waves began to run through to the land-side of the Ridge.

It was two days before Christmas; we had had a frost; but the ice was melting now, and we knew well the water would soon run down from inland over the marshes. It comes a deal quicker, since all the drain-pipes have been laid down in the fields.

'John,' said my father that Monday morning, 'if ye want aught from the village, get it to-day against Christmas. There is a storm coming.'

So John went in with the great basket; and well it was he went then, for the wind had risen ere he came back; and weary work it was for him to carry the heavy basket along the five miles of Ridge; and the wind grew higher after.

At ebb-tide, father and I went out to let the water off. Oh, it had risen more than I could have believed! It must have been snow-water from the hills. I never saw it so before or since. We opened the big gate; but when the water began to go through, all the ice came up in great blocks and fared to fill up the way; so we had to get a rake and pole to keep it clear. When we were hard at work, who should come by but Wilkins, the man that lives in the watch-house two miles on. He was not much of a neighbour then. I had said him 'Nay' afore I married John, and he wasn't one to forget. But that day, as I saw him pass, I was thinking just of the babe left all alone in bed, and I called to him to lend father a helping hand while I ran round to the house.

'I've got but two hands,' said he; 'and they're for my own work;' and with that he passed on.

'Never mind, Mary,' said father. 'You go to the babe; that is what is right.'

I suppose I was right; but in I went, right or wrong, and gave the boy his dinner and put the fire to rights; then John came in, and I sent him round to father, for the ice frightened me; I could hear it crashing and groaning from the house.

Just after John went out, I heard him call. Father, poor dear, had got tired, and had sat down all hot as he was; and now he was set hard and stiff with the rheumatics. Oh, the job we had to get him home and to bed; and there we had to leave him, for the tide was running in, and John could not shut the gates without me to keep the ice back. I thought it a dreadful time, not knowing that worse was coming.

When the gates were shut, I went in and sat by father. He looked very bad, and in my heart came hard thoughts of Wilkins. Why couldn't he have stopped and saved the old man from doing more than his strength could bear?

John went to bed for a bit, for we had a long night's work before us at the ebb-tide; and I lay down; but I couldn't sleep, the wind howled so. Little Dick was frightened too, but only held my hand, and didn't cry, for I said, 'Father's asleep.' There never was so good a babe! By-and-by he fell asleep; and when we had to go out, I just laid him on his grandfather's bed. Father looked a little better, and I gave him a hot drink before I took the lantern to start. It was a job to stand against the wind;

but that wasn't what made John stumble; it was a great log that used to lie down by the pipe-mouth.

'Mary,' said he—and his voice shook—'the sea's never been up here.'

'Heaven help us!' said I, 'if it has, for to-morrow's the spring-tide, and where will it be then?'

I tied the lantern up against the gate. The flood had risen higher than ever. It was terrible work keeping the ice back; but we felt as if we were working for our lives; for if the flood rose much higher, it would be almost over the bank; and with another high tide the waters would meet, and where would Ridge House be then?

The water ran through better now, and John said directly the gates were shut, he would go round to the village for help against the next tide. But when we came to slide the gate, it wouldn't stay. One of the great iron holds was gone—cracked through by the frost, and knocked off by the ice, I suppose. John held the shutter while I went back for bolts and screws. No one can know what it was like doing up that gate! We were both obliged to be half in the icy water; and the sea came roaring up the great iron tunnel, and we had only the lantern for light in the dreadful howling darkness. When it was done at last, we crawled back to the house; we were all drenched, and almost frozen. John made me change my clothes, and then I threw myself down on the bed and slept. I seemed to have only been asleep a moment, when I awoke at the sound of voices. It was daylight. John and father were talking. Father said he had heard the water against the house in the night. John went down to open the gate and look for the tide-marks, while I got the breakfast and dressed the child. Father managed to get up, and I didn't stop him, for I couldn't bear to think of his lying in bed to be drowned, if it came to that. I kissed Dick quite gently; but I felt mad at heart; and when father tried to teach him the Christmas words, I went out to John, for I couldn't bear it. What peace was there for me, and my child going to be drowned?

I told John I must go to the village—it was seven miles, but I thought I could get there. It was no use, however. When I had gone a few hundred yards, I got on to the loose sand, and having no foothold, I was blown down over and over again, and could only come back. When it was time to shut the gate, I tried to do it, while John stayed to stop the ice; but I couldn't stir it as we had done it up, so John had to do it for me, it moved so stiffly. Then we went in. The sea kept rising. Father prayed. I sat by the fire, and John walked about the room. There was no good in his going for help now, for this was the time of need. All at once he stopped in front of the window. 'Where's the watch-house?' said he; and well he might, for it was gone! It had been a little black house, built on a bit of bank between the Ridge and the great dike. Nothing was there now but foaming water, for the flood was rough like the sea.

'Wilkins must be drowned,' said John.

'Serve him right; and a good thing too,' said I. I felt quite mad.

John got his glass. 'I see him,' he said; 'he's on a spar. The house can't have gone long;' and with that he went to the door.

I went after him. As I expected, he was turning over our little punt. 'What are you going to do, John Warne?' I said, hard and cold. 'Who is to move the flood-gate? for I can't;' and I pointed to the icy water. 'You will never get back across the water; and if the gates stay shut, this house will be gone ere night.'

He turned round like one struck dumb and went into the kitchen.

Father looked at us both and said nothing. Then John did a strange thing—he cried. I'd never seen him cry before, and it frightened me. Then I spoke. 'John,' I said, quite gently, 'you can't go, for the sake of the lives here, and maybe those up country in the "lookers" cottages. But though I said "Serve him right," I'll go, not for Wilkins' sake, but for yours, John.'

Then John got up; but father stopped him; and I just kissed them all, and ran out, and pushed the boat into the water all in a minute, for I feared John would go after all. And as I put off, John came out, looking all stunned with trouble and the cold. After that, I had enough to do keeping the boat from the ice. I had the wind with me; and in about half an hour I got to where Wilkins was still clinging to the spar. I thought of his words about his two hands being for his own work, and I felt quite savage again. But when I got up to him, I helped him in, and dangerous it was. I thought the boat would have been over. Then I wrapped him up in a long piece of herring-net out of the locker, and turned to go home. While I was settling Wilkins, the boat had drifted on; and when I turned her head round, I found it was a very much harder thing to go back against the wind than it was to come with it. I was tired out, too, you see; and I began to wonder whether the tide was in. The spray was flying in great sheets over the Ridge; but every now and then I caught sight of our house, a black speck in the distance.

I pulled; but I didn't seem to make way; the ice kept coming up against us. At last the boat got stuck fast in a great ice-sheet, and I couldn't move her any way. I drew the oars in, for there was nothing to be done; the ice was too thick to break round the boat. The wind blew us on, boat and ice together, round the bend of the Ridge. I couldn't see our home now, and I didn't know what might be happening there. Wilkins lay white, and like one dead, at the bottom of the boat. Perhaps he was dead, and I had done no good after all.

And then John and Dick and father, they'd never been in trouble before without me with them; but what could I do now? Then I thought of father praying, and I prayed. I don't know what I said, and I don't think I said much. The cold seemed getting greater, but I seemed fading away from the cold and trouble. I fancied, somehow, through it all I was going into 'Christmas peace.'

I must have slept a long time: when I woke, John was standing over me; people were rubbing my hands; some one poured brandy down my throat. I had been all but frozen to death!

When I opened my eyes, John cried again; he

was weak with the toil and trouble; but now we could rest, for the men had come from the village—six of them. John had walked across that rotten ice with a rope, and somehow they had got the punt ashore. They carried us back, for Wilkins was worse than I was, though not dead; and now the wind had dropped, for the frost had come back; and as we went along the Ridge, I heard the bells ringing inland. 'Joy-bells' for Christmas! They were joy-bells for me, for those at home were safe. Nigh washed away, they had been; but the wind fell just in time to save them.

'Thank God!' said father; and so said we all.

The great folks since then, they have made a deal of my going for Wilkins; but I said to John: 'You were the bravest, for you wanted to go when I didn't; and then you let me go, which was harder than going yourself.'

And he said: 'I don't know, lass, that I should have let you go if I had been quick enough to stop you.'

WINGLESS BIRDS.

By FRED. V. THEOBALD, B.A., F.E.S.

JUST as Australia is peculiar for its remarkable marsupial fauna and gigantic fossil kangaroos, so is New Zealand for its peculiar Wingless Birds, living and extinct. Of these wingless forms there are not many known, but those that we are acquainted with are of great interest. Were it not for man's presence upon the earth, there is little doubt that we should have many more of these apterous birds, for history and tradition clearly show that several of them have been exterminated by man and by the introduction of his domestic animals. The Ratitæ, the group to which most of the living wingless birds belong, are found in Africa, where the representative is the ostrich, the largest of all the living aves, attaining sometimes the height of eight feet; in America, where the rheas are found extending into Patagonia and Peru; in Australia by the emu; in New Guinea and Moluccan Islands by the cassowary; and in New Zealand by the curious wingless apteryx or kiwi-kiwi of the Maoris. The African ostriches are the most important to us financially, for from these birds the much-sought-after ostrich feathers are obtained.

Strictly speaking, none of the living Ratitæ are wingless birds, for all possess a small and rudimentary pair of wings, although they are too small to be used as organs of flight. The ostriches run with extraordinary speed, and can give the fastest horse some trouble in pursuing them. The male ostrich is like a Mormon, fond of many wives!—These polygamous birds generally keep together in small flocks, and lay their eggs, sometimes three pounds in weight, in holes scratched in the sand. It is generally supposed that they are then left, and are hatched by the heat of the sun—a fallacious notion, for the parents look

after them, like all other birds; according to Mr Selater, the male alone does this, but authorities seem to disagree. The ostriches of America are quite distinct from those of Africa, and have a feathery head instead of a naked one. These rheas are also polygamous, and inhabit the great plains of South America, and are especially abundant along the La Plata.

Our next wingless form, the emu, comes from Australia. We shall find that all the living representatives of this remarkable group of birds in this part of the globe are clothed with feathers that are scarcely distinguishable from ordinary hair. The '*Dromæus novæ hollandæ*,' as naturalists designate the emu, is not unlike the ostrich in size, form, and habits; but there is one important difference that the hunter soon finds out, and that is, that the emu can kick with more deadly effect than the ostrich. The latter bird kicks forward, as we do; but the emu kicks backwards and sideways, like a cow. Little chance of escape has the unlucky hunter or hound that approaches near the back of this bird before it is tired out. The flesh of the emu is very good, and for this reason they are hunted and destroyed. So great has been the destruction, that fears are entertained that it may soon be numbered with the other extinct wingless forms that man has largely to account for.

From New Guinea, Moluccas, Malay Archipelago, and North Australia, another genus of struthious birds has been found—namely, the cassowary; not that notorious creature that 'ate the missionary on the plains of Timbuctoo,' for the true cassowary is only found in Oceania and the Malay Archipelago.

Although the wingless birds just mentioned attract much attention, there is nothing particularly striking in them, unless it be their remarkable grandeur; but when we come to the wingless forms of New Zealand, we cannot help being surprised at their extraordinary appearance. Australia is often called the 'Fossil Continent,' and rightly too, for its mammals, fish, and plants carry our minds back to long past ages; and we can say the same of New Zealand, if we look at the wingless apteryx. The kiwi—as the Maoris call this wingless creature—reminds us of no living bird, but calls to our recollection the birds which may have left those footprints on the sandy flats of Triassic times. These weird-looking kiwis vary in size from that of a fowl to that of a turkey. There is scarcely a trace of wings; the whole head and body is clothed with long hair-like gray and chestnut-brown feathers. The thick, tough skin is much valued by the Maori chiefs; and to their continual hunts after them is due the rapid disappearance of these remarkable birds. They have survived so long chiefly on account of their nocturnal habits. The natives hunt them by torchlight, when they come out at night to feed upon the insects and worms. Four species seem to be known; but all are rapidly becoming scarce, and, as Wallace rightly says, 'they will no doubt gradually become extinct.' Not so many years ago, the apteryx was thought by many scientific men to be a fabulous bird, just as the giraffe in olden

times was considered a myth. The first living specimen was brought over in 1852, and deposited in the Zoological Gardens, London, and, to every one's satisfaction, it laid several eggs. Perhaps the eggs of the apteryx are even more remarkable than the bird itself, for they often weigh as much as one-fourth of the weight of the whole bird. We find their fossil remains with those of the huge extinct 'Moa birds.'

Few birds have been more freely discussed than the moas, a group of struthious birds of enormous size, which inhabited New Zealand during and prior to the period of human occupation, and which, according to some authorities, only became extinct just before Captain Cook's discovery of the islands. Many of the moas were much larger than the ostrich. They agree in many features with the apteryx; while in their short beak and other important peculiarities they resembled the emu and the cassowary. These gigantic birds sometimes reached the height of eleven and twelve feet. Their remains are found in great abundance, and from them many complete skeletons have been formed in all stages of development, whilst their eggs are often preserved with their bones. That they were co-existent with man is shown by the fact that their remains are found in abundance in the kitchen-middens, whilst some of the bones are charred and cut. The first discovery of these giant birds was due to the Rev. W. Colenso, who also first determined their struthious affinities. In 1842 this gentleman wrote: 'During the summer of 1838 I accompanied the Rev. W. Williams on a visit to the tribes inhabiting the East Cape district. While at Waiapu, I heard, from the natives, of a certain monstrous animal. While some said it was a bird, and others a person, all agreed that it was a moa; that in general appearance it somewhat resembled an immense domestic cock, with the difference, however, that it had a face like a man's; that it lived on air, and was guarded by two immense Tuataras, who, Argus-like, kept incessant watch while the moa slept. Also, that if any one ventured to approach the dwelling of this wonderful creature, he would be invariably trampled on and killed by it.' A mountain named Whakapunaki was spoken of as the residence of this creature; but only one existed, which was said to be the sole survivor of the race of moas. For a long time it was hoped some solitary living specimen might be found in some high mountain region; but now all chance of finding this interesting and uncanny creature has vanished.

Mr J. Hamilton records an interview with an old native who asserted he had seen Captain Cook and also the last moa, and he described it as a very large bird with a neck like a horse. Whether any one has seen the bird is still very doubtful; but that it was coexistent with man—either ancient moa-hunting Maoris, or a moa-hunting race that inhabited New Zealand prior to the Maori invasion—is definitely shown by the bones and eggs being found with the evidences of man in those curious kitchen-middens and caves. Not only are the bones and eggs found, but in several instances the tendons and feathers attached to their skin have been discovered. The question is, How did these birds become extinct? There is no doubt that man has had the chief

hand in their eradication. To moa-hunting men their disappearance must be largely attributed; but certain evidence also shows that the glacial period has had no small finger in the pie in this matter. 'The recent existence of the moa, and its having been finally exterminated by the Maoris,' says Wallace, 'appears to be at length set at rest by the statement of Mr John White, a gentleman who has been initiated by their priests into all their mysteries, and who has been collecting materials for a history of the natives, and is said to know more of the history, customs, and habits of the Maoris than they do themselves. He says that the histories and songs abound in allusions to the moa, and that they were able to give full accounts of its habits, food, season of the year it was killed, &c.' Although the moas are called wingless birds, they, too, like the other Ratitæ, have rudiments of wings. It is probable that these struthious birds do not owe their imperfect wings to a direct evolution from some ancestral reptile form, but to a retrograde development from some low type of winged bird analogous to that which has produced the dodo of Mauritius from a more highly developed pigeon-form.

The dodo has become extinct, we know, during the last two hundred years. Mauritius, Rodriguez, and Bourbon (now Réunion) are remarkable as being the home of this curious group of ground-birds, quite incapable of flight. Leguat, who resided in Rodriguez in 1692, gives an admirable figure of the species on that island called the Solitaire. All these Dididæ were helpless creatures, and were soon destroyed by man and his animals. We have strong evidence that the origin of these large wingless 'ground-pigeons' must date back to early Tertiary times. Some ancestral 'ground-pigeon' like the *Didunculus* of Samoa must have reached Mauritius by means of intervening islands, afterwards sunk; and there, on this isolated spot, they remained and increased, free from the attack of any more powerful animal. We can easily see how their wings, being useless, would become abortive. They might even be prejudicial to the birds; for those that flew about would be blown out to sea and destroyed; whilst those that had small wings would roost upon the ground, and thus be sheltered from the violent hurricanes that continually sweep across these islands.

There are other extinct wingless birds, rails, also found; and in Rodriguez an almost wingless heron. Another large apterous bird, known as the *Apyornis*, has recently been brought before the notice of the public by the sale of its semi-fossil egg for the large sum of sixty pounds eighteen shillings. This *Apyornis* was a native of Madagascar, and is related to the moas and ostriches. It was as large, or larger than the moas of New Zealand. Its eggs were of enormous size, often reaching fourteen inches in diameter, and equal in capacity to six eggs of an ostrich.

There are several other wingless birds of different groups existing at the present day, and from them, as well as from other reasons, we can safely say that the wingless struthious birds, the emus, the ostriches, moas, and the dodo, are simply degenerate or retrograde forms, and not birds of low type with wings as yet undeveloped. There is good reason for believing that the

Ratitæ are a very ancient group, for we find the remains of the moa in New Zealand long prior to man's advent. Day by day, they and other wingless birds are becoming things of the past.

NEGRO COFFEE.

NEGRO or Wild Coffee is the name that has been given to Fedegozo seeds, on account of their being used in western tropical Africa and in some of the West India Islands by the natives as a substitute for coffee. In some of the French African colonies the seeds are also known as *Café nègre* and *Café marron*. Botanically, the plant producing the seed is known as '*Cassia occidentalis*.' It grows very freely in most tropical countries; in fact, it is a common weed, with a sickly, offensive smell, that many planters would fain be rid of. The seeds are roasted and ground, and the infusion, made in the same way as ordinary coffee amazingly resembles the finest Mocha. This fact is confirmed by Dr Nicholls of Dominica, who, writing to the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a few years back, states: 'I collected some seeds, and directed my cook to roast and grind them, so that I might taste the "coffee." Other matters engaging my attention, I forgot the circumstance until several days afterwards, when, one evening, my wife inquired how I liked my after-dinner cup of coffee. I turned to her inquiringly, when she laughingly said: "That is your wild coffee." I was indeed surprised, for the coffee was indistinguishable from that made of the best Arabian beans, and we in Dominica are celebrated for our good coffee. Afterwards, some of the seeds, roasted and ground, were brought to me, and the aroma was equal to that of the coffee ordinarily used in the island.'

Dr Livingstone took some of these seeds to the Mauritius Botanical Gardens, and mentioned that the natives of tropical Africa roasted and used them like coffee.

It has not been definitely stated that the infusion has any stimulating effect, but it is only fair to suppose it has, otherwise the negroes would hardly employ it in lieu of coffee. Chemical analysis shows it to consist of fatty matters (olein and margarine), 4.9; tannic acid, 0.9; sugar, 2.1; gum, 28.8; starch, 2.0; cellulose, 34.0; water, 7.0; calcium sulphate, and phosphate, chrysophanic acid, 0.9; malic acid, sodium chloride, magnesium sulphate, iron, silica, together, 5.4; and achrosine, 13.58 parts in 100. Achrosine is soluble in water, and communicates to the latter a garnet colour. It contains carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and sulphur; but its exact composition has not been determined. It is soluble also in alcohol and in acids and alkalies. The colour cannot be fixed upon tissues by any known mordant, and it is this circumstance that induced Professor Clouet, who made the analysis, to term it achrosine, or 'not colouring,' although being coloured itself.

If we might venture an hypothesis, we would suggest that further investigation into this colouring matter may prove that the colour is the important feature from an alimentary point of view. This has recently been proved to be the case with kola. For many years scientists were

puzzled as to the nature of the substance in the kola nut that produced the stimulating and nutritive effect. It was at first suggested that it was due to caffeine; but experiments proved that this was not the case. At length, after prolonged researches, Professor Heckel of Marseilles practically demonstrated that the 'muscle-bracing' and other beneficial properties of the kola nut were entirely due to the presence of a colouring body which he designated Kola Red ('rouge de kola'), and which a German scientist has since named Kolanin.

Besides using Fedegozo seeds as a substitute for coffee, the natives employ the whole plant as a remedial agent in various complaints and diseases. It is closely allied to ordinary senna—in fact, in Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, it is called small senna—so readers will not be surprised to learn that the whole plant is purgative. This is mainly attributable to the mucilaginous and extractive matters in conjunction with the small percentage of chrysophanic acid that analysis proves to be present in the plant. Torrefaction destroys the purgative principle in the seeds and causes them to taste like coffee.

One of the most useful properties of the plant is its febrifuge action. It is generally administered by boiling an ounce of the seed in ten ounces of water; and when this quantity is reduced to nine ounces, it is given to the patient during the cold period of a rigor; a profuse perspiration follows, and the rigors do not recur. The seeds have repeatedly been employed in France and in some West India Islands for this purpose; and instead of the decoction being used as just described, sixty grammes of the seed have been macerated in a litre of Malaga wine.

The value of the plant is recognised in all parts of the world. Mohammedan writers recommend its use in cases of coughs, especially whooping-coughs; an infusion of the root is considered by the American Indians to be an antidote against various poisons; and in Brazil the same preparation is used as a tonic and diuretic in dropsy and liver complaints. This latter property has gained for the plant the same unconventional title that country children apply to our own dandelion.

PROBATION.

It shall be mine, although I wait for it—
Wait while the sweet dawn broadens into day,
And lets my longing eyes see, far away,
That land, my promised land—wait while I sit,
Wearied beneath the noontide glare, and smit
Almost to utter blindness—wait, till gray,
Between my eyes and it, the dim mists stray,
And over all the earth eve's shadows fit.
O throbbing heart, when thou hast learned to beat
With patient pulses—these sad eyes to shine
In fearless faith, and when my eager feet
Have ceased to choose their path—when e'en Love's
wine

Were bitter unless God have made it sweet,
Ah then—in that same hour—it shall be mine!

KATE MELLERSH.

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THE ETHICS OF HOTEL LIFE.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

THE experienced know almost at a glance who is and who is not accustomed to Hotel Life. There is the same feeble helplessness of demeanour—the same lost and strayed air—the same kind of ‘Good gracious, what am I to do now, and what is going to happen next?’ which mark out the unaccustomed from the experienced, and give the latter the map of the country so soon as these others enter in at the door. The habits among themselves, too, of the unaccustomed betray them quite as much as their demeanour on first entering. There are certain who hold an hotel as no more public in the sense of self-restraint than their own home in the heart of the country. Have they acquired the bad habit of snap and snarl, of contradiction and interruption?—small check it is to them that strange and curious ears are listening to the familiar interludes which sound so bitter and are so futile! There is no malice, no real heart of sinful temper in these verbal scratchings. They mean no more than the stage combat—‘one, two, three, four, and cross over’—and their intimates take them at their full valuation. But strangers do not. Hence these two highly respectable and well-living citizens are set down as leading a cat-and-dog life, which they do not care to control even in public.

At the opposite end of the scale stand the unrestrained lovers—people who caress each other in public, call each other pet names sure to be of ludicrous complexion to strangers, and act generally as if no such thing as the dignity of reserve existed, and as if the sanctities of privacy were not different from the publicities of the market-place. These are the people who give each other choice bits or superfluous bits from their own plates; drink out of each other's glass; dispute amicably about the last teaspoonful of wine; and from start to finish act with the utmost unconcern as to appearances and the public verdict, thinking no more of their fellow-men than if they were two love-birds on a perch.

In a manner affiliated to these two types are the stand-off and the familiar—the people who look at you with a curiously supercilious air, as if questioning your pedigree, your upbringing, your business, your religious faith and political creed, and not by any means sure that the answers, if given, would be satisfactory. And there are the familiar, who call you ‘dear’ on the second interview, and before the third is out have confided to you their whole history—who they are and what they were, what their fathers died of, and how they lost their children, and anything else it may interest them to tell, to which you must make a show of sympathetic attention. Fortunately, these intimacies are like flowers without roots. They die as quickly as they are born, and their place knows them no more.

The unaccustomed are generally frightfully hard on the servants. They seem to consider the service of an hotel as a steady-going, unrelaxing automatic kind of thing, wherein the servants can never be tired, never want rest, never need to be absent from their posts for their own food or relaxation. It is a kind of ‘one down, another come on,’ to their mind. They do not realise the personality, the individuality, of any of the servants, but imagine that if one is tired another is there ready to take the work with the same automatic precision—the same minute attention to individual fads which persons of this sort demand from hotel servants. For this kind carries all its fads with it, and feels aggrieved if the chambermaid who has thirty rooms and their inmates to attend to, forgets this or mistimes that, bewildered as she is by the multiplicity of things to remember for those, unaccustomed, who treat an hotel as their private house, and themselves as the chief and principal of the whole affair.

Among these inconvenient inmates are the early risers. It is all very well to say that their servants are up every morning by six, and that six is as late as any well-conditioned domestic should be abed. The reasoning holds good for

those who go to bed at ten, and whose wildest vigils never stretch beyond eleven—those, too, who have had the whole evening and great part of the afternoon to themselves, when they might rest in tranquillity and gather enough strength for the next day's modest campaign. But for hotel servants—on their feet from seven till twelve, with no period of repose, not so much as a solitary half-hour they can call their own, things are different; and the abnormally early riser, demanding hot water, breakfast, what not, at inappropriate times, is a nuisance, and cruel at that. People who come to an hotel should come prepared to abandon a few of their own personal and special habits, and to conform to those which have been found best for the majority. Nowhere is that modern craze of 'individualism' more out of place than in a crowded hotel, where the smooth, the just, the humane working of things demands some amount of consideration from the visitors, and with this consideration a corresponding amount of giving up.

All sorts of characters meet you at the table-d'hôte, making a moral kaleidoscope as interesting and as infinite as is the material. There are the people who eat enormously, suggesting their determination to get their money's worth at all events. Come what may, they have paid for it, and they will have it. And there are people who pick and reject and grumble and find fault, with the air of the fastidiously accustomed who find nothing so good as that to which they have been used, and are for ever regretting their own cook and their own harler. And there are others so naïvely content with the horrible messes which come up under French names!--so touchingly sure that this is real French cookery, which they have heard of so often; and, dear me! now they have come across it, how good it is, and how far superior to our plain roast and boiled! With them are often children, who are encouraged to eat of everything that comes to table, and to eat without stint. If they do empty that whole dish of sweets, what harm? They are out in the open air all day long, and at such times as these it is well to enlarge the boundaries. What these small people manage to stow away in cheek pouches and supplementary stomachic store-closets not existing among the ordinary sons of men, is one of the marvels of hotel life. There it is, however; and it knocks the bottom out of all one's theories of what constitutes a proper dietary for the young, and of how much moral discipline should come into their education in the line of self-restraint as to appetites, fleshly and sensual. And speaking of children, too, a word has to be said in deprecation of the lax discipline and imperfect accommodation which makes the general drawing-room their nursery and playroom. Let them play and romp and dance and shout to their hearts' content, but let them have their own assigned recreation-room, wherein they can expand according to desire. To make the lives of the elder portion of the community unendurable by reason of the 'wild huzzas and cruel noise' so delightful to youth—so distracting to age—is an unfair division. Let the one be happy in its own glad noisy restless way; but let the other have peace, and the quietude without which is infinite suffering.

The windows are the grand battle-ground of

differences in age and constitution. There shiver the poor old goodies whom bronchitis catches by the throat if but the keen wind looks too sharply through the closed windows. There flush the radiant young and the many-fleshed mature, who fan themselves at Christmas-time and cannot exist with closed windows winter or summer, night or day—who enjoy a draught, and call a keen north-easter jolly. And who, pray, is to decide between them? As a rule the young have it, and the poor old goodies suffer. Here, rheumatic pains are increased and the stiff walk becomes a decided hobble. There, the old familiar enemy swoops down on the helpless victim and chokes him with worse than desert-sand. Then a week's spell in bed, with doctor and drugs and so much loss of time and enjoyment, makes the practical comment on the wisdom of sitting in a draught with a keen wind racing through the window to the door. The same thing goes on in the drawing-room, which the children use as a passage-place into the garden, with the necessary result of cold shivers down sensitive backs, and catarrhs of various kinds and different locations. But the old and frail have the worst of it, inasmuch as pains and sickness are worse than 'stuffiness' and discomfort.

Of the company, what an infinite variety! There are the badly dressed—men who slouch down to dinner in knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket, and women who wear crumpled collars and faded blouses. And there are the full-dressed, who make the mixed crowd of a second-rate hotel occasion for display in fine linen and diamond studs—bare shoulders, rich velvet, much jewellery, and an air of ballroom elegance. There are the free and the frightened—men whose hail-fellow-well-met kind of advances you have to resist; and timid girls, who could not answer you 'yes' or 'no' if you spoke to them, which in very pity you do not. There are the emphatic Nobodies who come from small provincial towns, and are flustered and excited at this their deeper draught of life; and there are the Somebodies, as yet anonymous, who come into the room with that air of distinction unmistakable and not to be gainsaid. They may be homely in feature, insignificant in person, by no means taking—but they are Somebodies. That stands out as plainly as the dome of St Peter's, and you seize the subtle announcement on their first entrance into the room. By-and-by you find how right your prognostic was, and are perhaps startled by the breadth and weight of this Somebody's repute. Sometimes these lions are humane and modest-mannered enough. Sometimes they are terribly the reverse, and can only be appeased by being induced to roar while fed with cakes of flattery and attention. And sometimes even they, great as they are, are served with the very cheese-parings of renown; when that benighted citizen says doubtfully, 'Don't know the name. What is he? What has he done?' Or some less imperfect if more entangled critic pronounces joyfully: 'Oh, he is Mr So-and-so, and he wrote that beautiful book of poems, don't you know?' But, unfortunately for the critic, he never wrote a line in his life, save, perhaps, the titles of his pictures for the R. A.; or haply his hypothetical book of poems was a successful play, or a novel that made its mark, or maybe only a book of philosophy, more widely talked

about than read, and less understood than discussed.

Many and many more types we must leave out of our gallery. The people who gather all the good things to themselves and their own party, and revel in abundance while others have nothing—what a well-known hotel type that is! So are the good-natured souls who are always willing to share their advantages, and who look after your little extra wants as if you were at their own homes. The people who—with a party of Irish priests at that table there in the corner, Home Rulers to a man as they are—sound the tocsin of the Union loud enough for all the room to hear. The rowdy sons and daughters of the Bank Holiday yesterday, who, at breakfast, sing, shout, let off little sharp screams mingled with gurgles of laughter, pull crackers, and generally comport themselves as 'Arrys and 'Arriets are wont to do. The people who slip by the servants, or scamp the tips when they cannot save them altogether, on the futile plea, 'Attendance charged for in the bill;' and the people who know that tips are expected, are part of the provisions of the place, and that no one who really respected himself would dream of 'bilking' the servants, as of old the scamps of the road used to 'bilk the pikeman.' The people who practise their scales, and play with humdrum fidelity for the stipulated two hours every day—or the piano is 'sick' and under a physician in the shape of a tuner with a plentiful supply of catgut in his pocket. These and more we encounter in an hotel, where also we meet the lovely and the genuine, the gentle, the refined, the unassuming, the enchanting. In any case, an hotel is a microcosm where we stumble against oddities of various kinds. And all this time we have left those ethics alone!—those ethics which can be compressed into a single sentence the briefest word of advice. 'Remember, an hotel is not home; nor are strangers your own familiars; nor, in a crowd, can you claim the special indulgences rightfully due to the one and the other.' The law of hotel life is consideration for others; and the purest form of socialism we have yet accomplished is to be found in a public drawing-room and at a table-d'hôte.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVII.

A tone which is now for ever fled;
A hope which is now for ever past;
A love so sweet it could not last,
Was time long past.

SHELLEY.

'HAS Mr Ludlow come home yet?'

'No, Missy; but I'm expecting him every minute.'

'But if he had come by the train he fixed, he would have been here an hour ago.'

The old man smiled. 'I think I can guess pretty well what he's doing. He's gone round by Burlington House just to have a look at his picture.—Bless your heart, he was so terrible took up with his Pomona, he could hardly bear to part with her. When the cab came to the door to take it to the Academy, I think he'd two

minds about letting it go, even on the chance of its not being hung. I've known amany painting gentlemen, and they're all a deal took up with their own pictures, though some of them hides it more than others; but I never saw one so downright wrop up as him; and he've stuck a fancy price on it, so as no one shan't buy it.—But come in, Missy, and I'll fetch up the tea. He'll be here in a—— Bless my heart!' Warren ended in a bewildered whisper, 'whoever is that young lady? I seem to know her face pretty near as well as I do yours.'

'It is my cousin, Miss Lester,' Sage said; 'but I don't think you can have seen her before.'

The whisper had not been lost on Pomona, and both she and Sage enjoyed the mystification of the old man; and the puzzled looks he stole at her as he spread the little tea-table in the studio, making excuses to come again and again to re-arrange the tea-things or bring an extra plate or teaspoon; and once Sage caught him standing staring with a plate of biscuits in his hand, from which, in his abstraction, an avalanche was descending on to the floor.

Pomona was examining with interest all the pretty artistic things with which the studio—unlike that of Owen Ludlow's at Scar—was adorned. A studio was quite as great a novelty to her as a shabby, little house in Dalston; and both one and the other struck her as intensely interesting, and something fresh and outside the conventional limits within which the lines of her life had hitherto been cast.

To Sage it was all familiar; but perhaps no less interesting than it was to Pomona, as association took the place of novelty with even more powerful charm; and where Pomona saw richly coloured Oriental tapestry, Sage saw the background to a picturesque figure; and where Pomona exclaimed over a Venetian mirror with quaint embossed silver frame, Sage could echo the admiration, seeing in it the dark handsome face and smiling eyes it had so often reflected. That bronze Mercury was beautiful and graceful, as Pomona said; but the beauty and grace were entirely associated with Maurice, saying before he went away in the winter: 'I wish I had winged heels like this chappie to bring me to my lady-love.'

There were not many pictures about; but Pomona was looking at some canvases standing with their faces to the wall in a corner, when the sputtering, spitting, little silver kettle on the tea-table called Sage away to make the tea; and while she was doing it, Pomona gave an exclamation of recognition.

'Sage, I am sure I have seen this man.—Oh yes; of course it is a Mr Moore I met at Mrs Coppleston's dinner. He told me he knew Mr Ludlow; indeed, it was he who first told me anything about him. It is only a sketch, but it is very good.'

Sage spilt some of the hot water on her finger, suddenly startled by hearing Maurice's name.

'Look,' Pomona went on—'do you know him?'

'Yes, a little.' It was no doubt the scalded finger that sent the rush of colour over Sage's delicate face and neck; and Pomona was eager in her sympathy and wish to do something to alleviate the pain, though Sage declared it was

nothing at all to trouble about, and would be all right in a minute.

Just then they heard a cab stop and the sounds of an arrival, a portmanteau slammed down in the hall, and Ludlow's voice talking to the cabman, and Warren's voice informing him that Miss Sage was there and another young lady; and then Ludlow's step sounded along the passage. He came in through the other room that opened into the studio, where he and Dr Merridew had sat on Christmas Eve, and Sage went forward to meet him.

'Well, little friend,' he said in his usual hearty, cheery voice—'well, this is a pleasant welcome. Where's'— And then, behind Sage, he saw Pomona, and the words died on his lips.

She was standing full in the light, looking towards him with a grave, shy look, that—Sage thought with a slight sense of disappointment—was less like the picture than the radiant, bright look that was more usual to her. Sage did not know how wonderfully more like it made Pomona to Katharine, the young wife whose sweet eyes had closed on this life twenty years ago.

Owen Ludlow still held Sage's hand in his in affectionate greeting, and Sage felt his hand grip hers with a sudden, painful pressure, and saw that his face had turned an ashy sort of white. It had not occurred to her till then that the likeness to the picture meant also the likeness to the dead wife, who was so living a memory in his heart; and she wished now that she had prepared him for it.

'This is Miss Lester,' she said quickly—'my cousin, Pomona Lester.'

He had recovered himself in a moment, and came forward with something of his usual courteous manner. 'I am very pleased to make Miss Lester's acquaintance. I am sorry to have been delayed in returning; and I hope Jervis has done the honours and brought you some tea.'

Sage fancied there was an unnaturally stiff tone in his voice, and a cold look in his eyes, almost of aversion, as he looked at Pomona, who, on her side, had a little touch of haughtiness in her manner, and an elegant, chill formality that had been conspicuous by its absence before, every look and movement and tone having seemed so wonderfully simple and natural and unconscious.

Sage was uncomfortably aware that this introduction was not a success—that these two friends of hers were not getting on and did not take to one another. She could see, with Pomona's eyes, that Mr Ludlow without his sympathetic, kindly manner was not attractive; while, with his, she could see Pomona as a 'fashionable young lady, giving herself haughty, fine-lady airs. She could not tell the other feelings that were surging within him, and had to be kept rigidly down by that stiff, rather over-polite manner, which Sage dreadfully feared Pomona might consider bad form.

She did not know that when Ludlow's hand touched Pomona's, he felt a tiny baby's purposeless clasp that had folded round one of his fingers twenty years ago, as he stooped to kiss a warm, little forehead among the folds of a big, white shawl. She did not know Pomona's eyes were really Katharine's looking across those twenty years at him with silent reproach. She did not

know how, after the first shock, followed by a desperate effort to disbelieve in the girl's identity, and assure himself that the likeness was purely accidental, that very likeness had been hateful and repugnant to him; the tone of her voice, an echo of the melody of that sweet honey-moon year, jarred and stung him; the curve of her cheek and line of her brow irritated and filled him with a sort of resentment; the very position in which her slim hands lay in her lap fretted him almost beyond endurance.

Pomona, on her side, felt repelled and disappointed. Maurice Moore had spoken so warmly of the painter; Sage had sung his praises so heartily; she had been so interested in his studio, and naturally she was much more inclined to like than to dislike people. In all her sunny, happy life, she had hardly ever met with any one to dislike, having one of those natures that see the best in every one, and so her whole world was inhabited by nice, pleasant, interesting people. It is a blessed gift to be born with, this quality of seeing the best. I hardly think a fairy god-mother could give a better, happier gift to a child in any rank of life. Oh yes; no doubt they will be constantly taken in, constantly disappointed; but that is infinitely better than to live in a dreary world, seeing only the low motives, bad disposition, meanness, and selfishness that are no doubt only too conspicuous in most of us, though, thank Heaven, not unmixed in any of us.

But Pomona's feeling for Mr Ludlow amounted almost to dislike, and being such a very unusual sensation with her, it fretted her, and made her uncomfortable, and she was glad to take her leave as soon as politeness allowed.

Nothing was said of her likeness to the picture. Owen Ludlow talked hard and heavily on society subjects in which he was not at all *au fait*, and Pomona answered with hardly veiled indifference. Sage vainly tried to make things run more easily and pleasantly, and it was a relief to all when Pomona declared she must go.

She wanted to take Sage back; but Mr Ludlow would not hear of it, declaring that was his privilege; and while he went to see if the carriage was there, Sage said: 'You don't know how nice he can be.'

'I am sure he can be very nice to you, dear; but I don't think he would to me. He doesn't like me.'

'Oh, Pomona!'

'I don't mind a bit, dear, little Sage, as long as you like me, and I am sure you do.—When will you come and see me? And what day shall we go down to Beechfield together and see mother? Come to-morrow morning and have lunch with me?—No! too busy? Well, I will write. I am so, so glad we have met.'

And then the painter returned and ceremoniously escorted Miss Lester to her carriage.

'Are you ill?' Sage asked anxiously as the painter came back into the studio.

He was walking very slowly, and his head was bent, and his shoulders stooped like an old man, and his face had a drawn look on it as of suffering.

'No, little friend, not ill, only old and tired, and not up, as you may perceive, to fashionable society. I didn't know you had such fine rela-

tions, Sage—and yet, I think your father told me once of a cousin.'

'I never saw her till to-day.—Oh, Mr Ludlow, don't you think she is lovely?'

He paused a minute, and then said with cold impartiality: 'Yes, perhaps she would be considered so.'

'But don't you think so?'

'Well, I am not sure.'

He was moody and absent; and Sage hardly knew if he were listening to her description of Pomona's sudden appearance that afternoon, and how sweet and cordial she was, and how she wanted her, Sage, to go down with her to Beechfield to see 'my aunt, Lady Lester.'

I do not think one need call it snobbishness the pleasure those last words gave to Sage; or if it were so, it was snobbishness of a very simple elementary sort, not unnatural in a girl who, till that afternoon, had thought of titles as belonging to people in books and newspapers, not to any one in ordinary life, certainly not life in Dalston.

She was longing to tell it all to Maurice; it was such a gratification to think that her relations would bear comparison with his; it had always rather afflicted her that Maurice's friends and relations should be in a higher station than hers; and if she had not loved him so, the feeling of condescension on his part would soon have become galling. I think it was this that made her shrink a little from descriptions of any society he went into, which shrinking had led to her hearing hardly anything of the dinner party at the Coplestons at which Maurice had met Pomona. But now that it would be give and take, she would like to hear all about his friends, and would not even mind being introduced to them; and, by-and-by, she would tell Pomona of their engagement, and take Maurice to see her, and, perhaps, to the beautiful place at Beechfield, and to 'my aunt, Lady Lester.'

I have said that in old days at Scar these two friends had no scruple in relapsing into silence when thoughts grave or gay absorbed them; and so now Sage's thoughts were roaming away; while perhaps Owen Ludlow's were as far from the studio and the present, only his were wandering into the past, sad and gray, while hers were venturing into the rose-coloured future.

'I think,' he said at last, drawing his hand wearily over his forehead and eyes—'I think I shall go back to Scar to-morrow.'

CARVED IVORIES.

THE subject of Carved Ivory forms one of the most important branches of the industrial arts, for from extant examples the art may be traced from prehistoric to the present times, and specimens of carvings made by all peoples in all ages may be seen in the public museums and collections. Owing, probably, to the little intrinsic value of ivory, many specimens have been preserved, it being a substance of little or no value for turning into bullion, so much needed for the successful carrying on of the wars of the middle ages; many specimens also were preserved and hidden, owing to their portability and small size.

At the present time, when so many vegetable substances are being used in the place of ivory, it is as well that the nature and characteristics of true ivory should be stated. If a section were to be taken and carefully examined, there would be observed series of lines proceeding from a common centre in arcs of circles, also that these arcs intersected one another and formed minute diamond-shaped spaces. In its strictest sense, true ivory is confined to that kind of tooth-substance which shows such diamond or lozenge shaped spaces.

The chief source of ivory is that obtained from the elephants of Africa and Asia. Ivory so obtained may be distinguished, owing to the African when first cut exhibiting hardly any grain, being first of a transparent tint, afterwards becoming lighter in colour. Asiatic when first cut is like African which has been cut for some time, but becomes yellow by exposure to light. The African has a closer texture, and is capable of being more highly polished than the Asiatic variety. Beside elephant ivory, other substances have been largely used in the carving of the middle ages, notably walrus, narwhal, and hippopotamus ivory. It is interesting to note that King Olthere of Norway visited King Alfred the Great in 890 A.D., after a walrus hunt in the North Sea, one of the objects of which was the obtaining of walrus ivory. Another very important source of ivory is that obtained from the Mammoth, the extinct *Elephas primigenius*. Large quantities of this ivory have been found in the frozen soils of Siberia, it being said that nearly all the turned ivory-work of Russia has been made from this so-called fossil ivory. These extinct elephants from which it is obtained have been immured in the frozen soil for countless centuries. In prehistoric times herds of these animals roamed over Western Europe.

The very earliest carvings now extant are those found in the caves of Le Moustier and La Madeleine, preserved at Paris, bearing representations of animals as seen by the prehistoric men. Amongst others are an ibex, a reindeer coming to a stream to drink, and perhaps the most important is an incised carving of the Mammoth, showing the long curved tusks and the shaggy mane, such as none of the present species possess.

Many centuries elapse between the prehistoric ivories and those to which any approximate date can be assigned. As in regard to other of the industrial arts, so in regard to that of carved ivory the earliest mention is referred to Egypt; a tablet of the twelfth or Theban dynasty (c. 2020 B.C.) gives directions for the making of a small statuette, parts of which were to be of ebony and parts of ivory.

In the British Museum are various chairs and other articles decorated with ivory, to which have been assigned dates varying from the eighteenth to the tenth centuries B.C., notably two daggers

with plain uncarved ivory handles dating from the eighteenth or seventeenth century B.C.

One of the most interesting series of all the objects found at Nineveh was a very valuable collection of about three hundred carved ivories, probably made between the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. They were discovered by Sir Henry Layard in a room, possibly the Treasury of the North-west Palace; and when found, were in a very brittle condition, owing to the fatty substances of which ivory is partly formed having decomposed. When brought to England, they were boiled in gelatine. As a consequence, they again became to a certain extent solid, and were placed (and are now to be seen) in the British Museum. Amongst the largest specimens, certain plaques with representations of Egyptian monarchs are finely carved. A very large number of small pieces consisted probably of the frieze placed round some valuable chest or coffer. Amongst other portions to be seen are some few which have small cells cut out of the ivory, and into which have been let portions of lapis lazuli and gold, the largest of this kind of work being a piece which is stated to have formed a part of a throne. In the Old Testament it is said that Solomon made a throne of ivory and overlaid it with the best gold. Since these Nineveh ivories were probably made about the time of Solomon, and very likely in or near the same place where the throne of Solomon was carved, might there not now be seen in this piece in the British Museum a part of a throne similar to the one made for the Temple at Jerusalem?

Ivory is referred to in the Bible. The ivory house which Ahab made is stated to have been one of his memorable acts. In the prophets, mention is made of 'benches of ivory brought out of the Isles of Chittim,' 'horns of ivory' and beds of ivory. On a black marble obelisk brought from Assyria, and now in the British Museum, slaves are represented as carrying elephants' tusks; as also similar representations are to be seen upon the bas-reliefs of the ruined palace of Darius and Xerxes at Persepolis.

In the sixth century B.C. the towns of Sicyon and Argos were noted for their ivory statues; and in the year 600, the Cypselidæ sent as an offering to Olympia a chest of ivory and gold. About 490 B.C. the very large chryselephantine statues made by Phidias and his contemporaries are noted. These statues, which were made partly of ivory and partly of gold, were of all sizes, ranging up to fifty-eight feet in height. It is very difficult to know how the ancients could have obtained such large pieces of ivory necessary for the making of these statues; and many theories in regard to it have been formed. Some think that the ivory was welded together in a way unknown now; others, that large plaques were hung on or fastened to an inner core, and the joinings carefully concealed, somewhat similar to the way by which the Battersea enamellers in later times concealed fire-flaws and cracks on their finest pieces of work by painting sprays of flowers over these cracks.

It would seem probable that the flesh-parts which were exposed to view were of ivory, whilst the dress was of gold. Of all these statues, the two most important were the figure of Minerva, which was placed in the Parthenon, and was

forty feet high; and that of Jupiter, placed in the temple of Zeus, at Olympia, and fifty-eight feet high. These statues, which were seen and described by the old writers of the early centuries before and after Christ, were destroyed by the fanaticism of the early Christians.

Very few ivories carved before the time of the Emperor Constantine (324 to 337 A.D.) are in existence. Most of the larger European museums possess one or two specimens; the South Kensington Museum has two such—one, a portion of a sacrificial cup; the other, one leaf of a diptych bearing the name of 'Symmachorum' incised upon it.

The subject of diptychs and triptychs is a very interesting one in connection with ivory. Anything doubled or doubly folded may be called a diptych; and should it consist of three parts, the two outer leaves of which fold over and enclose the central one, the object would be a triptych. During the early centuries before and after Christ, it was customary to use diptychs and tablets for writing purposes; the outside would be made of wood, bone, or ivory; the inner surface being hollowed out and coated with wax, which latter was scratched upon with a stylus. Two small diptychs with characters scratched upon the wax were found a few years ago in a gold mine in Transylvania, and from the words upon them it is known that they were made in 169 A.D.

When a person was elected consul under the Roman Empire, it became customary for him to send presents to the senators, high state officials, and other friends. These presents were very costly; and amongst others sent were ivory diptychs, upon the outsides of which would be generally carved a representation of the consul himself seated in his curule chair and attired in his official robes. In a lower compartment would be carved representations of the games with which the consul would inaugurate his year of office. Inside, the wax was inscribed with the names of the preceding consuls, finishing with that of the donor. At the present time, twenty-one distinct examples of these consular diptychs, as they are called, are in existence, some of which may be seen in the British and South Kensington Museums, and at Liverpool, Milan, Darmstadt, Berlin, Paris, &c., and date from the third to the sixth centuries A.D., and are chiefly of Byzantine workmanship.

A second class of ivory diptychs are those known as 'Non-consular,' generally having been made for some special purpose, and often of very great beauty. Among others may be mentioned that of Æsculapius and Hygieia, now at Liverpool; and the Tablet of Sens at Paris. But perhaps one of the finest ever sculptured is a single leaf of a diptych previously mentioned, inscribed 'Symmachorum,' the other leaf, much damaged, being in the Cluny Museum, Paris. The two leaves originally formed the doors of a reliquary at Moustier, in France, probably being used for that purpose some time in the eighth century. As a diptych, they may have contained the marriage contract between members of the Nicomachus and Symmachus family, the names inscribed upon each leaf.

In the British Museum, one of the largest carved ivories in existence is a diptych leaf of

Byzantine origin, sixteen and a half inches long and five and a half inches wide.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, possessors of diptychs presented them to the Church, and then, instead of containing the names of the consuls, they enclosed the names of persons who should be prayed for, the lists being read out at mass. A few such diptychs still exist, and are classified and known as 'Ecclesiastical.'

A very important work in ivory in the sixth century A.D. was a chair made for the Archbishop of Ravenna (546-556), and now preserved among the treasures of the cathedral at Ravenna. At the end of the sixth century and early in the seventh century, there was a decline in art in Italy, but at the same time there was a revival in Eastern Europe; and plaques of ivory carved at this and later periods in and about that region are to be seen in museums, and are classified as 'Byzantine.' About the year 750, a bitter struggle commenced in reference to the use of images not only as used in churches but in private life, and under Leo the Isaurian the fanatics obtained great power. To the rage of these iconoclasts, the wholesale destruction of antique monuments and sculpture must be assigned.

Charlemagne, who at this period (812 A.D.) was the great potentate in Western Europe, sent a Commissioner to Greece to inquire into the persecutions, and at the same time to invite any persons who so wished to come and live under his sway. Many journeyed to Western Europe, and at the same time brought with them objects of art, by means of which examples the workers of the West were enabled to improve their arts, and among others, their ivory carvings. Works made during the period ranging to 972 A.D. are classified together and are known as 'Carlovingian.'

From about the year 870 to 972 A.D., Europe was much disturbed by wars, which, together with the prevailing idea that the end of the world was to take place in 1000 A.D., caused a great decline in all the arts.

In 972 the Emperor Otto II. of Germany was married to the Greek Princess Thèophanie, who when she came to Germany brought with her workers skilled in the arts of Greece. These workers were settled in the towns bordering on the Rhine; and objects made by these people, their pupils, and descendants, which show a style somewhat Byzantine in form, but at the same time with Western faces and other parts differing from those made solely in Greece, are classified together and are known as 'Rhenish Byzantine.' Although there was again a decline in art generally in Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, yet the arts were to a great extent fostered and protected in the fortified towns of the Rhine district; and of all the art objects made in the twelfth century, few can compare with two reliquaries made at Siegburg, each in the form of a Greek church, around which are placed statuettes of the prophets, Christ and the disciples; and at the ends of the transepts, carved plaques. The larger of the two is the property of the nation, and is to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, and has an interesting history connected with it. For many centuries it was preserved in the Abbey of Hoch Elten, near Emmerich, until the French Revolu-

tion of last century, when the Abbey was sacked. Rather than allow such a precious object to be stolen, the Abbess took it away and hid it in the chimney of a neighbouring house. A few years later it came into the possession of a priest at Dornich, who sold it for eleven pounds; the buyer again sold it to Prince Salm for thirty pounds, who in his turn sold it to a dealer for one thousand pounds; the latter disposing of it to Prince Soltykoff, at the sale of whose collection it was purchased for the nation for £2142; and if the price lately paid for an enamelled hunting horn, namely, £6615, may be taken as a guide, it would probably fetch almost a like sum.

As in regard to all the arts, so in regard to ivory, a great renaissance took place in Western Europe in the fourteenth century. Gothic architecture was well known, and was made to serve as a model for carved ivory diptychs. Many such are to be seen divided into compartments representing Gothic arches with trefoils and quatrefoils, under which arches religious subjects were carved. Many other objects now became carved in ivory, such as chessmen, combs, draughts, caskets, mirror cases, pastoral staves, 'taus'—the earlier form of pastoral staves—oliphants or tenure horns, and statues chiefly of the religious kind. In the seventeenth century, some very fine vases were made of turned ivory by Fil. Senger, turner to Cosimo III., Grand-duke of Tuscany.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, various sculptors in ivory were engaged in carving portions of tusks with classical and other subjects, which were afterwards mounted in silver or silver-gilt by some of the finest Augsburg and Nuremberg workers, and formed vases and tankards. In the eighteenth century, various carvings in ivory were made chiefly of statuettes and small plaques, but none attain to the excellence of the earlier carvings. In modern times, the ivory carvings of India have become noted for their minute and delicate work. In China and Japan, ivory has been carved, the ivory balls enclosed inside one another being specially noted. Many theories have been formed as to how these balls have been cut; perhaps a probable one is that a ball of ivory was taken, around the upper and lower ends of which four small holes were carved out, gradually diminishing in size towards the centre until the axis of the one hole met the axis of the other or lower one at right angles in the centre of the ball; and that then small tools were inserted, and a thin layer of ivory, forming a part of a circle from one hole to its lower corresponding one, was cut and loosened from the whole mass; and so gradually cutting from one hole to the next one, a complete inner circle was eventually loosened, the circles themselves afterwards being cut into the required pattern.

Attempts have been made to forge old ivories and pass them off as genuine old ones. In 1862 a copy of a leaf of a consular diptych was made from an old engraving which Wiltheim had made of it in 1659, and had been offered to and accepted by a continental museum as an original object. An English expert who was shown the forgery at once stated that the original was in the South Kensington Museum, and advised the authorities to take it out of its frame and examine

its back and to look for the writing which had been placed there in the eighth century. Needless to say, no writing was visible, and the forgery was at once detected.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER III.

THE return of the eldest son and heir to the station created the usual amount of gossip in the district. Alf kept up the character he had first assumed of careless liberality, and did not interfere with Robert's management. He soon renewed his intimacy with the Rudders, and, as was but natural, became a devoted admirer of Kate's. On her part, it was only to be supposed that she should feel interested in him. He had plenty to talk about that had a certain charm of novelty; his adventures during the Zulu War and in the outside districts of Australia were told without boasting, and soon served to put him on a small heroic pedestal in the community.

As may be presumed, this intimacy with the Rudders was not at all to Robert's liking; and both men felt that it was, after all, but a hollow truce between them, and one that might be ruptured at any moment. Kate Rudder had no thought of arousing the younger brother's jealousy by treating the elder so intimately. She sincerely liked Robert, and it only wanted a word from him to awaken a warmer feeling.

Unfortunately, it was different with Alf. He had fallen head over ears in love with Kate, and felt certain that it was returned. It was evident that such a state of things could not go long without an explosion of some sort. Blanche had long guessed Robert's secret, and was prepared to become an active ally, should the turn of affairs necessitate it.

The smothered feud broke out one night when the two men were smoking a pipe before retiring.

'I intend to try my luck to-morrow,' said Alf. 'It's time I settled down and got married.'

'I quite agree with you,' returned Robert, somewhat meaningly. 'Where are you going to condescend to throw the handkerchief?'

'Oh, don't put on side. You know very well that I am going to ask Kate Rudder, and have every reason to suppose she will say yes.'

'It's a lie!' replied Bob furiously, a sudden gust of passion completely overcoming him.

Alf started, but checked himself. 'I can afford to laugh at you,' he said. 'Rave away; it won't whistle your sweetheart back.'

'If you put your boast to the test to-morrow,' said Robert, in a calmer tone, 'you will find yourself mistaken. I should advise you to stay at home.'

'Keep your advice to yourself, and don't provoke me,' said the other, who was now in his turn losing his temper.

'Provoke you, indeed!' repeated Robert contemptuously.

'Yes, you beggar, or I'll soon get rid of you.'

'As you did Sam?'

Alf leaped to his feet, speechless with a mix-

ture of rage and fear. Next minute, the two men would have been at each other's throats, but the door opened, and Blanche entered. 'I heard your voices raised,' she said, affecting not to notice their menacing attitudes: 'what are you quarrelling about?'

'Oh, we never could agree of old,' said Robert, trying to calm himself, as his sister approached him.

'Look here, my fine fellow,' said Alf; 'to-morrow you take yourself, bag and baggage, out of this; and just see that your accounts are square when I come to overhaul them.'

Robert's face turned fiery red; but Blanche caught his hand. 'If Bob goes, I go too,' she said.

'You are quite welcome,' returned Alf, who had completely dropped the mask.

'I will give you full satisfaction about the station accounts to-morrow morning,' said Robert; 'and in a short time I trust you will be able to give an equally satisfactory account of what I shall require from you?'

'What do you mean?' demanded the other fiercely.

'Simply, I do not believe your version of your trip out west. I will see what Burgess has to say in the matter.'

'You will have to go to another place than Queensland, then, for he is dead.'

'Oh, you knew that, did you? And yet you pretended to ask after him.'

'Pshaw! I will not stop to listen to any more nonsense. To-morrow, I will show you who is master here.' He left the room.

The brother and sister had a long conversation, during which, for the first time, Robert told her about the buried papers and what he suspected of their import. Blanche was naturally horrified, and reiterated her now fixed determination to leave on the following day. Robert impressed upon her the necessity of absolute secrecy; and they were about parting, when she asked him where he was going to when he left. For herself, she was going on a visit to an aunt for a while.

'I am going to the Northern Territory of South Australia to look for Jim Turner,' he said.

As he spoke, he had his hand on the door, and half opened it. A noise outside struck his ear, and he threw it wide open, and looked along the passage. A dark shadow vanished at the end as he did so, and it immediately occurred to him that Alf had been listening.

'Forewarned is forearmed,' he thought as he retired. 'I must guard against Master Alf getting any inkling of those papers, or he will be beforehand with me.' Then he thought that if Alf had been listening, he would have heard all he confided to Blanche; but on second consideration, he remembered that they had spoken low, all but the last words referring to Jim Turner, and it would be hard to trace anything from that.

Blanche had given her brother a hint that he had better test his fate with Kate Rudder as soon as practicable, and he determined to do it the first thing in the morning, if possible before he settled up with his brother. With this object in view he was up at daylight, and by sunrise was

on his way, calculating that he would arrive at the Rudders' station in time for breakfast. He managed to hit the meal very nicely; and while seated thereat, he informed his friends of his resignation, or rather deposition, in favour of his eldest brother. As the terms on which the two men stood were pretty well known, this intimation did not surprise anybody. It elicited, however, a quick glance of sympathy from Kate, which was sufficient satisfaction for Robert. He soon made an opportunity to ask the momentous question. As two ships converge towards each other in mid-ocean on a calm day, so the wooing and the wooed have a silent occult speech of their own which is better than any outspoken language, and serves just as well to convey the intended meaning. In the old nursery and schoolroom, now turned into a lonely kind of lumber-room, seldom visited, Kate and Robert plighted their troth; and then he departed with a light heart to seek the consent of her parent. Old Rudder half expected what was coming; and Robert was delighted to find that the return of the rightful heir did not affect his suit. The fact was that Rudder had seen enough of him and his management during the past ten years to feel assured that young Patten was one of the men bound to rise, and that the present would be merely a temporary eclipse.

The fifteen miles home—home no longer—were soon covered, and he entered the house to find his half-brother waiting for him. To his surprise, Alf approached him in the sunniest manner possible. 'Look here, old man,' he said; 'we shall always be snarling at each other, I suppose, as long as we are together; but let us have a try to do better in future at any rate. I will take back anything I said last night, if you will do the same.'

'I have made up my mind to go away and strike out for myself,' returned Robert, after a pause. 'As you admit, we should always be quarrelling; so it is best to part. I am glad it is not in anger, and am willing to forget the hasty words exchanged last night.'

'I suppose that is as much as I can expect from you,' replied the other. 'Go or stay, I shall not quarrel with you.'

After a hasty packing-up, Robert and his sister started in a buggy to the neighbouring township of W—, whence they would take the train to Sydney, where Robert intended to leave Blanche with their aunt.

Meanwhile, Alf went headlong to his fate. He had determined to propose to Kate Rudder, and rode over that day for the purpose. What he then learned did not improve his temper. He rode home in a mood of sullen spite, revolving in his mind the best way to obtain his own will and thwart his rival.

Robert wrote a short but explicit letter to Owen, the manager of Bendabar, on whom he thought he could rely, asking him to observe the strictest reticence concerning the buried papers and their whereabouts, and if any one turned up inquiring for them, to put the seeker, if possible, on a false scent. He further took him into his confidence concerning the return of the elder brother, supposed to be dead; and also told him of his purposed quest for Turner, who seemed to be the only man who could point out

the hiding-place. He then made a hasty trip to W— to say good-bye to his sweetheart, and started ostensibly to look for a suitable pastoral investment; in reality, he took the first steamer for Port Darwin.

A long narrow clearing through a dense scrub of upright 'mulga.' In the centre of this cleared track runs a row of telegraph poles, supporting a single wire, the slender link that traverses the Australian Continent from north to south, and binds it with an almost living bond to the rest of the world. At the edge of this thicket of mulga is a patch of open country, thinly timbered with coolibah trees. Here, alongside the rude dray-track that winds side by side with the line, are a couple of iron tanks, each containing about four hundred gallons of water, tanks such as are used on board of sailing-ships. A line-repairing party are camped on this open spot; and the tanks are kept full for the use of the men employed in the maintenance of the line. There are three men in the camp—an operator and two line-men; it is the middle of the day, and they are taking it easy in the shade; their riding and pack horses, hobbled out, are feeding a short distance away.

'Here comes the man they were telling us about when we spoke* Daly Waters Station,' suddenly remarked the operator, gazing up the long northern vista of the line.

'The man who is in search of Jim?' said one of the men, glancing at the third, who looked rather conscious.

Jim, who was the long-sought-for Jim Turner, busied himself in putting the fire together and placing a quart pot of water on to boil, for hospitality is the sacred creed of the bush; and the party were silent until the stranger rode up to the camp and dismounted.

'I suppose you are the repairing party from Daly Waters?' said the new-comer, after the customary greetings.

'Yes,' returned the operator; 'and I presume you are the man they wired to me about, looking for Jim Turner. This is Turner;' and he indicated the man in question.

The two nodded; and Patten—for it was Robert—remarked: 'I have had a long hunt for you. I suppose you are wondering what it is all about?'

'Better turn your horses out and have something to eat,' interrupted the operator; 'plenty of time for business afterwards.'

Patten accepted the invitation; and after eating his meal and finishing the regulation pipe, drew Turner on one side and broached the object of his visit.

'You were stockman on Bendabar,' he said, 'and were with Mr Hopwood when you picked up Burgess.'—Turner assented.—'The fact is simply this. You left Burgess to rest down there, while you went up to the station, got fresh horses, and came down again. While you were away, he buried certain papers he had, enclosing

* The operators on the overland line who are in charge of repairing parties carry small pocket instruments, which they can attach to the main wire by light wires, and thus converse with the stations north and south.

them in an old salmon tin that he picked up there. He is dead now; but before he died, he wrote and told me of these papers, giving me directions to find them by means of the marked trees about. I went to the place; but it is now all changed. The trees have been cut down; and a heavy flood has altered the appearance and size of the water-holes in the river. No one on the station knew the exact place; and as the clue he had given me was useless, my only chance was to find Hopwood or yourself; so I advertised in the leading papers.' Patten paused.

'I never knew of the advertisement until the other day,' said Turner; 'and then one of the chaps spotted it in an old number of the "Australasian."—Did you hear from Mr Hopwood?'

'Yes; and he wrote and said that, under the changed circumstances, he did not believe that he could point out the exact spot.'

'Then I'm blown if I could,' said Turner.

This was hard on Patten, and he hesitated for a moment. 'Look here, Turner,' he resumed; 'there's no occasion to speak hastily. Think the matter over, and see if you cannot remember any slight thing that will bring it back to you.'

Turner pondered for a short time. 'I might find the place if I was back there,' he hazarded doubtfully at last.

'It's most important that I get these papers,' went on Robert. 'I have been tracking you up now for six months, and I am not going to be balked for a trifle. I believe if you were on the spot it would all come back to you. I will tell you what I will do. I suppose your billet here is nothing very much; you could do as well in Queensland?'

'Just as well,' was the answer.

'Then I will pay your expenses round to the place, and allow you a couple of pounds a week during the time we are travelling. If we are successful in getting the papers, or what is left of them, I will give you a hundred pounds.'

'I'm in it,' cried Jim, without any hesitation; and they turned back to the camp.

Patten was sound asleep that night, when he was suddenly aroused by somebody shaking him by the shoulder. Rousing himself, he found it was Turner.

'It has all come back to me,' he said in an excited sort of whisper. 'I lay there thinking about picking up that man, and trying to puzzle out how I could make sure of the place, when all of a sudden I remembered about filling the quart pots. Right straight under our camp a bar of rock crossed the bed of the river. I remember it well because the water was deep just alongside, and it was so handy to stand on and dip the quarts. Of course, Mr Hopwood doesn't recall it because he didn't go down the bank; but I was down two or three times.'

'By Jove, that's something definite,' returned Robert; 'but I noticed several bars crossing the river here and there.'

'Ah! but this one was a slate bar with a seam of quartz running beside it. No flood could alter that, could it?'

'I shouldn't think so,' said Patten.

They left the camp; and in due time they arrived in Keppel Bay, where, leaving the mail-steamer in which they had travelled, they ascended the Fitzroy River in the tender. Robert

stood on the wharf waiting for his luggage to be put ashore, when a hand was laid on his shoulder. He turned to find his half-brother beside him.

'I expected, you Bob,' he said. 'Now, supposing we make this little trip to Bendabar together.'

WITH HER MAJESTY'S MAILS IN MANITOBA.

'GET up, boys!' And amid the merry music of the sleigh-bells and the hearty good-byes of our friends, the wiry little ponies jump away at the crack of the whip, and Her Majesty's mail once more leaves the Birtle post-office on its road to Shellmouth, fifty miles or more away across the snow-clad prairies. At a rattling pace we cross the Bird Tail River, whence the thriving little Manitoban village takes its name; but we soon get a check at the foot of the steep hill leading out of the town, for, like many another settlement in the Far North-West, Birtle lies deep in a hollow sheltered by clustering hills from the none too gentle touch of the biting blizzard. Slowly we climb the ascent, and, stopping awhile at the railway station to take aboard a few parcels, we make all snug, and prepare to face the long stretch of country that lies between us and our destination. It is a clear cold morning, with the mercury registering thirty degrees below zero; and the rising sun, glinting on the earth's fleecy covering with a rich golden hue, imparts to the landscape a charm peculiar to early morning in these cold latitudes; while, from scattered chimneys, the smoke rises in long, straight columns of fluffy gray, observable for miles in such a clear atmosphere as this.

There had been no wind last night, so that the trail is fairly good, and the team lay themselves down to their work as if they enjoy it. Well wrapped up as we are in buffalo robes and skin coats, we begin to enjoy it too, and drink in the keen air in exhilarating draughts. True it is cold, but we feel it no more than we should ten degrees of frost under a murky sky in England. Our driver, an old Londoner, who knows every inch of the fifty-mile trail as well as Piccadilly, is a man of good education, entertaining, and of strong Tory predilections, while we are to democracy inclined; and so, with argument, chat, and reminiscences of the last Riel rebellion, we slip along, and soon have covered the twelve miles to Lansburn. Here we change mail-bags; and in response to the invitation to come in and warm ourselves, we sit awhile by the stove, and take advantage of the heat to enjoy a few whiffs; for, outside, the nicotine will quickly freeze and choke our pipes. We may not stay here long, though, and once more muffling ourselves in our wraps, we leave for Binscarth, the end of the first stage.

After a few miles, it is evident we are getting into a more thickly settled district. Pretty log-houses, each under its sheltering bluff ('Bluff,' in the Canadian North-West, signifies a clump of trees), meet the eye at frequent intervals; whilst

russet-coated cattle, turned out for the warmth of the mid-day sun, pick at the hay thrown over the stackyard fences in evident contentment. Surely this keen air gives one a wonderful appetite; and we are not sorry to see coming in view the farm-buildings of the Binscarth colony, even now getting famed from Winnipeg to the West Coast for its cattle. The last two miles are over a first-rate trail, and soon crossing the railroad, we land at the hotel. Here the driver, who is 'boss of the whole outfit'—that is, sole owner of the rig and the ponies—unhitches, and personally superintends the feeding of his team; and then together we sit down to dinner, served piping hot in a room the grateful warmth of which is very acceptable after our cold drive.

Dinner over, we take a few more whiffs, and then—mail matters having been 'fixed up' meanwhile—we get behind a fresh team, and prepare to meet the twenty-seven miles of the second stage. On every side now the dwelling of the free and independent homesteader meets the eye; and the healthy-looking youngsters stopping in the midst of the 'chores' to look at the mail-stage as it flashes by, seem to tell of comfort and plenty, if not absolute wealth, within. Eight miles out we enter on a stretch of rolling prairie-land. Diminutive hills and tiny dales—like fairy playgrounds—are interspersed with leafless poplar bluffs, pretty enough in summer, and even now pleasantly relieving the monotony of the dead-white prospect. But the snow has drifted badly in these hollows, and now and again the ponies flounder to their knees, and slowly we plough our way through; but once more on rising ground we see Russell in the distance, and a good road over a piece of comparatively flat country soon brings us to the little town with its motley population of old-countrymen, Canadians, and half-breeds. Official work detains us here again for a few minutes, during which we make our way into the store and post-office—the general rendezvous and loafing-place, especially on mail-day—and gather the latest news.

'All aboard!' once more, and we are soon leaving Russell behind us on the last sixteen miles of the journey. On we go, up hill and down over a wretched trail, and through drifts that oftentimes take the little jumper away above the runners, while the air is getting colder as the short winter day begins to close in. Conversation now flags, and, somehow or another, our wraps don't seem so thick as when we started; and how we long to get out and stretch our stiffening limbs! Never mind; there's another twelve miles done, and we comfort ourselves by thinking of 'Jackson's' and tea when—'Hulloa! what's that?' standing out in dark silhouette against the rapidly reddening sky! 'Coyotes! by Jove!' And as a bend in the road brings them right on our flank, and scarce fifty yards away, we count no fewer than seven 'friars in orders gray.' Lean and hungry brutes enough they are, and it is with bitter feelings we recollect we are entirely without 'shooting-irons.' Harmless to man, our vigorous yells soon send them scampering to the right-about, to hunt for a supper off the shy but succulent cony.

We pass Lake Beautiful, and are soon at the top of the hill looking over the luxuriant hay flats of the Assiniboine Valley, and for an instant draw

rein and drink in the restful beauty of the scene, while coachee bursts into poetry:

The day is ending,
The night is descending,
The marsh is frozen,
The river dead.

Through clouds like ashes
The red sun flashes
On village windows
That glimmer red—

he notes, and well he may. The sun is just sinking behind the far bank of the river Assiniboine, leaving behind tiny, many-hued cloudlets, and bars of light, that shade away from ruddy crimson and glorious gold into masses of softest pink and amber; while the snow, catching a thousand luminous tints from the whole range of the western sky, seems to glow with a beauty more than earthly. From afar, the tinkle of the cow-bells and the cries of the herders, mellowed by distance, come floating to us in sweet and musical cadence. But the surly sough of the north-west wind, even now gathering energy for to-morrow's blizzard, bids us hasten; and calling to the team, we descend the hill and hurry across the intervening flat at a pace that soon lands us at the Shellmouth post-office. Many an eager eye on the watch for letters from the dear old home has descried our coming; and the bags safely delivered, we turn to 'Jackson's,' where, with a celerity more than worthy of the old coaching days, kindly hands instantly unhitch and take stablewards the tired ponies, to be fed and tended by their ever-thoughtful owner before even he thinks of his own pressing needs.

What a picture we should make at home in caps, mitts, and huge buffalo coat, with our moustaches solid lumps of ice, and beards and whiskers of a hoary whiteness that old Father Christmas himself might envy! Just now, however, sentiment gives way to supper, and that discussed with true north-western appetites, we gather once more round the stove, and heeding not the blast as it hurtles against the house in impotent fury, we sit and smoke, and with yarn and merry chorus beguile a few hours till sleep—as well beloved as supper—summons us to rest.

Thus, in the depth of winter, some three or more years ago, I travelled with Her Majesty's mail in Manitoba, a journey that was preceded, and has been followed, by many others in different parts of the North American Continent, and accompanying men employed in the same vocation, thereby affording me ample opportunity for observing how the business of mail-carrying is conducted in different localities.

In new countries and in sparsely settled districts it is so frequently attended with difficulty and danger, that the men employed in this service are generally of a resolute and hardy type. In Manitoba and the North-west Territories, the work is usually done by men who own the teams they drive; and a large proportion are old-countrymen, for whom 'running the mail' with its free outdoor life, not wholly unattended with excitement, has untold charms. In the United States, too, I have 'happened across' Englishmen employed in the same capacity; and at one time

I met in Texas a scion of one of our noblest houses riding pony-back with the mails between San Antonio and Bandera, for fifteen dollars a month and his board; and a six-shooter always ready to hand in the not unlikely event of being 'held up by road-agents.' The distance is fifty miles each way; and as the letters left San Antonio every second day, this meant continuous riding for six days, or three hundred miles a week.

In the Great Lone Land, however, the various mail-routes, though often embracing over a hundred miles of country, and conducted alike in scorching heat and intense cold, are entirely free from hostile interruption, and never once in the course of many years' experience did I hear of the mail-robber getting in his work at the expense of the Government.

Occasionally, however, the mail-bags are conveyed by means other than those prescribed by the postal department; and though I have known the gay and festive ox-team pressed into the service, it was not exactly in the hope of gaining additional speed thereby; nor, when the bags are conveyed afoot, does the process quite come up to our notions of how the business ought to be managed.

But these are only exceptional cases. For ordinary work, a light four-wheeled rig drawn by a couple of ponies, and capable of seating one or more passengers in addition to parcels, is the usual thing; and on some routes where passengers and parcels are few and far between, one animal is sufficient to do the work. But in the winter, when the snow lies deep and wheels are unsuitable, a low 'jumper' with broad runners, but quite open, takes the place of buggy or buck-board; and so, keeping himself protected as well as possible from 'winter's cold, wild winds, and drifting snow,' and enveloped in furs, the driver is willing and able to go anywhere and do anything; and a blizzard has to be keen indeed that will scare these sturdy fellows from the trail when duty calls.

THE HOME OF A HERO.

GENERAL GORDON spent nearly all his life abroad, and was accustomed to make himself at home anywhere; nevertheless, it was the house in Rockstone Place, Southampton, until recently occupied by his sister, the late Miss Mary Augusta Gordon, which should be regarded as his real home. Thither his thoughts would often turn, and there he rested after his various expeditions and sojourns in foreign countries.

Rockstone Place is a crescent of white houses, on the heights above the town, overlooking the waters of the Solent and the distant slopes of the Isle of Wight. On the other side of the drive there is a green garden or lawn, planted with ilex and rhododendron, with a screen of elms and shrubbery which partly hides the galvanised iron roofs of the Ordnance Survey offices. The spot is quiet and sequestered, yet with an outlook on the world; and here Gordon, who loved retirement, could refresh his eyes, long used to the sands of the desert and the palms of the tropics, with the verdure of his native land.

The dwelling itself is the middle one of a

group of three, the two smaller forming the wings. A short flight of stone steps leads up to the door, which is set under a small vestibule. Two large plain windows flank the door, one on either side. Besides the green Venetian blinds, these windows are provided with two jalousies or open shutters, painted white, and folded back, each half against the wall. The jalousies give a Southern or Oriental look to the house, and remind one of the tropics. Above them are three other and smaller windows, also having blinds and jalousies. Higher still are the windows of the attic.

In the entrance hall the first thing that struck a visitor was the figure of a young crocodile, oddly fixed to the lintel of the drawing-room door on the left, as though it were running up the wall. It was a real stuffed crocodile, but varnished like the door-post, and resembling a piece of wood-carving. It had been sent home from the Nile by Gordon along with a larger specimen, which had not been kept. How he came by it we do not know, but, curiously enough, it was almost the only hunting trophy one could see, notwithstanding his travels. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the hero's well-known sympathy with animals and tender solicitude for them.

There also were two great spears, presented by King M'Tesa of Uganda. One of them was a parade spear with a flat copper head, and a carved handle, pliant as a cane. The other was a common spear, hafted with wood, and headed with a large double-edged blade. Both were very heavy and strong, much bigger than the Zulu 'assegai' or the Soudan spear, yet they are thrown by the natives with great precision. In a corner of the lobby near the stairs there lay a tom-tom or war-drum, also received from M'Tesa, the large bowl being of copper. It had come to serve the humbler functions of a dinner-gong.

The drawing-room was hung with numerous pictures, and decorated with knick-knacks and works of art, each with a history, and in some way or other associated with his wanderings. The pictures were chiefly landscapes of foreign countries which he had visited, and amongst them were several views of Khartoum, including a photograph of the Government Palace, where he had resided; and a water-colour sketch of the low mud forts of Tutti Island and their solitary palms, a scene on which his eyes must often have rested during his last stay in the country. The sketch was drawn by him, and sent home to Miss Gordon with a small pasteboard box of bullets, which, however, never reached her. The lid of the box was found in the hut where Colonel Stewart is believed to have been killed, at the time the Diaries were recovered, and it still bore the address in Gordon's writing, 'Rockstone Place, Southampton.'

On the other side of the drawing-room were several large photographs, one of them a portrait of the late Khedive of Egypt, presented by himself; the others represented four of Gordon's officers in the Soudan, all in Egyptian uniform, with the red official fez.

In a recess on the right of the fireplace, and as it were amongst these photographs, there was a picture of Gordon himself, painted by Lady Abercromby from a photograph taken in Brussels

while he was over there seeing the king of the Belgians, preparatory, as he then believed, to his departure for the Congo, but in reality, as it turned out, before his sudden despatch to the Soudan on his last mission.

It was a portrait-head of Gordon as he then appeared, clad in a black frock-coat, with a white turn-down collar and a black neck-tie—his usual dress at home. The canvas, though small, presented the head and shoulders life-size, and was surrounded by a rich gilt frame. The likeness was remarkable, and undoubtedly it was one of the finest portraits of the General ever executed. Whoever would see how Gordon looked in the flesh might do so here. The wonderful blue eyes, with their straight open noble gaze, fairly beamed with intelligence and truth. It was rather the look of a bright boy than a man tried in the world as he had been. There was a fascination in the light blue orbs gazing on the spectator as if about to speak to him—the fascination of intellect and perfect goodness. The head was erect, and the look was turned slightly upward. A pleasant expression was diffused all over the kindly face, and lingered in the genial curves of the cheeks and lips. The curly nut-brown hair, with its tinge of gray and gold, was repeated in the short moustache and delicate side-whiskers. The noble brow, so white and high, was very full over the temples, where it was traversed by a bar of care and thought. The strong and sinewy neck was turned to redness by the eastern sun. Any one would say on seeing this canvas that it was the picture of a good man.

Below it, on a small table in the same recess, there was a fine photograph of Lord Charles Beresford in his Soudan uniform; and a smaller one of Lady Beresford. On the wall beside these pictures were some memorial verses to the lamented hero of Khartoum. In the farther corner on the right of the window stood a small painting on porcelain of Gordon in his Chinese costume, with banners hung behind as drapery; the likeness, however, was not particularly good. There were numerous Chinese mementos in this room. On either side of the mantel-piece were two small glass cases, containing the bead necklaces forming part of Gordon's dress as a Mandarin of the Yellow Jacket, beautiful beads of coral and amber, big as marbles, with appendages of pale-green jade. On one of the tables lay his Chinese card-case, a large thin pocket-book of red leather, holding several squares of red tissue-paper inscribed with Chinese characters. This card-case used to be carried before him by a bearer when he went out visiting his Celestial friends.

Opposite the fireplace were a number of relics from the Summer Palace at Pekin, including some exquisite vases of enamelled copper from the Emperor's room. Gordon purchased these articles, as he did not condescend to 'looting,' and sent them to his sister. Amongst them were some grotesque figures cut in jade and rock-crystal; in particular a tablet of milky-green jade delicately carved with a Chinese landscape. On the mantel-piece, side by side with Dresden shepherdesses, were more of these clear crystal figures; and beside the hearth-rug stood a small jade image of a horse, also from the wreck of the Summer Palace. Round the neck of one of the enamelled vases there hung a dingy metal torque, of slender

workmanship, but in shape exactly like the larger and more handsome gold torques worn by the old Gaulish chieftains, and still found in British barrows. A brass crescent and other trinkets were fastened to one end of it, as an amulet. Gordon had this from a black man, who wore it round his neck, and no other dress or ornament. Beside it lay the barbed head of an arrow or dart of the Barri tribe, the barbs, of which there were several, being turned back like hooks from the stem in an ugly catching fashion. There was a bundle of these darts sent home by Gordon, some of them barbed, others plain. They were picked up by him in the woods, where he found a quiverful hanging on a tree, and thinking they belonged to no one, took them with him. The natives, however, discovering their loss, soon after attacked his boat, and a shower of arrows fell around it, some of which struck the boat, and are now, amongst the others, distinguishable by their blunted points.

There were other interesting memorials of Gordon's various life in the drawing-room; for instance, a 'vermilion pencil' such as the Emperor of China signs his decrees with; a cake of red China ink, inscribed with golden letters and figures of the imperial dragon; the vellum Address of the British residents in Shanghai; the central sight of a gun taken by Gordon at the Redan in 1855, and a bullet which struck the front of his cap while he was doing duty in the trenches before Sebastopol.

A photograph of his old officers in the Soudan, most of whom were negroes, and some of them old criminals, would have been difficult to match for sheer hangdog brutishness of feature. 'No matter what they had done, he forgave them,' said Miss Gordon to the writer, one day. 'They do not look like faces to be trusted.' 'He trusted them.' In the same part of the room there was a box of coco-de-mer wood from the Seychelles Islands, made by Gordon himself when he was commandant of that terrestrial paradise, which he considered a vestige of the lost Eden. We may mention here that a walking-stick and a small clock-tower of the same hard streaky wood were presented by the late Miss Gordon to the Kew Gardens Botanical Museum, along with a wax model of the double cocon-nut, made by Gordon himself. Beside the palmwood lay a thing which Gordon prized more than his richer souvenirs—a small slab of reddish-brown stone from the bed-rock of the reputed site of the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, and the place where Abraham is supposed to have offered up Isaac.

The dining-room on the right of the hall was the room in which Gordon liked to sit. It contained another excellent picture of him, also painted by Lady Abercromby. Some prefer the one in the drawing-room; but Miss Gordon unhesitatingly preferred this one, and considered it a perfect likeness. It was a large half-length portrait of Gordon, dressed in a general officer's uniform, and so placed that it could be seen best in the bright morning light. The attitude was much the same as in the other picture; but the tone was darker and the style stronger. There was the same crispy nut-brown hair, streaked with gray; the same steadfast gaze, but the expression of the eyes was deeper and more thoughtful. If the other picture seemed to show us a good

man, this one presented a great man. In the broad and splendid brow, in the full, keen, and penetrating eyes, we found an evidence of his military genius and power of command. We felt, in fact, that we were looking on a conqueror and a born leader, nay, a king of men. Fearless courage, keen scrutiny, which can look through and through the soul, were here united with the highest powers of administration and resource. It was the head of a great soldier we were looking on, one who was a host in himself, and who might have been the saviour of his country. We felt, too, how incalculable was the loss we had sustained, should the empire ever be attacked by a European power.

So much for a superficial view. But there was more than the great captain in this face. Let us look at these indescribable eyes, which riveted the attention with their magnetic power. Probably no other hero or soldier in ancient or modern times had eyes like Gordon. 'Capsome,' the little dusky slave-boy whom Gordon had freed and brought to England, and whose photograph was in the room, showing his cheek scarred across by a large 'H' branded in the flesh, said to a lady once: 'What! General Gordon! Ain't you afraid of his eyes? He can see in the dark—the light is within.' Truly, there was a light within, a spiritual light, which radiated from his eyes. But there was also a pregnancy of meaning which it is difficult to analyse—a look of inspiration—of divine possession. It gave one the impression of something great, but unknown, a central secret, an inner mystery, like the unknown god of the Greeks. Mere creative genius and force of will would not have inspired that sense of a divine presence.

Gordon would sit for long intervals, looking just like that, in the stuffed armchair on the left of the fireplace. Of what was he thinking? Was he recalling some past scene, or devising some new plan, meditating some point of policy, of doctrine? or was he listening to some inner voice, and seeing some inner vision? We cannot tell. Gordon was more than the hero and the soldier; he was something of the seer and the saint.

Men either good or great are rare; Gordon was evidently both, and hence his power. He attracted alike those who loved the good, and those who admired great talents. A soldier, an engineer, a man of action, he had an influence over practical men of the world, whether soldiers or civilians, which a simple preacher or man of letters cannot readily obtain. His versatile gifts and published writings also attached him to the studious. But if his power over civilised persons, including his intimate friends, was great, so also was it over savage or debased people. We have been told by an eye-witness of his influence over his Chinese soldiers that he 'seemed to make gentlemen of them.'

From these marvellous eyes, so divinely lit as with an internal illumination, we turn towards Gordon's 'Soudan Throne,' a folding armchair he always sat in at Khartoum, and carried with him on his camel journeys. It was a little straight-backed chair, having a skeleton frame of round iron, a carpet back and seat, gilt knobs for ornament, and small pads on the arms for comfort. The carpet had grown dim in the African

sun, and deprived it of all royal pretensions, so that when Gordon returned from his Governorship of the Soudan and suddenly asked, 'Where's my throne? Has it been brought in?' they were all surprised. His throne! Nobody had seen a throne. But at length the camp-stool was found where it had been stowed away. In the Soudan, only Berzati Bey, his interpreter, was allowed the privilege of sitting in this seat of honour, after Gordon. Berzati's photograph was in the dining-room, with an inscription in Gordon's writing: 'For three years my brave and faithful friend, known by European scoffers as the Black Imp, Berzati afterwards fell in the massacre of Hicks Pasha's army.'

Leaving the dining-room and descending the stair, from which a glimpse was got of a pretty back garden, we came to a small unpapered room with an area window opening on the garden. This was a kind of workshop of Gordon, where he would sit and smoke, and pass away the time unpacking and arranging his 'rubbish,' as he called his collections. For the finer things he seemed to care very little, and for the worthless trifles a great deal. On the mantel-piece of this room stood a large tin teapot with which he had made tea for his little protégés at Gravesend, his 'kings' and 'scuttlers,' as he called them. He used to find berths for these little waifs on board ships, and would follow their course at sea from day to day by sticking pins in a large map which hung in his quarters at Gravesend.

Another room of the basement was a kind of study, containing a desk-table, at which he used to write; and in order to guard his privacy, he would put a handkerchief, or hammer, or something outside the door, to signify that he was busy. It was a plain room, like the other, and devoid of all luxury. Gordon smoked a good deal, and chiefly cigarettes from Cairo, but he always went down-stairs to do it.

Gordon's bedroom, on the first floor, was very simply furnished with several cane-bottomed chairs, an ordinary armchair, and a folding deck-lounge with cushions. There were a few pictures on the walls, and over the mantel-piece hung two texts, the upper, in German letters, running:

Oh, ask not thou how shall I bear
The burden of to-morrow,
Sufficient for to-day its care,
Its evil, and its sorrow;
God imparteth by the way
Strength sufficient for the day.

The lower, in black print, was from the Psalm 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.'

In the dressing-room off the bedchamber were to be seen the lines:

Christ is the word, and spake it.
He took the bread and brake it,
And what that word doth make it,
I do receive and take it.

This room was doubtless the sanctum sanctorum of his home. Here he probably meditated many of his plans, recalled his experiences, and shaped his future course. Here, above all, we may suppose that he gave up his mind to those devotional reflections which formed a large element in his

spiritual life. In the other rooms, or in the garden, he mixed with company, and shared in the world; but here he was most himself; and the visitor was conscious of a feeling that here he was treading upon holy ground.

THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA.

PERHAPS no country in the world provides a better and fuller illustration of the principle of the survival of the fittest than does Australia. Civilisation and barbarism there came into conflict, and once again the inexorable law of victory to the more adaptable was the result. Unlike the subjugation of the Red Man of America, the victory has been achieved not so much by force of arms as by force of circumstances, and the want of adaptation on the part of the weaker contestants. In bravery and in many other qualities the American Indians were the equals of the whites. Physically and intellectually, the braves of the Far West were far finer men, and, by their surroundings and traditions, were far more fitted to cope with the hated Pale Faces than were the native tribes of the Great Island Continent. Inch by inch the Indians were driven off from their lands, never admitting themselves beaten. Even now, cooped up within their reserves, they as strongly refuse to admit the overlordship of the mighty horde which has spread from end to end of their once boundless happy hunting-grounds, as they did when the Pilgrim Fathers first set foot on Plymouth Rock. They are still strong enough to form a menace to the civilisation which hems them in, firm in the belief that they shall again roam free and unfettered in the land from the Father of Waters to the Setting Sun. Hard as it went against the grain, the Indians again and again gave proof that, if need be, they could adapt themselves to the manners and ideas of their enemies. As surely as the Australian black, the American Indian is doomed to extinction; but whilst the extinction of the latter will be the putting away of a brave nation, dying because of its own unconquerable will, the flickering out of the former will be from far other and lower causes. The great majority of the Red Men disdained alike the virtues and vices of the whites, strong in their native strength and traditions; the Aborigines of Australia, unable to raise themselves to the standard of the new civilisation, and too weak to fight it down, fell only too easy victims to its vices. Indolent and unambitious by nature, they willingly exchanged their precarious existence with freedom for the flesh-pots of serfdom. Their only ambition was for a lazy life and plenty to eat. They soon discovered that to accept food from the settlers was more to their liking than to hunt, fish, or fight; and so they chose to become the miserable hangers-on of the settlements, and imitators of the white man's vices.

Several causes helped to this easy surrender of freedom. Whereas the American Indian lived in a land of varied beauty—rushing rivers, endless lakes, wide-reaching grassy plains, and rugged mountains—where wild animals, birds, and fish were plentiful, and in a climate which called forth all his energies and ingenuity to battle with, the Australian aborigine was the child of

the monotonous bushland, of dismal plains and drought-wasted, sluggish rivers, where food of all kinds was comparatively scarce and inferior. What he gained from the warmer, sloth-breeding climate, he more than lost by want of vigour and the need for adaptability. Nature forms her children after her own likeness. Country and climate stamped the Indian a valiant, unconquered patriot; the Australian black, if not a slave, a weak dependent. Then, too, the whites with whom these two nations first came in contact, and from whom they received their earliest impressions, were of a widely differing mould. The pioneer settlers of America were strong, earnest men, men of conscience, the picked manhood of England; the first settlers in Australia were the scum of the English nation, the refuse of the prisons. If the Pilgrim Fathers struck hard blows and carried things with a high hand, they did it as men of purpose. Like the men who rebuilt Jerusalem, with one hand they wrought, and with the other they fought, fighting and working alike to the glory of their God and their religion.

They brought with them none of the tempting vitiating vices so alluring to the savage nature. The opening chapter of Australian history is one of the vilest pages ever written. A horde of men steeped in every crime were turned loose in the country—men who for the most part gloried in debasing themselves and in debasing all with whom they came in contact. Hard fighting and stern religiousness were the factors in the settlement of America: rum and vice in that of Australia. The differing results accorded with the different beginnings.

The blacks of Australia, however, did not succumb altogether without a struggle. They resented the intrusion of the new comers; but the struggle was for the most part one of cunning and cruelty rather than a brave resistance. It took the form of treacherous reprisals for injuries received or supposed to have been received; it never approached to a combined struggle for freedom. The outer line of settlement was a sort of skirmishing ground where a half-hearted resistance and continuous cattle-raiding on the one hand, and land-grabbing and the dishonouring of the native women on the other, engendered bad feeling, and led to innumerable bloody murders. The early squatters undoubtedly ran many risks from their treacherous foes. The blacks, however, were generally to be won over by a little judicious handling and feeding. Much of the treachery was the outcome of the treatment they had received at the hands of the whites, who scrupled little to shoot down the aborigines like beasts, the 'lifting' or disturbing of a few cattle being considered a sufficient excuse for declaring war against the whole tribe. In some districts the war was one of extermination. Boomerang, waddy, and spear, never so deftly wielded, were no match for firearms. Might was right, and treachery counted little against salt-petre.

The settlement of the country meant its conquest. Once within the line of civilisation, what little power the aborigines had possessed was broken. Equally unable to breast or adapt themselves to the new order of things, their tribal compacts broken, their land gone, the animals on

which they had depended for food displaced by sheep and cattle, it only remained for the blacks to become the creatures of their dispossessors, the recipients of their charity. In all parts of Australia where the country is in any degree settled, this is the position which they now occupy. The old order of things still holds good in the 'new,' little-explored country of Central Australia, the northern part of West Australia, the Northern Territory and some parts of the 'Gulf' (Carpentaria) country. Cattle-stealing and occasional murders are heard of amongst the 'wild' blacks, who still sometimes hold their tribal 'corroborees,' and are responsible for considerable trouble.

Captain Phillip, the first governor of Australia, writing about 1790, not long after the settlement of the country, computed the number of aborigines at one million. He based his computation on the fact that there were some three thousand in the districts then known, a ratio that would give a million for the whole continent. This was merely a guess, but probably was not so very far wide of the mark. The estimate of other and later authorities is much lower. The census of 1881 gave the number of aborigines at thirty-one thousand seven hundred. This number, however, represented only the 'civilised' blacks, and the true number is supposed to have been two hundred thousand. From these figures it will be seen that the decrease is steadily but surely going on, and that the time when the Australian black shall have been 'improved' off the face of the earth can be pretty accurately worked out by rule of three. In Tasmania, the end has already come, the last of the island aborigines having died in 1876. On the Continent, after the pure bloods have died out, some characteristics of the decayed people will linger on in the half-breeds.

If the aborigines have been sufferers by the influx of the whites, they have also in some degree been gainers. The Governments of the several colonies have always more or less recognised their obligations to the original possessors of the soil. For many years there has been an annual distribution of blankets and other necessities. Mission stations have also been established by Government and private funds in different parts of the country, where as many of the blacks as are willing to conform to the mild rules laid down for the conduct of the establishments are housed, fed, and taught. Their want of constraint, and their instinct for a free roaming life, however, generally weigh more heavily than does even their liking for regular rations and a lazy life. The majority prefer to become hangers-on about the townships and stations, eking out existence by begging and doing odd jobs. Every station and township has its little band of black-fellows and their 'gins,' who wander about in wonderful assortments of the cast-off clothing of the whites, begging from every one, and not always clearly distinguishing between 'meum' and 'tuum.' 'Bacca' and six-pences are what they most favour, but nothing at all comes wrong. The men and women are alike inordinately fond of tobacco and intoxicants. This fondness for drink has had not a little to do with their downfall. It is a pitiable sight to see the poor creatures loafing about the hotels, begging and praying for the maddening poison

which they know too well is fast destroying them. Once having acquired the vices of the whites, their ruin is swift. A few, but not many, are employed as cattle-men, shepherds, and general helps about the stations. They are also drafted into the police force as mounted troopers and trackers, and have done and are doing some splendid service in hunting down criminals who escape to the bush. Many are fine runners and athletes, but since abandoning the old wild life, their prowess in these respects is waning.

Mission-work amongst the blacks cannot be said to have been successful. Undoubtedly, good work has been done by the devoted missionaries who have spent their lives in trying to raise and enlighten the native tribes. The low type of intellect, the shiftless, aimless life, the wandering habits, the traditional instincts of the aborigines, and the too often evil example set them by the rough settlers, have been hard to overcome. Some few have truly embraced Christianity; but with the majority—as with many other so-called converted heathens—it must be sorrowfully confessed that their acceptance of religion has been from interested motives. They are like children—easily pleased with anything new. The mission-work shows best on paper. The children, however, give better promise.

The day of the black-fellows has gone, and gone for ever. Whilst the Great Sunny South Land was hidden away amongst the secrets of the sea, he was her fitting lord and master. But the time came when she should sweep 'into the younger day.' Nature had prepared for the change, but he had not. She was ready for the great wave of advancement, but he was not; and so he was swept away before it. One hundred years have gone by since the war of races commenced in Australia. Probably before another century, or century and a half, has ended, the last of the Australian aborigines will have died out, and the memory of the black man will linger only in the liquid music of the native names which everywhere dot the map of the Island Continent, and which, happily, the Anglo-Saxon has the good taste to prefer to his own more commonplace nomenclature.

TRAGEDY.

A SKETCH.

Alone! the loneliness,
When our own sin has shut the doors of home,
And we are left without—the deepening gray
Of twilight lying chill upon the old
Remembered paths, and the long night of death
Already creeping o'er the eastern edge
Of a deserted world. The fireside glow
Strikes through the casement, and the children play
About the settle of the ingle nook,
The grandsire nodding by the cheerful blaze;
But if there falls a shadow on the pane,
It is the ivy or the slanted rain;
And if a sob breaks in upon the laugh,
It is the wind among the apple boughs—
This is the righteous punishment of sin.

C. AMY DAWSON.

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WHAT IS WEALTH?

THE frequent discussions which from time to time take place in magazines and elsewhere, as to the proper uses of Wealth, suggest the question—What is Wealth? And to that question there seems to be no more comprehensive and definite answer than there was to Pilate's interrogation on the subject of Truth. To be 'rich beyond the dreams of avarice' is a favourite figure of speech, but we may well doubt if the position is capable of realisation, when one regards the stupendous fortunes of some of the American kings of finance.

The truth as to wealth seems to be that it is actually a relative term. In plain words, it is the excess of realisable value which a man possesses above his normal requirements. But when the excess becomes excessive, then it becomes incomprehensible by the majority of men. Thus, to a man with one pound a week, two pounds a week will seem riches, because it implies a large margin for accumulation; but to this man a figure of wealth represented by the numerals £5,000,000 is a mere figure of speech. He can no more grasp its significance than a man who is colour-blind can appreciate the unspeakable glory of the sunset or the dawn. Even richer men than he can find no tangible meaning in such figures.

Wealth, in fact, is not the mere possession of anything in abundance, but the possession in abundance of that which can be used. Midas, at whose fabled touch everything turned into gold, was not wealthy in the true sense, because he could not use what he produced. It is usual to employ his case in pointing the moral against the love of money; but, as a matter of fact, Midas would have been quite as sorely afflicted had his touch transformed everything into sheaves of corn, or joints of beef, or new hats. And thus it is that the conception of wealth must vary with circumstance as well as with individual.

The new 'Gospel of Wealth,' of which so much has been heard of late, is, in essence, this—that it is good for everybody that wealth should be concentrated in few hands. It has been said that

it is better that one man should have one thousand pounds to spend, than that a thousand men should have one pound apiece. It is probable that the weight of opinion against this proposition will be pretty much as a thousand to one, and for very adequate reasons.

The attraction of wealth to the intelligent human creature is twofold. There is the pleasure of winning; and there is the joy of possessing. Now, the joy of possession may be as keen to the owner of a thousand pounds as to the owner of a thousand thousands; but the pleasure of winning is certainly open to all in equal degree, even to the owner of a single pound. No keener enjoyment is possible to the rational animal than persistent effort suffused with perennial hope. This is but to say that the pursuit of wealth gives pleasure to millions; whereas the possession gives a dubious joy only to thousands. According to 'the New Gospel,' these millions have no right to this enjoyment, if one rich man can do more towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number than a thousand men who are not rich. The proposition, however, ignores the absolute and unalterable fact that the nine hundred and ninety-nine men who are debarred from the pursuit of wealth are deprived of the greatest material happiness possible to them.

Upon this hypothesis, the concentration of wealth in a few hands has the very reverse effect of helping towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number, however wise and beneficent in the administration of their wealth may be the possessors. Wisdom, however, is exceptional among those who have made their wealth rapidly. When a man's fortune has grown more rapidly than his intellect or his conscience, the consequences must always be injurious to himself as well as to society. And that is not all. It is not possible for any one man, however wise and beneficent, to administer to the best and fullest uses such fortunes as have been piled up by some men in our time.

It is worth while taking a look at the accumulated wealth of some American millionaires, and

we select them in illustration for two reasons. In the first place, the statistics of such matters are more complete and accessible in America than they are here. And in the second place, there are very few persons in this country whose capitalised means equal those of the transatlantic money kings. Again, in this country accumulation is the work of a lifetime, or even of generations; while in America it has been frequently the work of a few years. The fortunate beings who suddenly 'strike it,' or discover 'a pocket,' form a factor in the greatest economic problem of the age, without knowing it.

By a calculation made a year or two ago by an American statistician, it seems that seventy citizens of the United States possessed among them an aggregate wealth of 540 million pounds. That gives an average of about $7\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds apiece. To come to particulars. There was one estate—we refrain here from mentioning names—returned as worth no less than 30 million. There were five individuals valued at 20 million; one valued at 14 million; two valued at 12 million; six valued at 10 million; six valued at 8 million; four valued at 7 million; thirteen valued at 6 million; ten valued at 5 million; four valued at $4\frac{1}{2}$ million; and fifteen valued at 4 million.

The brain reels before such figures. They express measures of wealth which the ordinary mortal is powerless to grasp.

Besides these seventy colossal fortunes, there are fifty other persons in the Northern States alone valued at over 2 million each—thirty of them being valued in all at 90 million. There were some little time ago published lists of sixty-three millionaires in Pennsylvania possessing in the aggregate 600 million, and of sixty persons in three villages near New York whose wealth aggregated 100 million. In Boston, fifty families pay taxes on annual incomes of about £200,000 each.

We have nothing to compare with such individual cases of wealth in Great Britain. Baron Rothschild and Lord Overstone each left about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million; the late Lord Dudley left 4 million; the late Duke of Buccleuch, esteemed the richest Scotchman, left estates valued at 6 million. One living English Duke is valued at 10 million, and another at 8 million; but not many names could be added to these, to place against the above list of American fortunes. In 1884 there were only one hundred and four persons in the United Kingdom whose incomes from business profits were returned as over £50,000 a year. In 1886 there were only seventeen estates which paid Probate Duty on about a quarter of a million each.

There is another interesting feature in the relative distribution of wealth in the two countries. By Mr Goschen's analysis of the income tax returns, it was found that in ten years the number of incomes paying duty on up to £500 had risen 21·4 per cent.; those between £500 and £1000 had not increased at all; those between £1000 and £5000 had decreased 2·4 per cent.; and those over £5000 had decreased 2·2 per cent. According to Mulhall's estimate in 1877, £7,770,600,000 of British wealth was distributed among 6,676,000 families; and two-thirds of it was owned by 222,500 families.

The statistics of the United States show quite other results. They prove not only that the wealthy class there is enormously wealthier than the wealthiest class of Great Britain, but also that the wealth of the country is in much fewer hands. Mr Thomas G. Shearman estimates the average annual income of the richest hundred Americans at about £300,000; and the average annual income of the richest hundred Englishmen at about £90,000. The earnings of fully four-fifths of American families do not average, he says, £100 per annum. According to the estimates of the wealth of American millionaires, it seems that 25,000 persons own one-half of the entire wealth of the United States; and if the present rates of taxation and accumulation continue, it is computed that that great country will be practically owned by about 50,000 persons—say one-thousandth part of the present population.

We have cited these figures because they carry on the face of them the refutation of the new doctrine that it is good for the world that wealth should be concentrated in few hands. That one hundred and twenty persons in the United States should possess among them an aggregate capital equal to the entire National Debt of Great Britain is a remarkable fact, which cannot but have vast economic and ethical significance. For it is not conceivable that these hundred and twenty persons can so administer such a fund as, say, 120,000 persons, with smaller proportionate shares in it.

And then as regards the possession of wealth, the means by which it has been acquired cannot be disregarded. It is not to be assumed that all millionaires have made their fortunes by wholesome industry, affording employment and happiness to many thousands during its accumulation. Many of the American fortunes have been made under the shelter of the strict system of Protection, which that country preserves—that is to say, may have been drawn out of the pockets of the people by the deliberate consent and contrivance of the people themselves. Other fortunes have been made by lucky hits in mining, &c., and are to a large extent the products of chance. Others have been made by a clever, even daring speculation in various departments of commerce and finance. Others, unhappily, by the unscrupulous use of capital in rigging and manipulating markets, to the serious loss of the community.

We are not going to discuss the ethics of the question, but merely suggest that if wealth has not been accumulated by means which sanctify its possession, then it certainly cannot be in the best hands for putting it to uses tending to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Mr Andrew Carnegie will certainly not find many millionaires to agree with him, that the man who dies rich is 'disgraced.' The aspiration of most men, indeed, is to leave behind them as much as possible. And the fact is that it is not practicable for the man of millions to dispense his wealth during his lifetime. Life is so uncertain, and in order to avoid dying 'disgraced,' he would have each day to dispense in some way the earnings of each day, and he could not possibly do it, even if he wanted.

As to the uses to which accumulated wealth may be or should be put, we shall say nothing

here. The subject is too vast and complicated. But a word in conclusion may be offered on the ethical aspect of wealth.

The desire and the longing for that which is expressed in the word *Wealth* has been from all time, and will be for all time. It is deep-rooted in the heart of man, and it is not necessarily a sordid longing. The desire for wealth does not imply that mere greed and yearning for the possession of gold. It means a great deal more, for it springs from the idea that wealth not only gives power but also happiness. People, not being misers, desire money because they believe, or suppose, that money can enable them to obtain certain articles which will contribute to happiness.

So far good; but the experience of mankind is that there is more happiness to be derived in the pursuit of wealth than in the possession of it. The root of happiness is in the mind, not without; and by the healthy organism, it is found rather in hopeful and manly endeavour, than in placid contentment with surroundings. Pleasure may pall by familiarity; but there is no limit to the pleasures of hope. It is possible, even, that the sordid gold-hunter and ignoble money-grubber has a sort of happiness of his own; but he is not the sort of being we are considering. The pursuit of riches by honourable effort as a means to an end—namely, happiness and the power to bestow happiness—is a perfectly legitimate and rational one. But the worst of it is that we all too much associate money with happiness, and act as if the one term connoted the other. In the haste to be rich, men so often forget to be just—and sometimes even honest—while they lose in the race the faculty of being happy at the end of it. We cannot understand the nature and attributes and responsibilities of wealth aright, if we do not distinguish between money-making as a means to an end, and accumulation for the mere sake of possession.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

The time of pleasant fancies
For lass and lad returns
In velvet on the pansies,
In little rolled-up ferns.

LORD DE TABLEY.

'Oh, Sage, I wish I was you! You are the very happiest, luckiest person in the world.'

Kitty was watching Sage dress with feelings of the deepest dejection.

'It does seem so unfair that you should have a cousin all to yourself. I'm sure you can have a share of our cousins, and my share in them as well, for I can't bear any of them. And I'm quite sure Miss Lambert would put me up into a higher class if I could say, "My aunt, Lady Lester, wishes it;" but I might talk of my aunt Mrs Wilson for half an hour, and no one would pay the least attention. And I do not think, Sage, that Aunt Maria is at all a nice aunt for any one to have, and so tiresome about putting one's elbows on the table.'

'Dear, little Kit, I wish I could give you a share.'

'Well, Sage, I do think you might let me stay at home from school to-day to see Pomona. And I do think I've got a headache; and you know I did not eat half so much bread and butter at breakfast as usual; and I think my tongue is very bad,' said Kitty, examining critically a very red little member in Sage's glass.

'I wish you might, Kit; but father made such a point of your going to school, and he will be vexed if you don't.'

A slight cloud dimmed the brightness of Sage's face, for this was the one drop of bitterness in her cup, that father was by no means so pleased as Sage was at Pomona's appearance, and at this restoration, or rather beginning, of friendly relations between Sage and her mother's family. Perhaps he still nourished resentment of their treatment of his wife; and what he would have welcomed gladly for her sake, though never for his own, he almost resented, now that it had come years too late to gladden her gentle heart; but he could not find it in his heart to pour cold-water on Sage's pleasure, only he listened a little grimly to her glowing descriptions of Pomona's beauty and sweet graciousness, resolving in his inmost mind that the olive branch held out so tardily should only be received by Sage herself, and should not, however willingly it might be done, be extended to himself or his other children. And so, to-day, when Pomona was coming to fetch Sage to take her down to Beechfield, Dr Merridew's professional duties suddenly assumed an engrossing importance they did not always present; and he also harangued his family all through breakfast on the necessity of regular attendance at school; and he was quite cross because Sage suggested that Nigel had coughed in the night.

He would not, he told himself, stand in Sage's way; her mother might have liked her to know the old home which, from the fact that his wife had never dilated on its attractions, had grown in his imagination to a very Paradise, from which, for his sake, she had been banished. It was only right that Sage should know her mother's birthplace and her mother's people; but with Sage it must stop; neither he nor his other children should reap the smallest advantage from the Lesters, even though, by so declining all intercourse, it should separate them somewhat from their own little Sage.

And perhaps he felt—though he was not at all inclined to worldly wisdom—that it might be good for Sage as regards Maurice and his family. It galled him a little now and then to think that Maurice's people might look down on his little girl; and perhaps these fine relations of whom he would have made no mention while they kept aloof, might raise her in the estimation of the Moores.

He did not tell Sage anything of this; but she guessed a little of it, and sometimes debated if she would not draw back and resist Pomona's fascinations, and dwell among her own people, the proud, shabby, little people of Dalston, among whom her life's happiness had found her. But there was no resisting Pomona, or being surly or proud or independent with her; and she could only hope that some day father would

be brought, even against his will, under her sunny influence, when she was quite sure he would fall a victim.

And yet—and yet Mr Ludlow had not done so. That introduction had been altogether a disappointment; and she was almost sure the painter's sudden return to Scar had been in consequence of his meeting with Pomona. It seemed even to have taken away his pleasure in the picture; and he did not go again to see it after his hurried visit on the way from the station, though he had promised to take Kitty the very first day of his return to London.

So perhaps Dr Merriew might not be so fascinated as she was; and how would Maurice like her? or, rather, how did he like her? for Pomona said she had met him, and it must have been at that dinner-party of which he had told her so little. Maurice had not yet returned to London. He was still staying with his old uncle in Sussex; but how much longer he would remain Sage did not know, as the letter she carefully transferred to her pocket when she changed her dress was dated some days back, and did not say which day he should return—so he might; who could tell?—be coming that very day, and she would be away. This was another little drop of bitterness; but, after all, what are two drops in a cup so overflowing with sweetness? for Sage was inclined to agree with Kitty's envious statement that she was the very happiest, luckiest person in the world. She had not told Maurice anything about Pomona's visit; she was reserving all this new, interesting episode in her life to describe to him when he came back, and only made mysterious allusions to it in her letters.

But to-day she was going down to Beechfield; and though she would have been happier if she had had a more recent letter of Maurice's in her pocket, the want of it was not enough to spoil the pleasure of the beautiful May day.

Poor, unwilling, envious Kitty was packed off to school; and Sage was ready, even to the last button of the beautiful gloves Maurice had given her, when the carriage came round the corner, the very sound of the wheels and the stepping of the horses' feet being different somehow from the usual vehicles and horses that passed unnoticed every day.

'And if the carriage were different from those usually seen in Dalston, so, too, was the lovely bright face within, all eager and smiling as Sage came out.

'Mayn't I come in and see Kitty?' she said. 'I want to see if she is like the picture, and I have brought her a box of chocolates. I am sure that little girl in the picture likes chocolates. Next time we go to Beechfield, she must come too. I do love taking a child there—they are as happy there as the day is long, as I used to be as a child; and indeed I am the same now.—Oh, Sage, I hope you will like it—it is such a dear old place. You can't help liking mother—every one does. I hope it will be one of her good days, when she can come down or out on to the terrace. It is so warm and sunny to-day; I should think she might venture out.—It is my birthday to-day, do you know, Sage? I am twenty to-day, and I am a week older than you; so I am out of my teens, and you are not; so I shall take care of you and chaperone you. We had a heap of invi-

tations for to-day, and some of them nice ones; but I always spend my birthday with mother; so I refused them all. Lady Charteris looked a little black at me, but I did not care. I told mother that wild horses should not keep me away on my birthday; and this is a real proper birthday, with the apple blossom all out, to make up for my ridiculous name.'

Pomona was in high spirits, and she went on talking gaily while the carriage was taking them to Victoria Station; and Sage was well content to listen.

'There is some present awaiting me at Beechfield; but I don't quite know what it is; but it is sure to be exactly what I like best. Mother has a most wonderful way of finding out what I want, and she knows I don't care for jewellery.—Do you know, Sage, I've never cared for jewellery since I was a little wee bit of a child. I had set my heart on a small blue enamel locket, and cried because mother did not give it me. I fancy it was really a trumpery, little thing, and the nurse I had then, to comfort me, said, "Never mind; you'll have all the Lester diamonds one day of your very own;" and I was full of the idea, and went running to mother to ask if it was true, and if it would be soon; and mother told me it was quite true, and it might perhaps be very soon, for it would be when she died.—Oh, Sage, I remember how I cried; and I hated the sight of diamonds for ever so long; and even now, I haven't quite got over the feeling, though I have had some given me, and see how beautiful they are. Lady Charteris gave me a lovely star this morning—a beauty. I have brought it with me to show to mother; and you must see it; but I know mother's present will be something I shall like much better.—Sage, how I do go on talking, and you so quiet! I think there is something about you that makes one talk, you have such a listening face. One does not feel that you are only listening out of politeness, as most girls do, and are only paying half attention, and thinking of something else, or criticising one's dress and appearance.'

'But I am doing that too,' said Sage; 'I am thinking all the time how nice and sweet you look.'

'You are a wicked, little flatterer, and you do it with such a truthful look, that one cannot disbelieve you.'

'Mr Ludlow always says I am such a good listener; but it really is because I am so interested in what he says.'

'Oh, Mr Ludlow!'—a slight cloud passed over Pomona's bright face at the painter's name. 'He is so fond of you, Sage. I wonder why he took such a dislike to poor me, and I must be like his wife too, since the picture is so like me.'

But Sage could offer no explanation except that she thought Mr Ludlow was not well, as he had gone back to Scar next day.

But they had reached Victoria by this time, the scene so often of frantic departures of the Merriew family. After an hour's quick run through beautiful May country, incredibly green beyond the wildest, gaudiest colouring of the most audacious landscape painter, Hillston, the station for Beechfield, is reached; and Pomona recognises a smart groom in tops with the cordiality due to the person who put her first on her shaggy, little

Shetland pony, and who has followed her since over hedges and ditches, and through, I am afraid, more hare-brained adventures than always came to the ears of Lady Lester. He had even now a painful struggle between respect and affection, and a tendency to call her 'Missy,' and say 'Lor bless you!' and to grin wider than is becoming to a gentleman's servant, and to forget to put his finger to his hat at regular intervals; and he had an inclination to lean over from the back seat of the little phaeton that met them at the station, and volunteer remarks on the ponies, or other interesting stable news, instead of sitting up with crossed arms in wooden silence. But no wonder he talked about the ponies, for they were Lady Lester's birthday present to Pomona, and as beautiful a little pair as ever stepped, perfectly matched chestnuts, with plenty of life and action, picking up their dainty feet so prettily, and tossing their spirited, little heads as if life were a good joke, and the little carriage behind them a mere feather's weight.

I am afraid, as regards the ponies, Pomona found Sage for the first time a little unsatisfactory, for much as she admired them, there was no disguising that the admiration was ignorant, for Sage's experience had lain principally among cab and omnibus horses, and even these she had not known intimately; and the feeling chiefly called forth in such experience was that of pity. At Scar, there had been some cart-horses on which, when they went down to drink at the pond, Kitty and the boys used to ride, and these had endearing qualities and large hairy feet; and there was a baby donkey with woolly legs very close together, and a short innocent nose, and a bang of hair on his forehead, like an American girl, which frisked about round its patient, old mother in a manner delightful to behold.

But Sage felt that to mention a young donkey *apropos* of Pomona's ponies might have been taken as an insult; so she wisely refrained; and Stokes, in the back seat, having more knowledge on the subject, presumed on his privilege as an old servant to lean forward and expatiate on their beauties; while Sage drank in all the charms of the road along which the ponies were taking them, as it seemed to her, all too quickly.

The country in May was full of novelty to Sage, as holiday-time does not come till August; and I do not think, if these ponies had not stepped so briskly, Pomona would have got her many yards away from the little station, so lovely was the lane leading up from it, with high banks clad with young green things, that by August have grown dull and dusty.

But Pomona's ponies go too fast for me to describe half the beauties of the way: the little beetle-browed, thatched cottages, garlanded with white clematis; the farms peeping out from among the apple blossom, across broad green meadows striped and fragrant from the big iron roller, whose musical jangle made the ponies prick their ears and listen.

'Here we are!' said Pomona as they turn in at a gate by a pretty, trim lodge, out of which a smiling woman in a white apron runs to open for them to pass in; and Sage gave a little sigh to think that the drive was over.

But 'Here we are' at Beechfield means something different from 'Here we are' in John

Street, where a couple of steps will take you from the street door to the hearthstone; and there were yet three miles to drive, and by far the loveliest half of the drive, through the beautiful park.

I think the deer formed the culminating point of the day to Sage; and after them the house with its stately front of gray stone, clothed at one end with a mantle of shining ivy; and the broad drive that led to it through great banks of rhododendron, hardly stirred any feeling of admiration in her; and it was of the deer she thought when she said to Pomona, as they went up the wide stone steps at the entrance: 'How proud you must be of it all! and to think it will all belong to you one day!'

And Pomona laughed, and then sighed. 'I suppose I am proud of it; at any rate, I am very fond of it. But as to its belonging to me one day—well, you see, dear, it is like the diamonds—I would rather not have it.'

'Oh! Pomona, I am sorry'—

'No; don't be sorry. How can you know what I feel about mother, when you lost yours so long ago!'

After all, talk as we may of the inequalities of life, one is struck now and then by the strangely even balance. If you extract the pure happiness from each one's life, it is surprising how little more you get from boiling down all the heaped-up possessions and riches and glories of one man's opulent life, than you do from the few poor, insignificant possessions of another. Pomona's happiness largely consisted in the frail life and tender love of her mother; surely, in the poorest Whitechapel slum, there may be found like material for happiness.

(To be continued.)

THE HONEY-BEE OF THE FUTURE.

THE Americans, who, like the Athenians of old, are ever on the watch for something new, are reported to be endeavouring to alter the character of the 'little busy bee' by applying to it the principle of artificial selection, in order to make it a useful servant, devoid of sting, yet capable of producing a much larger store of honey than heretofore. We are apt to overlook that interdependence of animal and plant life in the economy of nature, of which Darwin gave a curious instance in his well-known assertion that the number of cats kept in a district would influence the growth of red clover. The reason assigned for this singular connection between the carnivorous animal and the plant is that the cats keep down the mice which destroy the nests of the humble-bees, and as the red clover is fertilised only by humble-bees, it follows that when mice abound, humble-bees are scarce, and so is red clover; but when the mice are killed by cats, the humble-bees have a good time, and spend it in sucking the honey from the red clover. In so doing, they convey the pollen from flower to flower, and thus effect the fertilisation necessary to enable it to produce perfect seeds.

Now the reason why the red clover is thus

dependent upon the good offices of the humble-bee is, that the proboscis of the common hive-bee is not long enough to reach the nectary. The American apiculturist therefore proposes to cross the hive-bee with the giant bee of India, in order to lengthen the proboscis, and so enable it to rifle the nectary of the red clover, thus adding to its food-supply; and by another cross with stingless bees, an effort would be made to get rid of that troublesome sting, which renders the manipulation of a swarm of bees a little difficult and sometimes dangerous.

Both these modifications may be possible, but it is doubtful whether both would be equally useful. A bee's sting is a weapon both of defence and offence; and although its use generally means death to its owner, it is employed much more freely than is agreeable to the recipient. Cases, indeed, are on record in which a swarm of bees, angered by some unknown cause, have attacked men and horses and caused death; whilst even the sting of a single bee has been known to be fatal when received in the throat or in some great nerve-centre; nevertheless, it seems to be an accepted fact that the sting of the bee is a remedy for rheumatism; and the 'Mediterranean Naturalist' asserts that the people of Malta have long been accustomed to expose themselves to be stung by bees for the cure of this painful disease, with excellent results. It is well known among our peasantry that any one who has been frequently stung feels no ill effect from further stings for years after, and this would seem to afford an opening for medical investigation into the properties and uses of the bee-poison. Certain scents appear to madden bees; one of these is a sweating horse, which is so obnoxious to them that it has happened not infrequently that horses tied up near a hive or a nest of wild-bees have been attacked furiously, and if not cut loose quickly, have been stung to death.

Whether the bees of South Africa are peculiarly savage or hypersensitive, we do not know; but many instances of horses stung to death are recorded from that part of the world. They certainly seem to be very easily offended, for we have been told of an instance in which a mischievous little naked Kaffir boy chewed a carrot and spat it out at the door of a hive; whereupon the bees immediately attacked him, and would inevitably have killed him, had not the gardener thrown him into a trench he was digging and covered him up quickly with earth; and it may be here remarked that fresh mould is one of the best known remedies for the stings of bees or wasps.

When, therefore, American apiculturists propose to deprive bees of their stings by crossing them with the wild stingless bees, of which at least two distinct species are known in America, it would seem as though they were working for a noble object. 'If we had a race of stingless bees,' they say, 'the value of the honey crop would be doubled.' But it is well to pause and deliberate before attempting to deprive the insect of the formidable weapon provided for it by nature.

Bees have many enemies, and therefore undoubtedly require a defensive weapon; but there is reason to suppose that the sting is something more than that.

It is acknowledged that stingless bees are not much good as honey-gatherers, and Linnholtz, the Swedish naturalist, says of the honey produced by the stingless bees of Australia, that it causes diarrhoea, and is sour and soon fermented because the bees have no poison to preserve it. Probably, therefore, if our bees should be deprived of their stings, the honey made by them would be worthless instead of gaining in value; for the sting apparently is not only a weapon of offence and defence, but an alembic in which is distilled a subtle fluid, a drop of which is added to each cell of honey before it is sealed, and which, although poisonous when injected into the blood of man or other animal, is essential not only to the well-being of the insect, but also to the wholesomeness of the food provided for its own use and that of its progeny, and which is so unscrupulously appropriated by omnivorous man. The value of the sting to the bee is exemplified by the fact recorded by Darwin, that since the introduction of the common hive-bees into Australia they have almost exterminated the native stingless species.

In these days of cheap sugar we can hardly appreciate the extreme importance of honey and the honey-bee to the ancients. The land flowing with milk and honey loses half its significance to those who look upon honey as dainty desired chiefly by children; and notwithstanding the great revival of bee-keeping of late, it is extremely doubtful whether the public taste will ever return to its ancient delight in that which has become a luxury instead of a necessity. The Americans say the consumption of honey in the United States is only eight ounces per annum for each person, because people have not yet learned the use of it; and English bee-keepers complain that they are overstocked and cannot sell all their produce; and yet it is affirmed that a good deal of artificial honey and honeycomb finds its way into the market.

Much of the honey which in Switzerland is an invariable accompaniment to the breakfast of bread, butter, and coffee, is said to be spurious; yet with the rows upon rows of beehives everywhere, and the abundance of mountain flowers, one would suppose the manufacture of artificial honey to be quite unnecessary; but in the pre-sugar era, the making of false honey was an art recorded by Herodotus with praise. It was the confectioners of Callatebus, on the Mæander, who thus secured fame to themselves by manufacturing honey from tamarisk and wheat. The ingredients now employed by artificial-honey makers are not made public, but honey supposed to be gathered by bees from certain flowers exclusively, is largely advertised as remedial for various diseases. Thus, eucalyptus honey is much used in America as a cure for consumption, and so is that made from horehound, but probably in both cases the medicinal properties are added by human manipulators. Tennyson writes of the 'honey of poison-flowers;' but we never heard of any one having been poisoned by honey, although that made from the euphorbia in South Africa is hot and disagreeable to the taste, and probably unwhole-

some; and the honey made in India from the flowers of the rhododendron is said to be poisonous; so that we may infer that the qualities of the flowers rifled are to a certain extent imparted to the honey, which undoubtedly varies considerably in flavour. The honey of Mount Hymettus, so famous of old, is still most delicious, and so is the heather-honey of Scotland.

When, therefore, apiculturists have succeeded in breeding a race of bees able to suck the nectar from the red clover, our honey will doubtless be improved in flavour. The Ligurian bees are said to possess the desired length of proboscis, and if these are the bees of Hymettus, we may perhaps have a clue to the excellence of their product. British bee-keepers have long imported Ligurian queen-bees, with the view of improving our native stock, but so far the success of the experiment remains uncertain.

It is hard, indeed, to realise the fact that for thousands of years the whole world depended entirely upon the product of the honey-bee for all the sweetness required in cookery. The numerous allusions to honey in the Bible and among classical writers will be familiar to many people; and among the most ancient of British pottery, antiquaries find perforated vessels, supposed to have been used for straining honey. But perhaps it is not generally known that some ancient peoples used honey for embalming; and it is related that an inquisitive antiquary, on discovering a large jar or pot of honey in some ancient excavations, tasted it with his finger, and found a hair adhering to his tongue; and farther investigation revealed the fact that this was one of the coffins containing an embalmed body; and the honey therein, notwithstanding the use to which it had been put, had retained its flavour for many centuries.

A nest of wild-bees is still a lucky find among natives, and travellers do not disclaim to share the feast with them, whilst the stings of the despoiled owners do not trouble them, for they know that 'little smoke will stupefy the bees and make them harmless. The Hindus feed their new-born babes with honey and ghee for luck; and the custom, which once prevailed everywhere, of telling the hive-bees whenever a death occurred in the family of the owner, and of tying pieces of crape to the hive to put them in mourning, lest they should forsake those who had not treated them with proper respect, has not yet died out among our peasantry, and carries us back to the time when bees were among the most valuable possessions of the agriculturist, a fact still preserved in the proverb, 'A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay.' At that time, no one knew anything about Ligurian queens or the fertilisation of red clover; and had any one proposed to modify the proboscis of the bee or to breed a race of stingless bees, he would have been laughed at as a madman.

'What is sweeter than honey?' said the expounders of Samson's riddle, in answer to which modern chemists have put forth saccharine; but the intense sweetness of this chemical extract will never supersede sugar and honey, for the flavour is not agreeable to the palate of men; and even wasps and bees, fond as they are of sweet things, reject saccharine with disdainful fury, and will buzz angrily about anything sweetened

therewith without touching it, as though they felt themselves defrauded of their lawful perquisites, and were wroth with those who would try to deceive them.

• A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

ROBERT was scarcely surprised at the unwelcome appearance of his half-brother. He had all along suspected that he had overheard his conversation with his sister relative to the search for Jim Turner, and naturally would have kept a watch on his movements. He therefore accepted the situation without much comment; but as soon as he could get away without exciting suspicion, made his way to the telegraph office. Here he wired to Owen at Bendabar, giving him the clue of the rocky bar and all other details furnished by Turner. He asked him to follow the search up at once, and if successful, to keep the papers until his arrival, and restore the spot where they were found to its original state, as though it had been undisturbed. This done, he felt more at ease.

He knew that Alf would soon get all he wanted to know out of poor, simple Jim; and he was not at all sure that he did not intend to play him some trick on the way up and get ahead of him. The four hundred miles to the station were, however, negotiated without any mishap. He did not trust himself to exchange glances with Owen, lest Alf's sharp eyes should note it; but as soon as there was an opportunity, the manager told him that he had been quite successful. The papers were still in the tin, but Robert begged his friend to keep them where they were until the force of a search had been gone through.

Next morning, they started down the river; and Jim Turner soon identified the spot where they were camped when Burgess appeared. Needless to say, the search—extended into the next day—was fruitless. The general conclusion was that if Burgess had buried anything, it had been only just beneath the surface, and the tin was probably soon laid bare. In that case, the first bush-fire that swept over the spot would destroy the contents.

Alf did not seem at all elated at the fact that nothing had transpired; and Robert guessed that the state of uncertainty was worse to him than the discovery of the hidden tin would have been.

Jim Turner was rewarded; and Alf took his leave, Robert announcing his intention of spending a few days with his friend Owen. From something he noticed in Alf's manner, he mistrusted the fact that he had really left the station, and believed that his suspicions had been aroused by the non-discovery of anything, and that he was still keeping a watch on his movements. So impressed was he with this idea, that it was not until he retired and locked himself in his bedroom that he commenced his investigations. The tin had preserved its contents with wonderful fidelity. On lifting the lid, the papers appeared to be in almost as good a state of preservation as when first placed there. There were three folded papers and a small note-book.

He opened the folded papers. They were all in his brother Sam's writing, in pencil, and, by a strange coincidence, he read them in their proper sequence. The first was addressed to himself, and ran: 'DEAR BOB—We have had bad luck, and worst of all, I have met with an accident that has crippled me. I am just scribbling this to say good-bye in case things take a turn for the bad. If I don't turn up again, you know how to act for the good of all at home.' Then followed some affectionate messages to his mother and sisters.

The second paper bore date the next day, and was but a few lines: 'Burgess has come back. I am much worse, in awful pain; shall never leave here. Thank God, I am not deserted by everybody.'

The third and last was almost illegible; the reader managed to decipher: 'Burgess will tell—too bad—I had forgiven—now left here—die.' The rest was unintelligible.

Robert dropped the message from the dead man whose bones lay in the desert. His half-brother's name was not mentioned; but he read the whole story as though it had been printed. Sam had met with an accident, and Alf had left him to get on as best he could. But what was the accident? and how did he meet with it? The note-book would tell him that.

He took it up and opened it. Just then all the dogs on the station commenced to bark furiously, as though some one was coming. He opened his window and looked out; but all seemed quiet; and after a fight among themselves, the dogs subsided into silence.

He commenced the note-book, wherein Burgess had, as he said, told the true story of Sam's death.

'I promised Sam Patten when he was dying that I would tell the truth; and I swore to Alf, after he saved my life from the blacks, that I would not. I will write it all down; hide it, and never speak of it again. I don't know what to do. From the start, Alf Patten made himself disagreeable; and although Sam stood it very quietly for some time, at last he quarrelled with him; and after that, there was nothing but rows between them. The morning we found five of the horses poisoned, they had the worst quarrel. Alf was away, when we camped the night before, and he blamed his brother for not noticing the poison-plant about. While they were still at it, the black boy and I started after two of the horses that had strayed away. While we were tracking them up, we both thought we heard a pistol-shot in the direction of the camp. When we got back with the horses, we found that there had been an accident. Sam, while doing something to his revolver, had accidentally touched the trigger and shot himself through the hand. That was the story they told us. It was a clean wound; and I did not think it would turn out bad. We had good country and easy travelling for a day or two, and Sam's hand seemed getting on very well; then we had a long dry stage and hot weather. Sam's hand took a sudden turn for the worse, and when we got to some good water and grass, he said he could go no farther, but must stay there until his hand was easier. Ever since that morning, the brothers had not spoken, and Sam would not let his brother help him in

any way. We spent three days at the water-hole; and the rest and plenty of cold-water bandages did the wound good. Alf had been getting very impatient, and at last he said that we had come nearly as far as we wanted to, and seen most of the country they had come to look at; that the best thing to do was for Sam to stop at the camp, while we went on about fifty miles farther, and then we could go home by easy stages. This meant that we should be away from Sam for nearly three days; and I would not agree to it. But Sam himself persuaded me; he was anxious to get home, and thought that by the time we got back he would be able to ride, and there would be nothing to detain us. We started the next morning. While we were packing and saddling the horses, Alf went up and spoke to his brother. Whatever it was he said, the quarrel broke out again at once; and when we started, Alf had gone back to one of his fiendish tempers. We went about thirty miles that day, and camped. The next morning, as we were starting, I asked Patten how far we were going before turning back. He said: "Right on to the Overland Telegraph Line." I pulled up, and said I would go no farther, but would return to the camp. He argued with me that Sam was all right, and even tried to threaten me; but I rode away, and he and the black boy went on.

'I got back to camp that evening, and found Sam very bad. I think the excitement of the quarrel with his brother had inflamed the wound again. Next morning he was in terrible agony, and his arm was swollen right up to the shoulder. He was delirious, and kept praying me to cut his arm off. I never left his side except to get water to keep the bandages wet. The next afternoon he suddenly fell asleep, but woke up just at sundown. He was quite sensible, and had no pain at all; only, he said, "he felt too weak to move." He talked to me quietly about going back, thinking, now the pain had left him, he would be strong enough to ride in the morning. He told me that his wound was not an accident, but that his brother in a fit of passion had threatened him with his revolver; that he had tried to take it from him, and in the struggle it had gone off and shot him through the hand. He never meant to say anything about it, but for his brother going away and leaving him; and asked me to tell the true story if anything happened to him, and I promised. Presently, he said to me: "This is heavenly to be free from that terrible pain; I shall sleep so soundly to-night, old man." He never spoke again. I scarcely know when he died, but I think it was about an hour afterwards.

'Next morning, I was digging a grave as best I could, when Alf and the black boy came up. They had been riding all night. He was like a madman when he saw Sam's body, called himself a murderer, and vowed that he would go back and give himself up to be hanged. After Sam was buried, this fit seemed to wear off; and next morning we started home. We scarcely ever spoke during the next few days. Once he asked me what story I was going to tell when we got in, and I said, "The true one." A week after Sam's death we got to the Herbert River, and camped near a water-hole. Suddenly the place seemed alive with blacks, and a shower of spears

and "nullas" fell around us. The black boy was speared clean through the body; but I only got a crack with a nulla. I used my revolver, and made a rush for a carbine that was lying where I had been sleeping; but before I got there, I was knocked down, and the niggers rushed in and got hold of me. Another moment, and my brains would have been beaten out; but just then Alf came to my relief, and saved me. The black boy was dead. That night, when we were talking it over, Alf said: "I think I saved your life to-day, Burgess. Poor Sam is dead and gone, and it will do no good raking up our quarrel; cannot you hold your tongue when you get in?" Of course he had saved my life, and I scarcely knew what to say. "How shall we account for Sam's death?" I said at last. "He was killed here by the blacks," he replied, pointing back to where the fight had been. So it fell out that I agreed. He swore that he intended to go away and change his name, rather than face going home; and I promised to tell the story we made up that night. Next morning, we parted. He took three horses and most of the rations, as he intended to make for the Overland Telegraph Line; and I took the two worst horses, to try and get in to the nearest station. They died on the road, and I have walked in. I do not know whether I have done right or wrong; but this is the truth. With this book I bury three letters that Sam wrote and gave to me. Alf knows nothing of them.'

It was all out now; and Robert knew that every word was plain truth. He could see his half-brother in every line of the confession—the outbreaks of uncontrollable temper followed by fits of short-lived remorse. Doubtless, when he parted from Burgess he fully intended to keep his vow, and be henceforth a dead man to those who had known him. But time had blunted his feelings of regret; his character had degenerated; he had grown tired of his self-imposed exile, and the death of Burgess had been too great a temptation to return, removing as it did the only witness to his crime; for although no laws could touch him, he was as guilty of his half-brother's death as if he had shot him through the head.

What was he to do? He looked up, and started; there, pressed close against the glass of the window, was the face of his half-brother. The expression on it arrested Robert in the act of rising. He scarcely knew whether he was gazing at a living face or a dead one, it wore such a ghastly look. While he was hesitating, it vanished. Robert went to the window, which was an ordinary French light, opening on to the veranda, unlocked it, and was about stepping out, when he paused. A meeting between them just then had better be avoided; evidently, Alf's uneasy conscience had dragged him back; he knew now that Robert knew the truth, and he could do no more harm. He stood at the door and listened. There was a sudden outbreak from the dogs; then he heard the sound of a horse cantering down the paddock. The nocturnal visitor was gone. But Robert's way was no clearer; and he passed a wretched sleepless night.

On the third day, a man rode up to the station with a note for Robert. It was from Alf, and ran thus: 'Whatever Burgess wrote is true. I

know you found the papers, and have read them. I am going a long way out West, and this time I shall not return.—Good-bye.'

The writing was so unlike Alf's hard firm hand, that Robert instinctively asked the man, who was the hostler at a small public-house some thirty miles away, whether his brother had been drinking heavily.

'He went it pretty hot for a couple of days,' returned the man; 'but he seemed all right when he started this morning.'

'He had gone, then?'

'Yes; started the same time that I did. He said he was going to Barr Downs to-night;' naming a station to the westward.

Robert pondered over the communication. Was it reality this time, and did it point to a suicide's expiation?

He determined to follow. Turner was still on the station, having taken a place as boundary-rider, so he engaged him to accompany him; and Owen provided him with a black boy, a good tracker; for there was no knowing how far he might have to go. By the time he was ready, Alf had three days' start of him.

It was easy enough to follow him, for he was making due west from station to station, and travellers were not very common as they got into the sparsely settled outside district. He could not gain on him, however; at every station where he stopped the night, Alf had always left just the three days before. The last place they crossed, the Herbert, Robert thought he recognised the water-hole where the blacks had attacked Burgess; but all tokens of the fierce fight had long been dispersed by successive floods.

At last they came to the most outside station, within about fifty miles of the Queensland border. Beyond was still unsettled country for about three hundred miles to the Overland Telegraph Line. Alf had stayed the night at this place, and next morning he had gone on by himself, leaving the people on the place in some perplexity as to where he was bound to. From thence out Robert knew they would have to follow his tracks. Once in the unoccupied country, this was comparatively easy, and they went on the first day without a check. Robert knew as well as if Alf had told him that their destination was Sam's lonely grave; would he get there too late?

They camped the first night at a small hole of water at the head of a rocky creek. Next morning, still following the tracks of the two horses, they crossed a low range and emerged on to a wide plain. By night they found themselves on a small clay flat with tired and thirsty horses. They had water for themselves in their canvas bags; but unless there was some ahead, their horses would not last through another day of such fatiguing travelling.

Alf had, however, camped on the flat, so it was evident that he was making for some place ahead that he knew of.

On again the next morning. Straight across the plain went the tracks, and with jaded horses, the party followed them. When within about a mile of the creek, the black boy, who was ahead tracking, pulled up and pointed to the trees. Half-a-dozen kites were circling slowly in the

air over a particular spot, looking like black specks in the distance. 'There's water there,' said Turner. Robert did not answer, but motioned to the boy, and they pressed on. In a short time they rode up to the bank of the creek, in the bed of which was a shallow pool of water. The loose horses ran down and commenced greedily drinking; two others, who were feeding on the edge of the water-hole, greeted them with loud whinnies. A glance told Robert he was too late. He motioned to Turner and the boy to go on to the water, and dismounting, tied the reins to his stirrup iron, and let his thirsty horse go loose after the rest.

A man was lying at the foot of a coolibah tree. He might have been asleep; but people as a rule do not sleep in the noontide glare of a tropical sun. It was his brother, dead by his own hand. On the tree, at the foot of which he lay, a sheet of bark had been stripped off years before, and on the surface of the wood beneath, the initials S. P. had been rudely cut. Robert at once divined that the letters had been carved by Burgess, and beneath was Sam's grave.

They buried the lifeless form that had once held such fierce conflicting passions, by the side of the man whose death lay at his door; and in the grave Robert placed the written testimonies of the expiated guilt. The Message that had come from the Desert was left to moulder there; no man now would ever know it. Alf himself had solved for Robert the question of what he should do with the knowledge bequeathed him by the dead.

Next morning, with a saddened heart, the only surviving brother retraced his steps through the untrodden waste that surrounded the two graves. In after-years, when wife and children were his, and prosperity and contentment, his thoughts would often be recalled by a chance word to that time; and like a picture would rise clearly before him the scene he saw as he turned in his saddle for a last look. The gaunt and desolate plain; the creek, bordered with dwarfed, distorted timber; the soaring, tireless kites; the fierce sun overhead, beating down on the graves of his brothers beneath the stunted, shadeless, coolibah tree.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONE of the most interesting matters brought forward at the recent meeting of the British Association was a demonstration of the isolation of fluorine. Six years ago this element was isolated in France; but the results had not been confirmed in this country. The apparatus required for the demonstration is furnished with platinum electrodes, through which a current is passed into a compound containing the fluorine. As a result, hydrogen is given off at one electrode; and fluorine, in the form of an almost colourless gas, at the other. The action of fluorine upon various substances is remarkable—silicon, boron, sulphur, and various metals igniting and burning brilliantly directly they come within its reach.

Those who have been led to hope that a balloon will represent the flying machine of the future have usually pinned their faith upon a screw propeller as the best means of urging it through the air. Some experiments in this direction have recently been made by M. Mallett, the results of which have been presented to the French Academy. With a screw having a diameter of seven and a half feet, and with a velocity of one hundred revolutions per minute, this experimenter succeeded in raising the balloon three hundred and thirty-three feet high in the same time—that is, one minute. Repetitions of the experiment invariably gave the same results. Unfortunately, no particulars are given of the kind of motor used in accomplishing this astonishing result.

The phenomenon known as 'bleeding bread' has, according to a correspondent of *Nature*, made its appearance in this country during the recent hot weather. It is an organism which appears on bread, boiled potatoes, rice puddings, and other farinaceous compounds, in the form of red stains, which resemble splashes of blood. It was first noticed in this country in the year 1853, when an account of it was communicated to the British Microscopical Society. It is only seen during periods of high temperature, and is sufficiently rare to give rise to superstitious notions, which, in spite of Board schools, are still rife enough in country districts.

At the Congress of photographers recently held in London, the most interesting item was a demonstration of M. Lippman's method of producing photographs in colour. Some months ago, specimens of this process were shown in Paris; but the method of exhibiting them has been since improved by M. Lumiere. The colours are due to what is known as *interference phenomena*, and are produced in the photographic film in the following manner: a specially prepared gelatine plate, bearing an almost transparent film, is placed with its sensitive surface in contact with a tank of mercury, and exposure to light-action through a lens is made through the back of the plate. The projected rays of light meeting the reflected rays from the brilliant quicksilver give rise to interference colours in the resulting photograph. Such colours can only be seen on the film when the plate is held at a certain angle, and they resemble and are analogous to the iridescent tints on mother-of-pearl. Viewed in this way they are ineffective; but when placed, according to M. Lumiere's suggestion, in the beam of a powerful electric arc light, and a reflection from the coloured surface is thrown upon a screen by the aid of a lens, the result is very brilliant. The experiment is a most interesting one, the colours produced approximating to those of nature.

Another very different method by which photographs are associated with colour is now to some extent superseding the old chromo-lithographic process. The method is strictly mechanical, and has nothing whatever to do with the solution of the colour-photography problem. Three printing blocks are made by the Meisenbach half-tone process, by which the original photograph is cut up into printable lines and dots. But each block is made from a negative, which takes cognisance of only one colour in the original design—red, yellow, or blue, the so-called 'primary' colours of

the old text-books. This is brought about by using in conjunction with the camera differently coloured screens, which will only admit rays of one colour to pass to the sensitive surface within. Each of these blocks is printed from in turn with its own coloured ink, the three images being superposed upon one another, and the general effect produced is that of a chromo-lithograph printed from a number of stones. The specimens which we have seen are exceedingly satisfactory; but it remains to be seen if equally good work can be turned out in bulk.

Another matter of photographic interest is the establishment in London of the first of a series of annual Exhibitions under the title of the 'Photographic Salon.' The object of the promoters is to exhibit the artistic capabilities of photography, putting its scientific and commercial aspects entirely aside. The pictures hung are about three hundred in number, and have been selected for their artistic merit. They are quite a revelation to those whose standard of photographic excellence is borrowed from ordinary sources. Both portraiture and landscape are presented here with an artistic and, in many cases, a poetic feeling which most persons would think quite unattainable with a camera. The Exhibition is unique, and it has attained a deserved success. All will look forward to the reopening of the Photographic Salon in the autumn of 1894.

According to a paper recently brought before the Association of Belgian Chemists, certain continental bakers mix soap with their dough, in order, it is said, to make their bread and pastry light. The soap is dissolved in water, and to this a little oil is added, the mixture being subsequently whipped into an emulsion, which is added to the flour. The idea of soap as an edible substance is not a pleasant one, but possibly the bakers referred to are particular to obtain a pure kind. Genuine oleate of soda, which is made by combining caustic soda with vegetable oil, would not be altogether objectionable; but we should be inclined to prefer home-made bread of the old-fashioned unsophisticated kind.

We are informed by a correspondent that some time ago the Geneva Library became possessed of a collection of unopened Egyptian papyri, which on being carefully manipulated and examined by M. Nicole, were found to be of great interest and value. They include a fragment of the *Orestes* of Euripides, which is believed to be at least one thousand years older than any other manuscript of the same work at present known. There are also portions of the *Iliad*, containing great variations from the usually accepted text. The collection also contains an Idyll on Jupiter and Leda, and an Elegy on the Stars. A curious document is a letter from the head of a monastery requesting the use for three months of certain horses. The animals were to aid the monks in getting about the country; and as an inducement for granting the request it is urged by the borrowers that 'they are orthodox.' There are other interesting items in this valuable collection of papyri.

It will be remembered by many that the late Mr Richard A. Proctor, who did perhaps more than any other writer to popularise the science of astronomy, died five years ago in New York

city of yellow fever, which disease he contracted in Florida. His grave remained neglected until a newspaper urged the claims of the deceased writer upon its readers. The response was quick; and a handsome monument has been erected to the astronomer's memory, adorned by a noble inscription, the work of his great friend, Herbert Spencer. There are many in this country who, without personal knowledge of Mr Proctor, have read his books or attended his lectures, and these will be glad to know that his memory is preserved in this manner by our English-speaking cousins across the sea.

The 'telegraph' which is placed on all steamships for communicating the captain's orders to the engine-room by means of a bell, dial, and pointer, is now, we understand, being adopted for street vehicles, so as to avoid the necessity of the occupant leaning out of the window and giving verbal directions to his driver. The new device consists of duplicate dials and pointers with such directions as 'Stop,' 'Go on,' 'Turn to the Right,' and so on, one being within the vehicle and one outside, both working synchronously.

Another comfort for travellers is the provision of reading lamps on the penny-in-the-slot principle, which are presently to be placed on some of our railways. On the District Railway, London, two thousand five hundred lamps will be required, and the carriages are being now wired for their reception. The lamps are electric, and the act of dropping in a penny will set a clock in motion for half an hour, during which time the current will be switched on to the lamp, and will concentrate a light of twenty candle-power upon the newspaper or book of the passenger who expends the coin.

Mr G. J. Symons, F.R.S., to whom the public is much indebted for his constant meteorological observations, has lately made some references to the rainfall during 1893, which will interest many. We all know that the year has been a remarkably dry one, and unless its closing weeks should bring with them tempests and floods, it will probably prove to be the driest on record. For thirty-five years Mr Symons has made constant observations of rainfall and other weather phenomena, and he tells us that only once has he previously registered the rainfall of four consecutive months at less than an inch each, and then it was winter-time and at the end of two exceptionally rainy years. For more than thirty years no year has been so dry as the seven months ending October last, and this applies both to London and the country generally.

It has been announced that the Manchester Ship Canal will be formally opened throughout its entire length on the first day of the new year, when ships will be able to find their way from the Mersey to the Manchester Docks. Every one will wish this bold and costly enterprise the success which it undoubtedly deserves.

We have more than once alluded to the value of finger-prints as a means of identification, and our readers will possibly be interested in knowing that the system has been adopted in the Indian army. The Order issued by the authorities is as follows: 'It is requested that as a means of identification of recruits for the native army, examining medical officers will cause an impres-

sion in printer's ink of the ends of the first three fingers of the right hand of each recruit passed by them as fit for the service to be made on the Nominal Roll opposite the name of the recruit; and in the case of the Army Hospital Corps, on the Verification Roll.' This innovation is mainly due to the exertions of Mr Francis Galton, who, it will be remembered, read a paper on the subject of 'Identification by Finger-marks' at the recent meeting of the British Association at Nottingham.

An incandescent arc lamp—by which is meant the combination in the lamp of the main features of the electric arc and the glow lamp—was described at the recent Electrical Congress at Chicago. The two carbons between which the arc is formed, which must be of very fine quality, are enclosed in a glass globe which is highly refractory. At the top and bottom this globe is closed with plugs, through which the carbons pass; and there is a safety-valve provided, which prevents any undue pressure upon the internal walls of the vessel. When the arc is once established, the enclosed oxygen is consumed; and the remaining gas mixed with carbon vapour becomes so luminous that the arc itself is almost invisible. Economy is claimed for this system both in the amount of current required, and in the saving of carbon rods, which consume less rapidly than if they were exposed to the air.

Some months ago we described how the buildings of the World's Fair at Chicago were being painted without brushes by means of a gigantic spray apparatus. A somewhat similar plan, it is said, has been adopted for the application of whitewash to ceilings. First of all, the whitewash is very carefully screened or filtered into a barrel, to which is attached the suction-pipe of a double-acting force-pump. With a pressure of one hundred pounds on the square inch, the mixture was pumped into the delivery tube, and discharged through a hole not more than one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter. The whitewash is thus sent aloft in a very finely divided form, ladders, scaffolding, and extra labourers being dispensed with, while a saving of expense all round is secured.

Our contemporary, *Knowledge*, calls attention to the peculiar eye-trouble common among hop-pickers which goes by the name of 'hop-pickers' ophthalmia.' It is ascribable to the microscopic hairs which cover the leaf of the hop, and which, it is thought, may possibly partake in a small degree of the properties of the nearly related stinging nettle.

The uses of steel are constantly increasing, and one of the most interesting of its applications is that of bell-casting. Hitherto, the bell-founder has relied upon bell-metal, which is an alloy of copper and tin; but cast-steel has recently been employed for the purpose, at a great saving of cost. It does not seem, however, that the tone of the new bells is quite equal to that of the old, and it is believed that some way of improving the steel for this purpose may be discovered.

The cycle is said to be threatened with a formidable rival in the shape of a pneumatic road skate, which will shortly be placed upon the market by a Scotch firm. The new skate, instead of having four wheels, like the ordinary roller

skate, has only two, which are placed in line one behind the other, and are not solid, but furnished with pneumatic tires. With this aid to locomotion, it is said that ordinary roads can be traversed with ease, and that the ascent and descent of hills are by no means difficult. The skates have been already seen in some of the Midland towns, where a speed of from six to seven miles an hour has been attained with them in the ordinary thoroughfares. Simple pedestrianism, it would seem, may soon go out of fashion.

A machine for typewriting musical characters has recently been invented and exhibited by Mr F. H. Bowen of Springfield, U.S.A. In outward appearance it looks like the ordinary Remington typewriter, and can, it is said, be as easily manipulated. It will impress the notes, &c., on paper already ruled with the five lines of the musical stave, or will print the lines itself as the work proceeds. The machine should be of use to those who find a difficulty in writing music legibly, and we fear that there are many musicians who labour under this disadvantage.

Many are the serious accidents which have occurred from bottles bursting or breaking while being uncorked or unstopped, and this has been especially the case since mineral waters have been bottled in receptacles which require heavy pressure to release the marbles or other devices by which they are closed. A Safety Bottle-opener, which has been devised by Mr W. Fletcher of Denby, near Derby, is, therefore, an opportune and valuable invention. It consists of a kind of semi-canister, which fits over the neck and shoulders of the bottle, containing at its apex a movable stopper, which can be pressed down while the hand is protected by the canister-like casing.

It is well known that the maintenance of large areas of glass on high buildings gives rise to constant trouble and expense, and we fancy that the yearly bill for repairs at such a building as the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, must be of enormous proportions. Breakage, as well as the evident danger to people beneath, will be obviated by a new device which is said to be practicable, and not costly. The glass during manufacture is moulded upon steel-wire netting, so that it is furnished with a strong skeleton, so to speak. The new material can during manufacture be bent without much difficulty, and it is obvious that it can be used in much larger squares than ordinary glass. A somewhat similar material, consisting of a transparent varnish which filled up the interstices in wire-work, was brought forward some time ago, but it intercepted much light, and was inflammable in its nature.

The experience of the past summer, when wasps were unusually and most unpleasantly plentiful, has shown that some persons are peculiarly susceptible to the poisonous sting of these insects. A case was recently reported in the *Lancet*, where a man, fifty-six years of age, was stung by a wasp on the middle finger of the left hand. He was admitted to a hospital, for he had become faint, and pains extended up his arm and all over his body. Severe rigor followed, accompanied by sickness and other distressing symptoms. The pulse became very feeble, and the temperature rose above the

normal. The man ultimately recovered ; but the case shows that a wasp must be avoided by certain individuals as most persons would avoid a poisonous snake.

A SOUTH ATLANTIC MYSTERY.

THE 'Enterprise,' outward bound to New Zealand, was rippling through the deep blue waters of the South Atlantic Ocean, with a light breeze from the south-west, which kept her moving at the rate of four knots an hour. Here and there the dancing waves were crested with a dash of creamy froth ; and a long streak of gray light was showing itself amidst the clouds in the distant east, as the dusky night slowly and reluctantly gave place to dawn. Presently, an old quartermaster lurched sleepily along the deck and peered down the companion hatch at the cabin timepiece. Finding that it was four o'clock, he returned forward with a livelier step and struck eight bells. The clear chimes echoed in the keen frosty air with a silver-like intonation ; the shrill notes of the boatswain's whistle were heard rousing up the men of the port watch ; the hands came aft to muster ; lookout and helmsman were relieved ; the starboard watch went below ; and then the decks became again deserted, as though the momentary bustle and life and movement were but caused by the magic wave of an enchanter's wand. In a few minutes the only audible sounds were the occasional rattling of the wheel-chains, and the mournful creaking of the yards as the vessel swayed gently to the long heave of the Atlantic billows.

In the meantime the chief-officer had made his appearance on deck, and was standing with the second at the break of the poop. After receiving the usual information about the course, the number of sails set, &c., and commenting upon the state of the weather, he suddenly started a conversation, the subject of which had evidently been in the thoughts of both of them before.

'I can't understand it,' he said. 'Here are we in the fifty-fourth degree of south latitude, and the skipper is still making a southerly course. We shall be down amongst the ice soon. I shall give him a hint about it when he takes sights after breakfast.'

The second-mate looked cautiously around, as though to make sure that no one else was within hearing, and leaning close over to the chief-officer, said in a low voice : 'Have you noticed anything strange about the captain's manner lately, Mr Wilson ? He was always quiet and standoffish like ; but during the last few days he has spoken and acted at times in such a strange way that I have sometimes fancied he was—a little'—Here the second mate touched his forehead significantly.

'Well,' replied the mate, after a pause, 'I don't mind admitting that I have noticed it for some weeks past ; but I thought it best to keep quiet, in case I was mistaken.—But don't breathe a

word to a soul, for those fits of abstraction may only be a peculiarity of his, after all.'

'But the strange look in his eyes'—insisted the second-mate.

'Mr Martin, we must not jump to hasty conclusions,' returned the chief. 'What I want first of all to find out is—why are we steering so far to the southward ?'

'I hope he'll give a satisfactory reason,' replied Martin as he turned to go below ; 'for I've made nine voyages to the colonies, and was never so far south before.'

At seven o'clock the captain came on deck, and after exchanging a few words with the chief-officer, walked to the starboard side and looked long and earnestly towards the southern point of the horizon. He was a tall, fine-looking man, with a sunburnt and rather handsome face, a square, resolute-looking jaw, and long iron-gray hair, a lock of which, in moments of excitement, he had a curious habit of twisting round his fingers. But the eyes, which were of a steely gray and very piercing, were the distinctive feature of his face, principally on account of the singular expression which dwelt in them. It is hard to describe it—a sort of restless, eager look, as though for ever on the watch for some one or something that he had been long expecting to meet. His age, according to the ship's articles, was thirty-six, though he looked eight or ten years older ; and although usually of a somewhat reserved disposition, speaking little to his officers except on matters of duty, yet at times, when he 'came out of his shell,' as the second-mate expressed it, he could be a most agreeable companion, as he was fairly well read, and had visited many queer, out-of-the-way places in the remote corners of the earth. Professionally, he was as capable and gallant a seaman as ever trod a deck.

Having apparently satisfied himself that nothing was in sight, he took a few impatient turns up and down the quarter-deck, and then crossed over to where the chief-officer was standing.

'Mr Wilson,' he said, speaking very slowly, and regarding his chief-officer with a strange, steadfast look, 'I have something to tell you which will explain my reasons for taking a much more southerly course than is usual with outward-bound vessels. I was thinking the matter over last night, and then decided to take you into my confidence.'

There was something in Captain Roberts' manner and in the expression of his eyes that startled the chief-officer, and yet for the life of him he could not have told why. However, he said nothing, but inwardly wondering what it was the captain had to tell him, waited for him to proceed.

'It was in the year 1875, ten years ago now,' he began, 'that I was in command of a small steamer on the Australian coast. I had taken her out from England when she was new, and at the request of the owners, remained in her after our arrival at Adelaide. I had left my wife behind me in London ; but as, after a time I decided to make my home out in the colonies, I sent for her to join me. She sailed from

Liverpool in a barque called the "Lord Clive," on the 10th of December 1875; that vessel never arrived at her destination—only once, from that day to this, has she ever been heard of.' Here the captain paused, and stood for a few minutes gazing out to sea, as though lost in thought.

'Was the "Lord Clive" lost, sir?' the chief-officer ventured to inquire, finding the skipper still remained silent.

'They say so,' he replied. 'The last time she was seen, or at least spoken with, was by a whaler, in latitude fifty-four degrees south, and longitude ten degrees east, somewhere near the supposed position of the Bouvet Islands; though, what she was doing there, I can't imagine, unless she had been driven out of her course by a succession of northerly gales. That was nine years and a half ago, and she has never been heard of since. The owners, underwriters, indeed everybody I have spoken with on the subject, seem convinced that she is lost; in fact, the captain's wife has married again; but I believe the "Lord Clive" is still afloat, and that my wife is on board of her—alive!'

The chief-mate started, and stared at his commander with astonishment, not unmingled with a slight feeling of alarm, for whatever doubts he may have previously had on the subject of the captain's sanity, it now became evident to him that on one subject at least he was mad. To suppose that a ship which had not been heard of for nine and a half years was still afloat, and people alive on board of her, struck the practical chief-officer as out of the bounds of reason.

'I went home to England,' continued Captain Roberts, and the tone of his voice showed that he was labouring under suppressed excitement, 'and interviewed the owners of the "Lord Clive," offering to take command of a ship without pay, if they would place one at my disposal, and go in search of her. But they would not listen to me, for by that time the insurance had been paid, and they took no further interest in the vessel's fate. I have made eight voyages out to the colonies since then—for I will never trade anywhere else, and I can't get command of a whaler—and every time, I go a long way to the southward in the hope of meeting the "Lord Clive," for I expect she got down amongst the ice and was frozen in. But some day she'll break away and drift out into the open sea again; and I should like to be the first to board that ship, to meet my wife, and welcome her back to the world once more. For she is not dead, sir, I tell you, Mr Wilson—with an impatient stamp of his foot and a wild gleam in his eye—'she can't be dead; we only parted for a time—only for a time—and I feel as sure as I am standing here, that we shall meet again.'

'But not in this world,' muttered the chief-officer under his breath.

The captain turned to walk aft, but his steps were arrested by a shout from a man who was about some job on the main yard: 'Sail ho!'

'Where away?' roared the mate from the break of the poop.

'Broad on the starboard bow, sir,' replied the man.

The captain seized his glass from the companion hatch and hurried to the weather mizzen rigging, followed by Mr Wilson. On the utmost verge

of the horizon, where the gray-blue waters seemed to finish in a sharp clear-cut line against the paler sky, a small dash of white, barely the size of a sea-gull's wing, was visible. For the space of three minutes the captain gazed at it, then, closing his telescope with a snap, he took a few hurried paces on the deck. After a few moments of this restless kind of walk, he again pointed his telescope at the strange sail. 'We're rising her; don't you think so, Mr Wilson?' he exclaimed.

'It is scarcely possible to tell yet, sir,' replied Wilson, 'she has been in sight so short a time.'

'I am going below to examine the chart,' continued the captain; and despite the assumed calmness of his tone, it was evident that he was strongly excited. 'Keep her up a couple of points; we must overhaul yonder craft, for I want to speak her, and—if I am not on deck before—let me know when you can make out her hull.'

Two hours passed, and the 'Enterprise,' slipping smoothly and cleverly through the water, closed up to within three miles of the strange ship, which appeared to be drifting helplessly upon the ocean. She had only one rag of a sail, which fluttered heavily in the breeze, and her mizzen-mast and foretopmast were gone. As they drew still nearer, the chief officer was struck with the strange, dismantled appearance of her spars and rigging. Captain Roberts came on deck and looked thirstily at her through his telescope.

'Clear away the cutter!' he shouted, and the clear, sharp, intonation of his voice seemed to fetch an echo from the hollows of the sails.

The men came aft in obedience to the order, and as the second-mate went to see to the execution of it, he was stopped by the captain, who said: 'I shall want you in the boat with me, Mr Martin, and three picked men.'

'Very good, sir.'

The vessels were now within half a mile of each other, and the order was given to 'heave to!' The wind had died away to a light air with almost startling suddenness, but the horizon to the north-west was blurred and indistinct with a sort of gray, smoke-like haze.

While the boat was getting ready, the captain was pacing the deck with restless and feverish impatience, at times pausing in his hurried perambulation to gaze at the other vessel with an eager, longing look, as though on board of her he could see the form of some dearly loved person whom he had long been parted from. Presently he stepped up to the chief-officer, and touching him on the shoulder, pointed to the strange vessel, and in a voice trembling with excitement, said: 'Just look through your glass, Wilson, and see if you can make out anybody on her quarter-deck—a woman.'

'I can see nobody; the ship is evidently deserted,' the chief replied as he handed the telescope to the captain.

'Deserted! Man, are you blind? Can't you see the flutter of a woman's dress?' he cried, with fierce impatience. Then stretching out his arm, and pointing towards the drifting vessel: 'That ship is the "Lord Clive;" and my wife, I have every reason to believe, is there, sir. I saw her figure but this minute, and I should know

her even at this distance.—Yes, I have found her at last—I have found her at last !'

Wilson's honest sunburnt face wore an expression of the utmost astonishment and pity, and he was about to make some sort of a reply, when the second-mate came aft and reported the boat as ready.

Captain Roberts without another word entered it and took his seat in the stern-sheets ; but the chief-officer managed to convey a hint of the skipper's mad fancy to the second before the boat shoved off. 'Look well after him,' he whispered ; 'for God knows what he will do when he finds no one on board that ship, as I feel confident will be the case.'

As they approached her, Martin observed that her hull was terribly weather-beaten—some shreds of sails hung from her topsail yards, and ragged ends of rigging and running gear hung over her side. There was ice, too, about her, although the thermometer was scarcely down to freezing-point, a pretty conclusive proof that she had but recently drifted up from the desolate frozen seas that encircle the South Pole. The captain occasionally muttered something to himself ; his face was flushed, as though with some pleasurable anticipation, and his bright eyes burned with a wild light, but all the time he kept his gaze fixed upon the after-part of the dismantled barque.

Presently the boat swept under her counter ; the name which had been painted on her stern was partially obliterated ; but Martin's heart gave a big thump when he saw that the letters which remained—evidently the final ones, were—'IVE.' Was it the 'Lord Clive,' after all ?

'In bow ! Way enough !' he roared. They were alongside !

The captain swung himself lightly into the main chains, then climbed over the rail on to the deck. The second-officer was about to follow him, but the skipper waved him back. 'Wait until I call for you, Mr Martin,' he said ; and then he disappeared. For about twenty minutes the boat's crew held alongside, but the captain made no sign, although at times they fancied they could hear him moving about the decks. Suddenly they were startled by a loud cry, which seemed to come from the cabin. Sharp and shrill it rang upon the air, with a note of grief and agony in the ghastly sound of it, such as might have been the last cry of a lost soul. Sailors are usually superstitious, and that awful scream, coming as it did from the heart, as it were, of that mysterious vessel, caused the sunburnt faces of the boat's crew to blanch with fear. Even the second-mate, who was a hard-headed practical man, felt an eerie feeling creeping over him, and it was some few minutes before he could muster up courage to leave the boat and try to find out the cause of that awe-inspiring cry ; but after a short hesitation, he clambered up the side.

There was no sign of a living soul upon her decks, which had been swept nearly bare by the seas. A piece of canvas fluttered from the stump of the mizzen-mast, and it was probably that which Captain Roberts' mad fancy had transformed into a woman's dress, when he saw it from the deck of the 'Enterprise.' He had evidently gone down below ; and Martin, as he stood by the

companion hatch of the deserted ship, had an inward feeling that he was about to assist at some weird tragedy.

Before going below, Martin took a look round the horizon, and what he saw there caused him more real apprehension than any of the undefined terrors of the mysterious ship. Away to the north-west the horizon was blotted out by a gray smother of vapour, which was rapidly spreading itself in all directions. There was considerably more weight in the swell, too, and the wind gave out a hollow moaning sound as it swept through the rigging. Martin rushed to the taffrail and shouted : 'Come on board here, one hand !'

In answer to his call, one of the men scrambled up on deck.

'Keep a lookout while I go below and search for the captain ; and let me know before that smother gets too close on top of us,' pointing to the white mist that was steadily coming down on them.

'Ay, ay, sir !'

On descending the companion stairs, the second-mate found himself in a moderately sized saloon with sleeping cabins on either side, and some lockers aft by the stern ports. There was a table in the centre, and a skylight overhead which admitted enough light to enable him to see clearly. A small hatch was open on the star-board side aft, apparently leading to a sort of lazarette. By the side of this hatch a dark figure was lying, face downwards. It was Captain Roberts ! Martin stooped down and lifted his arm, but it was limp and lifeless ; he then turned him over and endeavoured to raise him to a sitting posture, but with a shudder he let him fall, for he was quite dead. What sudden shock had caused his death, cannot be told : out firmly grasped in his right hand he held a faded white shawl of some soft material, such as women wear over their shoulders, and his features were distorted by an expression of horror hard to be described. What had he seen ?

Fancying he heard a slight rustling sound in the lazarette, Martin peered down the small hatch, but it was so pitch dark that he could see nothing. Was there anything down there that might help to solve the mystery ? Just then the hoarse voice of the seaman was heard in a warning shout : 'Come on deck, Mr Martin, quick ! or we shall be adrift !'

The second-officer rushed up the companion ladder on to the quarter-deck and cast one sharp look to windward. There was a dense bank of fog not much more than a mile distant, and a dark shadow on the sea showed that wind accompanied it.

'Come and help me to lift the captain up on deck,' he cried to the man who had been keeping watch.

'Where is he, sir ?'

'In the cabin—lying there—dead !'

'Dead ? Then the living come first, sir,' replied the man gruffly as he ran towards the side. 'If we don't clear out of this now, we shall lose our ship, and be cast adrift in this cursed hulk.' With that he climbed over into the boat.

The second-mate hesitated for a moment, scarcely knowing what course to pursue, when the seaman yelled to him again, in a voice half

wild with impatience and fear: 'Jump into the boat, Mr Martin, or we'll *slove* off.'

The words had scarcely left his lips, when the wind, with a sort of mocking shriek, swept through the rigging of the derelict, and a few moments later the fog was swirling all round them. Martin sprang over the side into the boat, and the men commenced pulling madly in the direction where the 'Enterprise' had last been seen. For five minutes they pulled on with all their strength, the sweat pouring down their faces, then they eased up a bit, and the man who was at the after-oar asked the second-mate if he could make out their vessel.

Martin strained his eyes to pierce the surrounding gloom, but was obliged to acknowledge that he could see no sign of either ship.

'Then, sir, we're hopelessly adrift now, without a drain of water or a mouthful of food,' cried the man, with a ring of passionate despair in the tone of his voice.

'Keep cool, my lads, and pull steadily on; we shall fetch the old "Enterprise" right enough,' said Martin.

At that moment a dull boom was heard right ahead.

'There goes a gun from our ship to show us our whereabouts,' sang out the second-mate; 'give way, my lads!'

The men pulled with a will; and five minutes later the 'Enterprise' loomed up out of the fog close aboard of them. A line was thrown, the boat hauled alongside, and in a few minutes they were all standing safely on her decks.

Martin reported to the chief-officer everything that had occurred; but as the wind and sea were rising fast, and the driving mist obscured everything from view, the only thing that could be done was to heave the ship to until the weather cleared a bit. All night long it continued to blow hard; but about nine o'clock the next morning the wind fell light again, and the fog lifted a little, although it was still very thick all round the horizon, and it was not possible to see a greater distance than two miles. All hands were on deck, peering into the dim obscurity, to get a glimpse of the derelict in which lay the body of their unfortunate captain; but to no purpose. About two o'clock in the afternoon it came on to rain heavily, beating all the life out of the wind, while the gray sea rose and fell with long sullen heavings. The 'Enterprise' still remained 'hove to,' as it was quite useless attempting a search while the weather remained so thick. So it continued all the following night, until shortly after daybreak on the second morning, when the rain ceased, the clouds and mists drifted away, as the sun rose gaily above a clear horizon. The whole wide expanse of ocean was now visible, and sharp-sighted men were despatched to the masthead on the lookout; but no sign either of ship or wreckage rewarded their search. A light breeze sprung up from the south-west, and for four days they cruised about those waters; then the chief-officer reluctantly abandoned the search as a hopeless one, and the 'Enterprise' proceeded on her voyage to New Zealand.

There can be little room for doubt that the derelict barque foundered during the gale of wind on that eventful night; and if indeed she was the ill-fated 'Lord Clive,' which, after nine

long years of imprisonment in the ice, had at last broken loose and drifted into the ocean highway, then the strange meeting between those two ships was more than a mere coincidence.

The men who were in the boat to this day declare that it was a woman's voice which uttered that startling cry; but whether their statement is correct, and what it was Captain Roberts saw in the barque's deserted cabin that left that expression of horror on his face, are mysteries deep and unfathomable as the ocean where he lies at rest.

A VIGIL.

Is this the dawn that slowly leaves
The shadowy bed so still and white,
And with its cool, soft touch unweaves
The fevered fancies of the night?

Is this the dawn?—Oh! love, you lie
So calm beside the taper's beam,
As though it were not you and I
Who laughed together in my dream;

While o'er the flowery way abreast,
We stept along the springy lea,
Till outward to the closing west
Gold pathways led across the sea.

And all the purpling deeps of space,
And all eve's tender, softening shine
Were deeper, holier round your face,
Your face, my love, so close to mine.

And lo! your eyes looked o'er the bay
And shone so—two conflicting gleams,
Love's dawn, and the last glance of day
Met in a halo.—Love, it seems

Only a dream; your floating hair
Beam-billowed, and a dream your face,
Now morning takes us unaware,
And draws aside the shielding lace

Of night; and breathing early flowers,
Looks boldly on the placid lid,
And brightens all the unheeding showers
Of gold, wherein last night lay hid

Your hand upon my shoulder. Dear,
In thy long dream, sometimes, ere night,
Bend o'er me when the sky is clear,
And look against the western light!

WILLIAM WOODWARD.

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HAUNTED HOXTON.

A 'REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow' quarter of London is Hoxton, lying in the north-east between Old Street and Kingsland. To the majority of West End people but a geographical expression, about which they have, save for one thing, the haziest ideas—two only, in fact: one, that it is a place beloved by the 'coster' interest, and full of cabbage leaves; the other, that one of the finest theatres in London exists in it, the 'Britannia,' which, some thirty years ago, Charles Dickens, in his uncommercial travels, brought under the notice of readers in general. Thus much is known of Hoxton, and little more, save for the reason already mentioned, which is, that Mr Besant has laid one of the scenes of one of his most charming novels there, and has, with his usual accuracy, described the Hoxton of the present day in its habit as it lives.

What he has done we do not propose imperfectly to attempt, except to say that once a village lying outside London, it is now a densely crowded quarter, full of small industries, and tenement houses crammed with families, and much heart-rending squalor and poverty. Yet, passing down its main street, the eye constantly lights on fine old Jacobean and Georgian houses, red-tiled, dormer-windowed, with eaves and lofty attics; and once with ample gardens behind, now turned into yards, crammed with lumber, even as the stately houses have been subdivided into small shops, which represent all the needs of a densely populated, toiling neighbourhood.

Yet the Hoxton of to-day, fallen from its high estate, and weltering in mud and vegetable refuse, resonant with the bellowing of street vendors and the shrill chatter of innumerable work-girls, such as Mr Besant has limned in his 'Children of Gibbon' and others of his East End romances, is haunted by an array of shades, some, indeed, of high degree. Two centuries ago it was a charming rural village. It stood at the end of rustic Shoreditch and quiet Old Street, and ran northwards to the fields of Hoxton, which, beginning

by Kingsland Road, stretched right away to the village of Kingsland with its old houses and green. Those famous fields are now covered with streets, squares, 'roads,' and 'groves,' generally known as De Beauvoir Town, and thickly populated, and terminating at Ball's Pond Road, which runs at right angles to the main road north through Kingsland to Stamford Hill and Tottenham. But half a century ago a clear view of pasture and cornfields could be obtained, covering all the space between Kingsland Gate and Stamford Hill villadom.

We dwell thus on these Hoxton fields, and call them famous, for some of the most noted shades who haunt the once pretty village have traversed them. Across them—'to avoid the dust of the roads, and arrive at the Charter House'—came James I., what time he leisurely journeyed from the North to take possession of the throne of England. But a mightier and earlier crowned shade was before him. Henry VIII.—in veritable fact as well as phrase, 'most dread lord' to his subjects—visited, in all the pomp and splendour the Tudors loved, the fields of Hoxton and the village itself, the air resounding with fanfare of trumpet and deep-throated cheering, as the bluff despot watched the archers whom he so fostered contending at the butts; and from the quaint village houses a motley throng gathered to watch with awe their masterful sovereign, 'whose frown would have sent the proudest peer in England to the block.' The burlesque title of the Duke of Shoreditch was bestowed by the king on the Captain, and that of Marquis of Hoxton on the best archer of our historic village; and, by the way, the manor of Hoxton—or Hokestone—has been held by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's since a time earlier than the Norman Conquest. Thus 'the witty canon of St Paul's' may be said indirectly to be one of the shades which haunt the place.

Nor is James I. our only royal instance. His unhappy successor, when returning from his romantic love-journey to Spain, galloped with Buckingham, his ill-omened *fidus Achates*, across

the fields and down the village for the Bishop's Gate, passing through rural Shoreditch, where lately stood, amid the modern din and turmoil and showy shop architecture of the great thoroughfare of to-day, an Elizabethan-gabled timber house, which must have indeed witnessed many and marvellous vicissitudes in the centuries during which it remained unaltered amid constant metamorphoses. Hardly, in 'his house in Old Street—to which he retired,' curious as it sounds to those who know the incessant din and crowd of that now thickly populated centre of industry, as 'his favourite retreat from the gaiety and bustle of London'—(twelt the now almost forgotten author Samuel Daniel, who flourished in Elizabeth's reign, and wrote 'The Civil Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and York,' and whom Drummond of Hawthornden pronounced in rhyming 'second to none.' He cultivated his gardens, and frequently strolled in the evenings into flower-encircled Hoxton, wandering along its long winding street as he composed his poems or his History, for he wrote one of England from the Conquest to Edward III. His style both in prose and verse has, like Dryden's, a most modern aspect; and he wrote some of the poetry for the court entertainments; but ultimately retired 'to a life of contemplation and quiet in the country' near Hoxton.

The village, detached as it was at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and surrounded on all sides by fields—and a century later flowers were gathered in Brick Lane, Spitalfields—was a favourite place of resort for the citizens of credit and renown. Like 'merry Islington,' it was famous for its cakes and ale, also for custards, as appears from allusions in the dramatists and other popular writers of the period. Hither, therefore, came many pleasure-seekers, and among them one of the most inveterate; for, as a modern essayist has shrewdly remarked, nothing is more perceptible in that candid self-portraiture, the Diary of Samuel Pepys, than his many-sided capacity for enjoyment. Pepys passed his childhood at Kingsland, and mentions how, when he was a man of good position, he revisited his ancient haunts, the fields where he shot with his bow and arrows; and, indeed, he frequently took coach along Shoreditch, and so northward. Frequently, too, no doubt, he strolled out of the city gates towards Hoxton, and with that appreciation of good things which we see in every page of his Diary, enjoyed the cakes, ale, and custards, the flower-gardens, and famous elm-trees—the Whitmore family, whose name yet marks several well-known places in the locality, had some magnificent specimens, which were blown down early in George III.'s reign—and the pretty faces that peeped from the flower-enwreathed lattices of the Hoxton cottages. Some of the cottages are there still, but, alas, how different in aspect!

And besides the figure of the loquacious Clerk to the Admiralty of Charles I., one can see with the mental eye various brilliant and roystering figures familiar enough at that monarch's free-and-easy court, who found much diversion in occasionally going so far from the fashionable purlieus of Whitehall as to Hoxton in its rural quiet, there to riotously enjoy its cates and 'syllabubs from the red cows' pasturing in the belt of fields; and also to flirt more or less riotously with the pretty

maidens, who in those days were abundant among the ancient cottages—and who have left some representatives yet in the now long unlovely street, albeit, poor things! their faces are hunger-pinched and toilworn.

Perhaps, however, the shade which haunts Hoxton, of all others the most interesting to every student of English literature, though his name be unfamiliar to most of its present inhabitants, is one whose bodily presentment was often there some seventy or eighty years ago. 'A spare figure in clerly black,' with a melancholy smile, and keen, gentle humorous eyes, seems to flit before us as we pass down the lower end of the long street where still stands Hoxton House, ancient, indeed, in some of its buildings, and for so long a series of years a lunatic asylum. For thither, too, often across the Hoxton fields, now covered with houses, came Charles and Mary Lamb, both weeping as acquaintances have met them, and on their way, poor souls! to the asylum, whither they always went when Mary Lamb—to whom her gifted brother so nobly and unostentatiously devoted his life—felt one of her periodical fits of insanity approaching. Hither, from distant Shacklewell, where Lamb loved to lodge when desiring repose, and which with its ancient green is in great part unaltered as when he wrote some of his Essays, overlooking it the affectionate and sad pair, would journey—perhaps the most pathetic shades in Haunted Hoxton.

POMONA.*

By the Author of *Laddie, Tip Cat, Lil, &c.*

CHAPTER XIX.

For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings,
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

SHAKESPEARE.

'It is not a very good day with mother,' Pomona said, half an hour later, coming into the morning-room, where Sage had been luxuriously waiting in a deep armchair, in which each slight turn of the head brought some fresh beauty into view: the open window and through it the broad lawn, sloping away into thickets of rhododendrons, and beyond that, the park, and a glimpse of bright water through the great trees, and beyond it all, blue distance; or the conservatory, into which another window led, full of richest hues and sweetest fragrance; or the room itself, with pictures and statuary, books and music and flowers everywhere; or even the little table close at hand with its tempting array of scarlet strawberries, iced lemonade, and dainty cakes.

Pomona was looking wistful and sad; for even the separation of a few days was enough to show an alteration in her mother; or, perhaps, as she tried to persuade herself, she had forgotten a little of the weakness and transparent fragility which struck such a pang to her heart now.

'The weather has been trying lately,' Pomona went on with an almost pleading tone in her voice, insisting on finding any reason but the

real and obvious one; 'and she went for rather too long a walk last week. And she has been so looking forward to to-day, and trying to be so well and bright, for my sake, that she has got nervous, and could not sleep just because she was so anxious to be at her best. Martin—that is her maid, you know, who was with her before I was born—says she is wonderfully nervous. Just fancy, Sage, Martin asked me not to talk about Mr Ludlow's picture and its likeness to me. She says that what I said in one of my letters about it seemed quite to worry mother. It is so unlike her, Sage—she used not to be a bit fanciful. She wants to see you presently after lunch; and I told her I was sure you would not mind being left a little to your own devices, as you would quite understand that I should want to be with her on my birthday; and she is so easily overtired if there is more than one in her room.'

Sage was able truthfully to declare that she would not mind if she were left all day to her own devices; and she entreated Pomona to do exactly as she would if she were alone.

'You don't know,' she said, 'how beautiful and new it all is to me. I was only thinking, before you came down, that I could be quite contented to sit here all day and never move.'

'But I shan't let you do that, you dear, little soul. Fancy coming to Beechfield and never moving out of the morning-room! Even if I should allow it, mother wouldn't. She would get right up off her sofa, I believe, and come down to see that you got proper treatment in your own mother's old home. It is yours as well as mine, Sage, so you must feel proud of it too. I will turn on Mrs Stone, the housekeeper, to show you the family pictures, unless you would rather prawl about by yourself. She is a dreadful old bore, there is no denying; she has all the names and dates and painters at the tip of her tongue, and reels them off to the people who come to see the house on the days when it is shown to the public. I used to think her wonderfully clever, when I was a child, to remember it all; but I soon found out that it was just learned off by rote, and that she could not answer any question the least off the beaten track; and that if she got at all put out, or lost the proper succession, she floundered hopelessly, and had to begin all over again. And for my part, I much prefer to invent the histories for myself, and I endowed all those old Lesters with such romantic stories, ever so much more real to me than Mrs Stone's dull, little, historical facts. The advantage I had over her was that I could ignore the unities of time, and bring young hearts together that centuries had divided; and there was no table of kindred and affinity in my world, for I think I frequently allowed a man to marry his pretty, young grandmother.—But I think you ought to be introduced properly to your relations, Sage; and it will gratify poor old Stone so much to do it, that you will have to sacrifice yourself. But come along into the garden, and I want you to see the stables and my dogs before lunch.'

Sage was well content, as she said, to be left

to amuse herself, and to explore the house and gardens and out into the shady glades of the park. She submitted gladly to Mrs Stone's guidance through the picture-gallery; the historical facts that had seemed so dry to Pomona were deeply interesting to Sage, who never till to-day had felt that she had any connection with the events of which she had laboriously mastered the particulars at school. It gave her a little thrill to reflect that an ancestor of hers had raised a troop for King Charles; that another had been attainted of high-treason and had his lands confiscated; that this in stiff ruff and long, pointed, jewelled stomacher had been one of Elizabeth's ladies; and the other—in whose somewhat sensual face Mrs Stone traced a likeness to Sage—had been a court beauty in Charles II.'s time. It seemed to give a reality to history, to fetch it out of the dog's-eared covers of school-books, and set it moving and feeling and breathing before her. And it gave life to people who had been hitherto only names attached to pictures in the National Gallery, not meaning much more than the numbers. Van Dyck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough were real painters like Mr Ludlow, to whom ancestors and ancestresses of hers had sat, just as she and Kitty had sat at Scar.

She looked with respect at the bed in which Queen Elizabeth slept. Did ever queen sleep in more four-posters than good Queen Bess? Future ages will not have a quarter the number to display as the resting-place of Queen Victoria, even if future ages have a quarter of the respectful interest that lingers, even in this radical age, in the uneasy resting-place of a head that wears a crown. She would have liked to have heard a great deal more about some of the relics: the handkerchief that belonged to Marie-Antoinette, the pearl-embroidered glove of Lady Jane Grey, the snuff-box given by Napoleon, &c.; only, she remembered Pomona's warning that vexatious questions annoyed the kind, old housekeeper, who appeared to her a very grand and dignified person, quite justified in the patronising tone she assumed.

She was called away from her examination of these treasures to her interview with Lady Lester. In after-days, looking back on this her only interview with her aunt, she always connected it in her mind with the deer in the park: perhaps it was the great, pathetic, dark eyes that looked so unnaturally large in the pale, wan face; perhaps it was the shadowy, fragile grace; perhaps it was the sense of speedy passing away which impressed her in this still, quiet room, as it had when the dappled herd flitted across the glade out of the shadow, across the sunshine, into the shadow again.

'Here is Sage, dearest,' Pomona said, rising from her low seat by her mother's sofa. 'Now I am going to spare you to her for ten minutes, which I think is very generous of me; and at the end of that time I shall come and turn her out ruthlessly.'

And then Pomona left them together.

'Let me look at you, my dear,' the faint voice said. 'Come and sit down where Mona was.—Yes; you are very like the Lesters, as she said.'

'Father always says I am like my mother.'

'I hardly remember her enough to say, but you are like the old portraits.'

'Pomona is not like them.'

'No.' Lady Lester's eyes closed; and Sage felt that her voice, with the greatest care to soften it, was still rough enough almost to scare the delicate life away; but Lady Lester began speaking again eagerly and hurriedly.

'I wanted very much to see you to ask you to forgive me.'

'What for?'

'For a great wrong.'

'I do not understand,' Sage said. She wished Pomona would come back; she had heard of people in great weakness getting wrong in their heads; and Lady Lester's eyes were bright and burning, and the thin hand that held Sage's grasped it with an almost painful pressure.

'No; how could you understand? Tell me, dear, have you been very poor?'

Sage's hand gave a little, proud start, as if to draw itself away from the detaining clasp.

'You must not be offended. I have so little time to put what I want to say into polite words. Mona will be back directly; and besides—do not tell her—I have not long to live, and may not see you again.'

'I have been very happy,' Sage said. 'I have the kindest, best father in the world, and a most happy home.'

'Yes; that is just what I want to know, that you are happy.'

There was something in the great burning eyes that seemed to draw out from Sage a hint of that greater happiness that had come to her of late, and she went on, with the colour mounting to her cheeks: 'I think sometimes I am the happiest girl in the world.'

'That is right. And you would not change places with any other?'

'Not for worlds.'

'Not with Mona?'

'Not with any one.'

'Am I right, little Sage, in thinking there is some other reason for the happiness? You can't be expected to tell a stranger all about it, though that stranger is an aunt; but I think you would if you knew what a weight it lifts off my conscience to think that what I have done has in no way affected your life's happiness.'

She drew the girl's flushing face towards her with her two soft hands and looked straight into the shy, gray eyes.

'Is he very nice, little Sage, very tender, very true, that for his sake you would not change with Mona or any girl in the world?—God bless you, dear! I shall sleep quieter with the feeling that I have not hurt you.—There is Mona coming—kiss me, and say you forgive me.'

'Indeed, indeed, there is nothing to forgive.'

'Why, mother, I declare you look ever so much brighter and better! I shall be quite jealous of this sly, little, quiet Sage if she can charm away your headache better than I can.'

But the transient life that the excitement of her conversation had imparted soon died away, and such prostration followed that Martin had to be summoned; and the two girls reluctantly left her. Martin promising to call Pomona directly her mother was sufficiently restored for her to return.

The two girls were lingering in the gallery that ran round the large central hall, when the

sound of a carriage at the front door made them draw back.

'Some one come to call,' Pomona said. 'I really can't see them. I think one has a right to do as one likes on one's birthday.'

Presently a silent-footed servant came up the stairs with some cards on a salver, and presented them to Pomona, who glanced at them carelessly.

'I said I thought you were engaged, Miss, as her ladyship was not very well,' the man said.

Pomona had taken up one of the cards and was looking at it hesitatingly. 'How did they know I was down?'

'They came to inquire for her ladyship, and asked when you were expected; so I said you were down for the day, Miss.'

Pomona looked round towards her mother's room.

'Martin promised to call me,' she said doubtfully, 'when mother was a little better. I should not like to miss a minute that I could be with her; but'—And then she looked at the card again uncertainly for a moment, ending, however, by tossing it back on to the salver, saying: 'Yes; say I am only down for a few hours, and I cannot leave Lady Lester.' And then she turned to a large window in the gallery that commanded a view of part of the drive up to the house, and stood there for a few minutes, after the closing of the door and the sound of wheels on the gravel announced that the callers had left.

Sage's artistic eye was struck by the exquisitely graceful picture she made, leaning on the oak window-ledge, with one hand holding back the heavy velvet curtain, and above her the rich colouring of old glass emblazoned with the Lester arms; and beyond, through the open casement, the broad sweep of park and the blue distance. Was it the sun through the crimson glass that cast a sudden flush on the milk-white neck as the sound of wheels died away?

'I wonder,' Sage thought to herself, 'if that caller was any one she cares for? It was a gentleman's card.'

And then a wave of sympathy swept over her, fancying how she would have felt if it had been Maurice driving away; and perhaps her eyes were a little too sympathetic when they met Pomona's, for she turned away with a half-proud, half-shy look, as if the blossom of her confidence was not sufficiently blown to allow of a gaze into its heart.

'I will go and see how mother is,' she said; and then, with a touch of compunction, she put her arm round Sage and kissed her. 'Poor, dear, little Sage. I am treating you very badly, leaving you so much to yourself.'

'Indeed, indeed, Pomona, I do not mind. I could not bear you to stop away from Lady Lester on my account.'

And then Sage went down the great stairs alone, still wondering if Pomona had any one like Maurice, and if that were he who drove away just now.

On the old carved oak table in the hall was the silver salver with the cards lying on it, one of them face downward, as Pomona had tossed it; and Sage stood for a moment looking at it, figuring to herself what Pomona's lover should

be like, how handsome, noble, splendid; and then, hardly thinking what she was doing, or if the curiosity was justifiable, she turned the card over to see the name. It was 'Mr Maurice Moore.'

THE PROPOSED NAVAL INSURANCE FUND.

By CHARLES GLEIG.

THE loss of the battleship 'Victoria,' and the circumstances attending that terrible disaster, are still fresh in the public mind. It may be truly said that in every British home the deepest sympathy was felt for the widows and children of the brave fellows who met death so steadfastly on the 22d of June. The appeal of the Lord Mayor of London on behalf of the dependent relatives was so generously responded to in all parts of the kingdom, and even in the colonies, that within two months the Victoria Relief Fund was swelled to seventy-two thousand pounds, this being by far the greatest fund ever subscribed under similar circumstances. The Fund has since been entrusted to the management of the Royal Patriotic Commission, of which His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge is President; and as soon as the necessary inquiries and formalities have been concluded, the widows, orphans, and other dependent relatives will begin to receive small weekly pensions from the Fund thus generously subscribed by the public. As we write, more than three months have elapsed since the sinking of the 'Victoria,' but as yet the Patriotic Commissioners have not been able to issue those weekly pensions. This delay has led to very strong comments in the press and at the naval ports; but it would be outside the scope of the present paper to discuss that question, and we merely allude to the delay that has occurred in support of the contention that the time has arrived when a General Naval Insurance Fund ought surely to be formed.

This project has already been widely discussed at the naval ports, and there is every indication that the petty officers and men of the fleet are desirous of ensuring provision for their families in such a manner as to obviate the necessity of periodically appealing to the public for charity. Such an excellent scheme as this deserves the support of public men, members of Parliament, and even, perhaps, of the Government itself; for every one must admit that the system of relying upon public charity for the support of widows and orphans of men of the royal navy is altogether wrong in principle. It is not that the public grudge the money—this has been clearly exemplified by the loss of the 'Victoria'—but the seamen themselves are earnestly desirous of securing more definite provision for their families; and, for reasons we will endeavour to explain, the establishment of a General Insurance Fund would almost certainly render the naval service more attractive to the rank and file.

Under the present system, or rather lack of system, the widows and children of petty officers and men who lose their lives in the service of the Crown are only entitled to pensions under certain conditions. These pensions, as we shall show, are very small, and, but for the charity

of the public, would be altogether inadequate. Under the second section of the Act 46 and 47 Victoria, the Admiralty are empowered to grant these small weekly pensions to the widows and young children of men who have been killed or drowned on duty, or whose deaths have resulted, within twelve months, from injuries or disease directly due to the service. The regulation is so framed as to greatly restrict the award of these pensions, notwithstanding that the money comes out of the Greenwich Hospital Fund, and not out of the pockets of the taxpayers. It has to be proved to the satisfaction of the Admiralty that a man has met his death actually on duty, or else the widow gets nothing. Thus—to take a very common example—a seaman may be drowned by the capsizing of a waterman's boat, when returning to his ship from leave. In such a case the widow receives no pension. Or, again, a seaman may be robbed and murdered whilst ashore in some semi-civilised country, and here again the widow would be thrown upon the world. This regulation may or may not be regarded as harsh; but in any case the remedy for this state of affairs will never be found in Admiralty circulars, for what is required is obviously a General Insurance Fund upon which all naval men's widows should have a legal and indisputable claim.

But to return for a moment to the existing rules. These Greenwich pensions, granted under fixed regulations, vary in amount from three shillings and sixpence to six shillings and sixpence a week; the widows of seamen, stokers, or marines being entitled to the lowest scale, whilst the widows of petty officers may receive the higher rates. Small allowances are also made to each child, never exceeding two shillings a week; but these cease in the case of boys at fourteen and of girls at sixteen years of age. From these figures it will be observed that the widow of an able seaman left with, say, three young children on her hands would receive a pension of not more than nine shillings and sixpence a week. It has always been necessary on this account to appeal to the charitable instincts of the British public whenever any of Her Majesty's ships have been lost, or even when serious accidents have occurred afloat, such as the bursting of the turret gun on board Her Majesty's ship 'Thunderer.' By this means poor Jack's dependent relatives have been preserved from absolute want; but the system is discreditable to a great maritime nation, and humiliating to the feelings of our seamen.

But there is another point which cannot be passed over in silence, and which in itself affords a strong argument in favour of the proposed scheme of naval insurance. The public is accustomed to subscribe towards the relief of the widows and children in all cases of actual disaster on a large scale, such as the loss of a ship, serious gun accidents, and so forth; but the public is not expected, nor can it be asked, to relieve individual cases of distress, such as those to which we have already alluded. Take the case of a seaman who is killed by falling from aloft, for example. His widow receives the Greenwich pension of three shillings and sixpence a week, and the officers and men of the ship invariably raise a subscription for her benefit;

but here the matter ends, although, of course, the unfortunate woman thus thrown upon the world deserves to be helped just as much as if her husband's life had been sacrificed under more sensational circumstances. Perhaps we have now sufficiently explained the desirability of establishing a system of naval insurance, and may proceed to consider some of the schemes under discussion in the naval ports.

The proposed formation of a General Naval Disaster Fund is not altogether a new project. The Naval Exhibition of 1891 was organised by a Committee of officers with the object of benefiting naval charities; and, thanks to the support of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the undertaking proved very successful. After paying all expenses, the Committee of the Naval Exhibition were able to declare a surplus of £47,246, 6s. 9d., and with this money it was decided to establish a new charity, known as the Royal Naval Fund. The Queen was graciously pleased to become patron of this Society, or Committee of management; the Prince of Wales was appointed President; and it was hoped that the problem of how to make adequate provision for the widows and dependent relatives of men who lost their lives in the navy would at length have been satisfactorily solved. Unfortunately, and in spite of royal patronage and support, this scheme has hitherto failed. It is scarcely necessary to explain that the interest of the capital produced by the Exhibition was in itself far too small to enable the Committee to carry out their scheme. It was confidently anticipated, however—by officers out of touch with the views of the lower deck—that there would be no difficulty in inducing the petty officers and men of the navy to support the scheme. The men were asked to assist in the project by paying one shilling a head per annum; and not a little astonishment was evinced in official circles when, after mature consideration, the men unanimously declined to have anything to do with the scheme. In making this decision, the men of the lower deck were well advised, as we will endeavour to show. The Committee of the Exhibition Fund had vested the administration of the surplus in trustees, who were bound down to apply it in relieving the widows and dependent relatives of men who actually lost their lives in the service, and the men's voluntary contributions would have been expended similarly. The scheme was a good one in many respects; but the men held, and, as we think, rightly, that the principle of excluding the naval pensioners' widows was open to grave objections. If they had accepted the scheme, there can be little doubt, we might have had to wait many years for a really extensive and business-like scheme of naval insurance; whereas, now, there is every prospect of this important question being shortly settled on a much wider basis. In order to make this point clearer to civilians, we should remind our readers that although the widow of a commissioned officer is entitled to a small pension under any circumstances—unless, indeed, she is possessed of considerable private means—the widow of a naval pensioner is considered to have no claim whatever upon the State, and has very frequently to end her days in the workhouse. The men therefore determined to have nothing to do with a scheme framed solely

in the interests of those actually serving afloat. They favoured a much wider scheme.

Now, the loss of the 'Victoria' following so closely upon the wreck of the 'Serpent' has had a very marked effect upon the minds of naval men. The idea of establishing an Insurance scheme was no doubt revived by the Committee of the Exhibition Fund; but the failure of that project damped the ardour of the officers, and for a time it seemed as though the men were inclined to let the whole question drop. But the 'Victoria' disaster has naturally aroused the men; and though the public has subscribed most generously towards the relief of the widows, the loss of so many lives has again directed their attention to the necessity of establishing an extensive scheme of Insurance. There is no longer room for doubt that the men of the lower deck are anxious to help themselves in this matter, and that they are willing to devote a small proportion of their earnings to insuring their lives; but at the same time they are not disposed to give more than a few shillings a year individually, and consequently the scheme cannot be carried out except with official aid. Miss Agnes Weston, 'The Sailor's Friend,' whose name is familiar to most people, has suggested in letters to the press that the Government should advance, without charging interest, a sum of three hundred thousand pounds. The suggestion is startling, but not unreasonable, for Miss Weston points out that there would be no great difficulty in repaying the money after an interval of about forty years. It is a large sum of money to advance, yet it is after all little more than the price of a cruiser, and, moreover, it could be ultimately repaid to the State if properly managed. If any such project should meet with the approval and support of the authorities, the men will be willing to subscribe a shilling a head per month; and it is estimated that those united subscriptions would amount to about forty thousand pounds per annum. Then, again, if the naval pensioners are included in the scheme, and allowed to share in the benefits, the annual subscription would, of course, be very largely augmented.

Another very practical scheme has been suggested by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds, a distinguished officer, who periodically endeavours to persuade the Government of the day to increase the strength of the navy, and whose name should also be familiar to the public. Sir T. Symonds has pointed out that the Admiralty have long been making a clear profit of more than twenty-five thousand pounds per annum on the victualling of the fleet, and the gallant officer holds that this surplus should be utilised for the benefit of the men. It is so perfectly certain that this saving will be effected, that the victualling vote is correspondingly reduced before being submitted to Parliament. Many will no doubt agree that the country could well afford to dispense with this economy; and if the Government should be willing to pay this annual surplus into a Naval Insurance Fund, the necessary balance could readily be made up by the men's subscriptions.

Still another project has been widely discussed at the home ports, which is greatly favoured by the seamen. The Commissioners of the Patriotic

Fund still have control of the numerous funds subscribed by the public for the relief of widows of seamen. None of the funds have been materially reduced, because the Commissioners have wisely expended only the interest, so that in course of time, as death gradually settles all claims, the Commissioners will find themselves possessed of a large surplus. This money will, of course, have to be utilised for the benefit of the navy, and it is suggested that the time has arrived when the various surpluses might be amalgamated, and devoted to forming the nucleus of the proposed Insurance Fund. No doubt, if the money can be spared for this purpose, the Commissioners should consider the project; but the amount of money at their disposal would not of itself go very far. Of the 'Captain' Relief Fund, £31,534 remains; of the 'Eurydice' Fund, £14,472; and of the 'Atalanta' Fund, £7500. Lieutenant-colonel Young, Secretary to the Patriotic Commission, has recently stated, however, that it is proposed to devote any surplus of the 'Victoria' Fund to forming the nucleus of a General Disaster Fund, and it is not improbable that the trustees of the Naval Exhibition Fund may be induced to lend their support to this project.

It must be remembered, however, that those Naval Funds are carefully safeguarded by deeds of trust, and that there may be difficulties in the way of the trustees which would prevent the proposed amalgamation of surpluses for several years to come. Meanwhile, there is the danger of present inaction to be considered. At the present moment the men of the fleet are keenly alive to the desirability of forming a Naval Insurance Fund, and there would be no difficulty in persuading them to submit to a small compulsory levy on their pay. If the Admiralty will bestir themselves in this matter, the result is not doubtful; otherwise, it is much to be feared that the Naval Insurance scheme may remain in dreamland for years to come.

LESS THAN KIN.

A STORY IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

By MRS WILL C. HAWKESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

It was a pretty cottage, that at which the dingy cab, engaged at Havant Station, drew up one wet June evening. Pretty, notwithstanding the weather which caused the roses, climbing up the front and peeping in at the windows, to nod their moist, bedraggled heads, and which weighted with damp the vine-leaves overshadowing the porch. Yet, in spite of its rural beauty, that it would be an empty dwelling in a very few hours was evident, for the curtainless casements looked bare and wretched, bits of straw displayed their ungainly length against the dark mould of the flower-beds and upon the yellow gravel of the sodden path; whilst over everything was written, as plainly to be read as the two short words upon the board by the gate, 'To Let.'

'I'm glad we had the covered vans, though they are so much more expensive,' remarked Mildred Russell to her husband as she flattened

her nose—a well-shaped nose enough under more favourable circumstances—against the panes and stared out into the twilight. 'Every atom of furniture would have been ruined otherwise.'

'My dearest Milly, all your arrangements are wise!' declared the clergyman behind her. 'Fancy arriving at Denleigh with never a dry chair to offer the expectant parishioner. Avaunt the notion!'

'You're a goose. You'll have to improve, now that you're a Vicar, really, Charlie. Oh, you must! And treat me with the dignity becoming my position too. Just promise to try, will you?'

'Promise? I'll promise anything!' At which his wife laughed, understanding that reply of old. 'There's a knock at the street door now, and a fine opportunity to begin my career of respect.—No; you don't,' as she showed signs of herself answering the summons. 'In the absence of the domestic, such menial offices naturally devolve upon the obedient husband. Permit me, madam!' With another peal of the merriest laughter, Mrs Russell sank upon the chair he was offering.

'How nice! And what a change,' she remarked, looking saucily up into his face. 'But really, if you are going to act butler'—

He was already in the hall, threading a careful path between the packages that encumbered the house entrance. In another instant his wife heard the sound of the turning handle, and of his voice offering an astonished greeting. 'My dear Jack! What on earth brings you here? And to-night. Come in out of the wet—do! Give me your goods.'

Mildred was beside him by this time. Having caught the first three syllables, she had waited in state no longer. 'Oh, Mr Duntry, how delightful of you! We were just wanting somebody to cheer us up—weren't we, Charlie?' with her pretty smile. 'Take care, you clumsy creature. You'll drop—Why, it's a baby!' For a little startled cry suddenly proceeded from the rolled-up bundle, which Charlie, believing it to contain nothing but shawls and rugs, had unceremoniously tucked under his arm, and now, in his astonishment, must inevitably have dropped, had not Milly's hands closed upon it.

Without a thought of anything but the child, who was beginning to scream loudly, the lady turned abruptly and led the way into the sitting-room. At least there was a chair there, if only the oldest of kitchen properties, upon which she could deposit herself and investigate her burden. Which she immediately proceeded to do, ultimately bringing to light a 'iny creature, with the reddest of red faces, and the smallest of clenched fists, with which later it beat wildly at the air, violently yelling the whole time. Mildred caught it closely to her breast and looked up, with a world of inquiry in her gaze, at her guest, who by this time had entered, followed by the wondering cleric.

'That's the way she's been going on all day,' Jack Daintry exclaimed, despairingly.—'Oh, Mrs Russell, I can't bear it—I can't bear it! Quiet her, if you can—do. My poor wee girl.' And he stooped to kiss the smooth head, that was jogging itself up and down furiously upon Mildred's shoulder. When he raised himself, she

saw that great drops, not attributable to the rain, were in his eyes.

'The child's hungry, I believe. When was she fed last?' going straight, as was her wont, to the practical side of the matter.

'This morning. Before we started from London, I suppose. At least—I— Oh, how shall I make you understand?' With which final exclamation he suddenly sank upon his knees by the rickety table, and bowing his head upon the hard wood, burst into sobs. Mildred and her husband exchanged glances.

'Here, Charlie, take her for a moment; I'll get what she wants,' cried Milly, though a great lump had risen in her throat, and she felt more inclined to join her tears with Jack's than to do anything more useful. That, however did not hinder her quick movements, which in five minutes resulted in producing a baby's feeding-bottle, filled with warm milk and water, upon which the half-famished infant at once set to work, giving vent the while to little gurgles of satisfaction.

'Wasn't it lucky I had kept our Dick's bottle to give to Mrs Jones for Mary?' Mildred remarked, as she held one soft hand in her own, and watched the stormy face subside into peaceful sleepiness.—'But, Charlie, I expect Mr Daintry is hungry too. Do go and fetch the cold meat. It's on the top shelf of the cupboard, and so is the solitary loaf we possess. As to knives and forks, you must rummage for them. Such are the exigences of a move,' turning to the visitor, who had by this time dried his eyes, with a sort of tired pathetic movement that touched the spectators more than any words. 'He's in awful trouble, whatever it may be,' was the thought in Mrs Russell's mind.

The supper arrived by-and-by; and although at the first sight of food Jack shrank back with a half-shudder, the refreshment did him good when he began to eat. Gradually the nervous quivering about his delicately cut mouth ceased, and the miserable heaving of his chest grew less noticeable. When at length he pushed away his plate and turned to the fire, he certainly seemed revived.

'You're worn out, old fellow,' exclaimed Charlie, with ready sympathy.

'Nearly'—pressing his fingers to his forehead. 'But how good you've been,' stretching out the other hand—a very weak, womanish hand it looked—and laying it upon Charlie's far more healthy member. 'You always were better than anybody else.'

'Oh, always!'—with a laugh, that for once was not the reflex of his feelings. 'And now, who is this young person?'—pointing to the child upon his wife's knee.

'My own daughter'—with an air half sorrowful, half proud. 'Ah, Charlie, you didn't know I was married?'

'No, indeed. How should I? when you haven't written for'—

'Two years,' finished Mildred, as he paused. 'I remember, if you don't! You see, I consider my husband's friends are my friends too, Mr Daintry.'

'I know,' answering her smile with another, sadder than tears. 'But let me tell you my story.

It won't be a long one, for I'm too fagged myself to want to weary you.'

'No fear of that,' from Charlie. But the other did not heed the interruption.

'I married—her a year ago. She was my landlady's daughter,' he began, in short, jerky sentences. 'Whilst I was studying in London I had rooms in her mother's house, and so made her acquaintance. Afterwards, Mrs Dawson died, and she was left quite alone. So my twenty-first birthday was also our wedding-day. She was the sweetest, daintiest creature. And she died just a fortnight ago, when this little one was born.—Mrs Russell, she was starved to death!' He drew a deep breath, as of a creature in physical agony. Then, as no one spoke—for what was there to say in reply to such an awful statement as that?—he went on again.

'We were married without my father's knowledge. But it came to his ears, and he stopped my allowance then and there. That was within a month of the wedding. I went and pleaded with him. He listened and laughed; and I flung out of the house in anger. But worse times came. We pawned—her—wedding ring to get enough money for our railway fares, and went again—together! But he would not so much as see us. We never redeemed that ring.'

Once more he stopped. Mildred's tears were falling fast upon the white dress of the motherless baby, and Charlie was shading his eyes with his hand. But now, whilst he recurred in memory to the deepest depths of his misery, Jack's own eyes, which overflowed so freely half an hour ago, were dry.

'When she was dying, I went again to Rushton, spending my last penny. I had better have saved it to buy food for—her,' with the pause he invariably made before each reference to his dead wife. 'I did see Sir George then. I told him that she was perishing from actual want. And he answered that it was what he wished. To get rid of her was the best he could do for me. After that, can I give him my little Ena?'

There was no determination in his tone, only the sad depression that had characterised his manner ever since he entered, and that told of the crushing torture of mind and body through which he must have passed. Charles Russell, remembering him as he used to be, weak but high-spirited, passionate but affectionate, could scarcely believe this to be his father's old pupil and favourite, who at one time had been to himself more than most younger brothers are. But it was not he who first replied to the pathetic appeal.

'Give him this baby? Ena, too! What a pretty name!'

'It was her mother's. Her people had been yeomen-farmers, and could trace their pedigree back to Saxon times. Longer than I can follow my own,' from Jack, with a melancholy smile.

'Really? But of course Sir George cannot have her. Why,' very hotly, 'he might teach her to despise her own mother, which would be dreadful! You'll keep her yourself, Mr Daintry. I can tell you a lot about babies, because there's our small Dick, you remember. Oh, she'll be such a companion'—

But he interrupted her. 'I can't bear my life here,' he said. 'I've no resources either, because

I'd rather die, and so follow—her, than go, on my own behalf, to my father, after'—

Mildred nodded a full comprehension of the unuttered words.

'He has my eldest brother and his boys to console him. Duke will never transgress in the way I did'—with a slight curl of his lips. 'As to work, there's none to be had in England; or if there is, I can't find it. But an old friend, whom I knocked against yesterday— You remember Dolby, Russell?'

'Oh yes.'

'Well, he offered me a ticket for the States. He's been in low-water too, and had actually booked his passage out, when he came in for a legacy. And as he had some notion, I suppose, that I was hard up, he gave me the chance of this windfall. The ship starts to-morrow.'

There was a silence when he paused. Of course the husband and wife guessed, more or less, of the request which was to be made, and were already meditating upon the matter. They were not rich by any means, in spite of the living to which the clergyman had just been appointed, the revenues of which were, indeed, barely two hundred a year. And they had themselves a five-year old toddler for whom to provide. Yet all Mildred's womanly heart had gone out to the infant whose little fingers were in her own warm grasp, and whose deep breathing, still broken by an occasional sob, alone disturbed the stillness; whilst Mr Russell was endeavouring to find an excuse for his own desire to have another prattler about the house in the consideration of the benefit that Dick might derive from such society. By the time that Jack found courage to give voice to his wishes, there was small danger that he would be met with a refusal.

'Mrs Russell, will you take her and bring her up as your own? Don't let any one know that she has no mother. In you she'll find one, poor little soul. And if she never hears the truth, she cannot feel desolate.'

Mildred had believed herself prepared for anything; but she opened her eyes at that. 'But you'll be coming back and wanting her by-and-by,' she urged.

'Then I am sure that you won't dispute my claim,' with another of those dreadfully mirthless smiles. 'But I don't believe that I shall ever ask you to give her up. It is possible. But I have a presentiment'—

'Bosh!' from Charles. 'You always were as superstitious as you were high, and that's saying a good deal.'

'Well, presentiments sometimes come true, at any rate. And if mine should, will you keep the child?'

The eyes of husband and wife met, making inquiry each of the other, as usual. True, that these two had been married for six long years of sunshine and shadow, but they were still lovers as fond—nay, much fonder—than when they plighted their troth. And they had not lost the lover's faculty of thought-reading.

'There must positively be one condition, then: her grandfather must be acquainted with the child's whereabouts. You can draw up a will, leaving her guardianship to me, in case of your own death. But, in fairness to everybody, Sir George Daintry must be told.'

And so it was settled. Using such legal knowledge as his never arduous studies had acquired for him, John Daintry bequeathed his one treasure to his friend, and wrote a brief note to his father before he quitted the house. Then, silently grasping Mildred's hand, and kissing the brow of the slumbering Ena, he took his voiceless farewell—for ever, in this world; for the ship that sailed with him on board arrived at New York with one short in the complement of her passengers. During a gale, encountered in the Atlantic, a furious gust of wind had torn a heavy rope from its fastenings and swept it across the deck, from which every landsman but one had long since disappeared. Like a serpent the long line coiled itself round the solitary idler, carrying him along in its flight; and before help could reach him, it was too late. The great billows had closed above Jack Daintry's head, hiding him and his broken heart in their gray depths until the day of resurrection shall call him forth.

And little Ena was an orphan.

A COREAN ROYAL RECEPTION.

CHOSŌN, the Land of the Morning Calm, has been for ages a closed book to European travellers and merchants, till within the last ten years, during which the hatred of the people to all foreigners has to some extent been overcome, and the country been opened up to Western civilisation. Treaty ports have been established, and the upper classes, at least, are fast learning foreign ways. The king himself is an enlightened man, and does all he can to introduce foreign customs and appliances into the country. Unlike his Chinese suzerain, he is only too glad to see the foreign representatives, and often invites them to Court festivities. A short account of one of these, held in honour of the queen's birthday, may not be uninteresting to English readers.

It was a cold afternoon in December that we started off in our official sedan-chairs, carried by eight bearers, for the palace. My chief was resplendent in silver-laced uniform and cocked-hat; for myself, not yet being the proud possessor of a uniform, I wore evening dress—rather an airy costume under the circumstances! After about half an hour's ride, we reached the outer gates of the palace, where a throng of people, in white robes and black high-crowned hats, lounged about, gazing at the foreign visitors. On all sides were official chairs, supported on long poles or covered with leopards' skins, the Corean emblem of rank. Preceded by our 'keso,' or flag-bearer, we passed through the gates, and walked through several large courtyards filled with soldiers, servants, and musicians, the last being dressed in scarlet. At some of the gates the sentries presented arms in a casual sort of way; at others, they took no notice of us at all; the discipline of the Corean army being decidedly lax, so much so that the guard at one of the inner gates was fast asleep, weighed down probably by the ponderous suit of chain-armour

which he wore. At last we reached the ante-chamber, where we were to wait till the king was ready to receive us, the representatives of each nation going into the audience chamber separately. Here were gathered some of the highest officials and nobles of the country—Presidents of Boards, Generals, and such-like 'great men'—dressed in dark green robes, high hats, and belts of wood inlaid with rhinoceros' horn—the Chinese dress of the Ming dynasty. They bowed, smiled, and shook hands most affably, setting chairs for us in an inner room, where a concourse of brilliant uniforms denoted the presence of the foreign representatives. The Japanese were especially noticeable for a superabundance of gold lace and cocked-hats out of all proportion to the size of the wearer.

After a while, a Court interpreter came bustling in to say that our turn had come and the king would see us; so, doffing our overcoats, we followed him out into the open air, across a courtyard and up some steps into a pavilion, the floor of which was covered with matting. On this our guide prostrated himself, and we bowed, although I as yet saw nothing to bow at. Crossing the pavilion, we went up into a dimly lighted hall, where I could just make out a personage—evidently the king—dressed in red robes, sitting cross-legged before a table, surrounded by a few courtiers. We advanced, and went through the necessary bowings and scrapings, standing quite close up to the table, which was covered by a foreign cloth of brilliant pattern. Our interpreter, bending forward, translated the king's words to us, in a subdued tone of voice. His Majesty asked after our Queen's health, where she had been staying lately, and other questions of a like nature. Suitable answers were returned; and after I had been presented and inspected by the king, the interview ended, and we backed out of the hall as gracefully as possible on a floor covered with uneven matting. The king struck me as an intelligent-looking man, with pale face and a pleasant expression, especially when he smiled.

We were now conducted to a smaller pavilion, where the Crown Prince stood to receive us. Mentors stood on each side to prompt him, and he seemed to be a very nervous youth. He was dressed in a brown robe, and bore no resemblance to the king, his father. After a few minutes, we withdrew and went back to the anteroom, there to wait till all the audiences were over.

In about half an hour's time we put on our hats and coats and marched off in a body to an inner building in the palace, past the Examination grounds and 'a foreign-built clock-tower. Dinner was laid in a long room, outside which a tent of matting, raised about eight feet from the ground, had been erected. The wooden floor was covered with matting, and here the dancing was to take place after dinner. We had to wait some time till all the preparations for dinner were completed, pacing up and down to keep ourselves warm, for it was bitterly cold outside, and the wind blew through the matting most persistently. The arrangements did not seem quite complete; officials were in consultation; the *menu*—on a large roll of paper—was being drawn up by the head-cook, a stout, comfortable-

looking person, dressed in green: servants were rushing about in all directions, placing knives and forks on the table, only to take them up next moment and run away with them. The electric light, too, was refractory, and evinced a desire to flare up suddenly and then go out, leaving the assembly in total darkness. It needed the combined efforts of two or three Presidents of Boards and the head-cook to set it going satisfactorily.

Then a difficulty arose as to how we were to be seated, some of the foreign representatives being very particular on this point. At last all was settled, and we took our seats, Koreans and foreigners alternately, the President of the Foreign Office at one end of the table, and the President of the Home Office at the other. The dinner was served in foreign style, and was good, although the quantity rather exceeded the quality of the dishes. There was a succession of pigeon, duck, chicken, pheasant, bustard, not to mention roast beef, mutton, and other joints. Puddings we had of many kinds, and fruit in abundance. The dinner must have lasted an hour and a half, when the President rose and proposed the health of the Sovereigns of Foreign Powers, which was duly responded to by the toast of the health of the king of Korea.

Cigars were then handed round, and we adjourned to the afore-mentioned tent, where a bevy of dancing girls, who had previously been flattening their noses against the windows of the dining-room, awaited us, arrayed in all the colors of the rainbow. They wore baggy silk trousers gathered in at the ankles; and gowns of red, blue, and yellow, reaching to below the knee, with long sleeves, which they waved about when dancing. Their waists were placed immediately below the armpits, and there was no attempt at tight lacing. All had glossy black hair, drawn back from the forehead, with huge head-dresses of artificial hair and flowers—not unbecoming. They numbered about eighty in all, of ages ranging, apparently, from ten to thirty. At a given signal, the musicians, who were seated cross-legged on the floor at the other end of the hall, struck up a weird, barbaric chant; and a band of girls with arms outstretched advanced at a slow, measured pace, swaying the body to the time of the music and placing their little slippered feet with a swing on the ground, while they chanted a monotonous dirge, every now and then changing suddenly to a higher key. The effect was curious, and rather pleasing. The dance consisted in moving backwards and forwards, in and out, now almost touching the ground with a graceful sweep of their long sleeves, now pirouetting on their heels. Just as this rhythmic movement was beginning to grow monotonous, the castanets rattled, and the music and dancing ceased abruptly.

It would fill a book to give a description of all the different dances they went through that evening. An account of some of the more striking figures will give an idea of the whole performance. For instance, a wooden frame about eight feet high, upright on a stand, was wheeled in by the attendants. It was painted in gaudy colours, and had a round hole at the top, through which a silken ball had to be thrown. Two girls advanced from opposite sides and

began swaying about to the sound of music, every now and then making a swoop down on the ball, which lay in front of them. At length, each girl picked up her ball, and, while swaying from side to side, made feints at throwing it through the hole. Suddenly one girl made a lucky shot and pitched hers through; whereupon she knelt down, whilst an attendant damsel placed a flower in her hair in token of victory. The other, meanwhile, had also thrown, but unsuccessfully, so she received a daub of black on her cheek, and then retired crestfallen into the ranks, while her more fortunate sister received a piece of silk as a reward. Another pair now took their places before the frame, and the same performance was gone through again, till all had had their turn. The dancers then formed into two columns, the successful ones carrying their pieces of silk on one side, the unsuccessful on the other. They marched round once or twice, and then dispersed as the music stopped.

Another interesting figure was the sword-dance, performed by four girls, dressed in crimson and yellow silk, with feathered head-dresses, to represent soldiers. Eight swords were laid on the ground in a circle. The girls began, as usual, to sway about; then as the music quickened, they picked up their swords, one in each hand, and began waving them round their heads. The band played faster and faster; and the dancers twirled their swords in the most wonderful manner, never seeming to tire, although the strain on the wrists must have been tremendous. Now they began to jump about, making pretence to rush at each other, and then as quickly retreating, throwing themselves into the most extraordinary attitudes. This lasted for quite a quarter of an hour, and was the most lively performance of the evening, eliciting great applause from the onlookers. Suddenly they stopped, and, starting a low monotonous chant, marched round several times and then retired to their places. After this, men dressed up to represent gigantic storks and tigers came dancing in, imitating the movements of the creatures very cleverly. They varied their entertainment by making dashes at the girls, who tried to escape their clutches by running about in all directions, screaming and laughing. The performance closed with a grand march round of the whole corps of dancers, a high-coloured junk in the middle, in which a little girl was seated, turning slowly round on its axis, as the other girls marched round, singing as before. The whole effect was very pleasing, and formed a sight not easily to be forgotten.

By this time the clock was striking eleven, and we hurried off to our chairs, after having said good-bye to the President and other officials. A slight stoppage occurred at one of the inner gates, owing to its being locked and the key having been carried off into safe-keeping for the night. The king's permission was needed to open it, as well as to obtain the key, which was at last brought, and proved to be quite a giant of its kind, being at least a foot long, made of solid iron. It took several men to turn it in the lock and push open the great gates, through which we passed escorted by a guard of soldiers, who volunteered their services to conduct us home, in the hope of receiving some present next day. At last the

outer gates were reached, where our chairs awaited us. We hurried through the deserted streets; and so, as Mr Pepys would have said had he been there, 'home to bed, well pleased.'

THE BRONZE MEDALLION.

THE people who drop into my studio and examine the various objects of art and virtu which a long life and a considerable success in my profession have enabled me to collect together, would no doubt be very much surprised to hear that of all my treasures there is none so dear to me as the Bronze Medallion that lies enshrined within a crystal case on my mantel-piece. Many of my visitors have glanced at it, and turned away to examine a rare bit of carving, or an almost priceless example of some forgotten art. To them the bronze medallion suggested nothing; possibly they thought—if they gave the matter any thought at all—that it was some medal won in my student days, and therefore treasured with care. That it represented a whole life-history, and had the power to revive many strange memories, they had no idea. Some people, perhaps, seeing it in a place of honour amongst my knick-knacks, may have fancied that it was something for which I had the same superstitious reverence that other men give to a horse-shoe. The bronze medallion, however, is neither a fetiche nor a memento of an early artistic success; it is simply an insignificant object, worth perhaps a few shillings, which has played no small part in my life, and on one occasion saved me from a sudden and violent death.

Thirty years ago, when I was a young man of twenty-six, and had fame and fortune still eluding me, I was attached to the artistic staff of the *Illustrated Weekly*, a journal which was just then beginning a career of great success. Black and white work was not then what it is now; but people thought highly of the illustrations we were able to give them for sixpence, and there was no lack of encouragement for proprietors or artists. My own special forte was animal life, as it always has been. From the time when I could first hold a pencil, I had spent my happiest moments in drawing horses. To me a horse was a creature of infinite artistic possibilities. I had drawn him sitting in the ring of a circus and galloping at express speed over a racecourse, and it mattered little to me whether he was a high-bred or a shaggy Shetland pony. I had already begun to paint him in oils, and my first picture, 'Young Horses at Play,' was considered worthy of a place in the Academy. It was this success in depicting horses that led the editor of the *Illustrated Weekly* to suggest that I should go down to Doncaster and make a sketch of the St Leger of that year. There was some famous horse running—I forget his name for the moment—and the public interest in the race was greater than usual. Consequently, the proprietors determined to give a double-page illustration of the scene; and I travelled to Doncaster a day or two before the event, and began my work by getting an accurate idea of the racecourse, and selecting a favourable standpoint from which to focus my sketch.

The day of the great race came, and during the morning I was busily occupied in interviewing the various horses engaged, and in filling my sketch-book with bits that seemed likely to be useful. When the afternoon came round and the racing began, I made my way to a certain part of the course which had seemed to me very well suited to my purposes, and there I took up my stand. There were two races to be run before the St Leger; and while these were being got through, and during the intervals between them, I occupied myself in watching the doings of the crowd which filled the upper part of the town moor. There must have been two hundred thousand people present on the stands and in the rings and on the moor, and from them came a perfect babel of sound, above which the stentorian voices of the bookmakers blended with the shrill cries of catchpenny adventurers of all sorts. Here two or three members of the three-card-trick fraternity were endeavouring to gull a group of round-faced rustics; there, a similar gang were shouting the praises of a sort of roulette table; yonder, a betting-man had screamed himself hoarse, and was reduced to shaking the money in his bag as a means of attracting attention. Beyond the shouting, swaying, bustling crowd stretched a long line of vehicles of all descriptions, from the lordly-looking coach to the farmer's light cart, and on these men and women were eating and drinking and discussing the prospects of the favourite for the great race. Across the course rose the long line of stands, thickly packed with fashionable race-goers, and these made a dark background to the picture I had in my mind's eye.

I was noticing all these things, and taking a sly sketch now and then of some face or figure that attracted my attention, when I caught sight of a little gentleman, evidently a Frenchman, who seemed very much out of place amongst the rough crowd. He was very neatly dressed from top to toe; but as he passed me I noticed that his black frock coat was somewhat shiny at the shoulders, and that his carefully brushed hat had certainly seen better days. He went in and out amongst the crowd, staring at the bookmakers, and glancing curiously at the three-card fraternity. I thought there was something wistful about his eyes as he looked at the gold which these gentry displayed so lavishly. Presently I lost sight of him in the crowd; but about ten minutes before the St Leger was to be run, I saw him again. He was engaged in confidential conversation with an individual whom I set down at once as a betting-man's tout, and against whose wiles and blandishments I should have liked to warn the evidently innocent foreigner. Presently, however, there was a great cry of 'They're off!' and I had to turn my attention to the race.

However great the excitement, and however long it may have existed prior to the event which rouses it, it takes but a few very brief moments to allay it for ever. Within four minutes of the cry of 'They're off!' the horses had flashed past me and past the winning-post, and the great race was over. I strolled round the crowd and amused myself by watching the faces of the people who had lost their money, and the joyful

manifestations of those who had betted successfully. I passed beyond the line of carriages and carts, and walked across the moor to the slight hill at the bottom of the course, from whence there is an excellent view of the crowds gathered before the stands. There were very few people about the hill or the furze-bushes which cover it, and things were quiet there after the roar and bustle of the crowd. I turned away to the left, intending to go into the high-road and walk back to the town; but I suddenly paused and hesitated, for there, close before me, was the little French gentleman, evidently in distress. He sat on the ground behind one of the furze-bushes with his hands hanging helplessly over his drawn-up knees, and his head drooping forward in abject fashion. It was evident that he had fallen amongst thieves. I went up to him and spoke, feeling that his distress warranted me in doing so.

'I am afraid you are in trouble, sir,' I said.

He lifted his face from his hands and looked up. 'Ah, m'sieur!' He spread his little fat hands abroad with a gesture that was half pathetic, half comical. 'Hélas, I have been robbed—swindled—I have lost all my moneys.'

'Do you mean that some one has picked your pocket?' I asked. 'If so, you should inform the police.'

'Ah, but it is not zat zey have peek my pockeet!' he answered quickly. 'It is zat I am one big fool—I bet—I stake—I gives my money to ze maker of books, and—pho! it is gone.'

'Ah, you have been betting.'

'Hélas, m'sieur, yes. You see, I am—ah, but!—I am poor. I am Professor of Languages at seexty pounds a year. It is ver' leetle for Madame my spouse, and for Jules and myself, and I often zink of how I can make heem more. A yong man say to me, "You should bet," "You should put your money on ze horses." He talk to me, zis yong man, of tens to one, and seex to one, and I listen. Zen yesterday comes, and zey pay ze salary at my school. Zey pay me five pound, and I put heem in my pocket and say, "To-morrow I will go to see ze horses-race and win much money." So I arrive here at ze course, m'sieur, and I walks round and see the makers of books, and I talk with a gentleman of sport who knows what he calls "a sure teep," and he tells me to put my five pound on "Crocodile," and takes me to a man who gives me a teecket, and lays me seexty to one against ze horse "Crocodile." Zen I say zat "Crocodile" will win me three hundred pound; and we will be happy, and my leetle Jules shall have a new coat, and Madame my spouse will buy herself a new gown, and I shall have great joy. And zen they run, the horses; and when zey have finish I go to my maker of books and request my money. And he say "Crocodile" is nowhere at all, and my five pound is lost; and ze man zat gave me ze "sure teep" is gone, and—hélas, m'sieur, now I have no salary to take home!'

And here the little man broke down and wept. Half-amused as I was at his story, I felt sorry for him, for I could well imagine that the loss of his five pounds would mean a good deal to him and to Madame his spouse and their boy Jules. When he had recovered himself a little, I talked further with him, and found that he was

a political refugee, and that he taught French in a boys' school at Doncaster. Convinced that his tale was genuine, I determined to help him. I had a five-pound note in my pocket for which I had no immediate need, and I made up my mind that he should have it. As I did not desire to pose as a benefactor, however, I resolved to adopt a little ruse.

'Well, sir,' said I, 'these fellows have swindled you, of course. To begin with, you should not have talked to the man who professed to know of a sure tip. All he wanted was your money'—

'Hélas, m'sieur, I am great fool—yes,' he interrupted, smiting his forehead. 'I have a head of wood. But it was the desire to carry home much money to my spouse and to cry, "Behold a fortune!"'

'And have you really nothing to go on with, sir?' I inquired.

He blushed and hung his head. 'Ah, m'sieur,' he said, 'not one centime. It is hard work to live on ze five pound a month. And now I have gamble heem away, my beautiful five-pound note, and zere will be no money for ze baker and ze butcher; and Madame my spouse will weep, and— Ah, wretched traitor zat I am!'

'Come, come, sir,' said I; 'don't give way. Here, you stay there awhile, and I'll go and see if I can't recover your money. Which of the betting-men was it that you gave your note to?'

'The gentleman called "Old Toby from London," m'sieur. He zat stands near the refreshments with a wonderful hat upon his head, and a long white coat.'

'Well, stay there,' said I, 'and I will see "Old Toby," and try to get your money; and away I went back to the crowd. But I had no intention of going near "Old Toby from London;" and after I had taken a turn through the people, I returned to the furze-bushes with my own five-pound note in my hand. I held it out to the little Frenchman, who received it with extravagant expressions of relief and delight.'

'There's your five pounds, sir,' I said; 'and I hope you'll never be tempted to bet again.'

'Ah, m'sieur, indeed, no! I promise you on my sacred word, and I beseech you to accept my'— Here he broke off and looked fixedly from me to the note, which he had smoothed out. He turned pale, then red, then pale again.

'What's the matter, sir?' said I. 'Isn't that right?'

'M'sieur!' He drew his little figure to its full height. 'Zis is not my note. See, I take ze numbaire of heem—it is 200317. And see, ze numbaire of zis note is 521683. Ah—ah—m'sieur, I see how it is! Your generous heart weeps for my poor leetle Jules and for Madame my spouse, and you give me zis money out of your own pocket. Ah, beautiful sympathy—it makes me weep.' And he began to shed more tears. I turned to go, feeling somewhat confused. 'Good-day, sir,' I said.

The little Frenchman seized my hand. 'I zank you, m'sieur,' he said simply; 'I zank you from my heart.'

'You are very welcome,' said I, and hastened to leave him.

Before I had proceeded many yards, he ran after me. 'M'sieur,' said he, 'take zis leetle

object as a memento. You will zink of Hector Malan and his gratitude when you see it. It is nothing—a leetle medal zat my son Jules win at ze school, m'sieur. I zank you again, and I pray ze good God to reward you.'

I took the little bronze medallion which he put into my hand, and went on my way again. That night on my way to town I looked at the memento of my somewhat amusing adventure; it was a bronze medal rather larger than a crown piece. One side bore a figure of Learning bestowing a laurel wreath on a kneeling child; the other informed me that the medal had been presented to Master Jules Malan for his proficiency in mathematics. I put the little token in my purse and thought no more of it until some weeks later, when I happened to be dining with a fellow-artist at a restaurant, and once more came across it amidst a handful of loose change. I handed it over to my friend, and told him the story as we walked away together.

'If that medal were mine,' said he, 'I should attach a sort of superstitious reverence to it. I should look on it as a species of lucky-penny, and always carry it about my person.'

I laughed at the idea; but I put the bronze medallion back into my purse, and there it stayed. I attached no sort of value to it; but it seemed somehow to become a fixture, and had an inner compartment of my purse all to itself.

Some years went by. I worked hard at my profession, and began to be known as a painter of animal life, and especially of horses. A battle-scene of mine, 'Horses in War,' brought me an invitation from my old friends the proprietors of the *Illustrated Weekly* to go out as war-artist during the Franco-Prussian campaign. I was disposed to go before the invitation reached me. I was unmarried; I had no ties; and there seemed no reason why I should not see something of war at first hand. Accordingly, I accepted the invitation; and within a week I was with the Prussian forces near Saarbruck. I am not writing the history of that famous campaign, and I shall therefore pass over the preliminary events of the war, and go on to the time when the Prussians, having easily recovered from their first reverses, poured over Alsace and Lorraine and began to besiege Strasburg and Metz. I, in company with several other English war correspondents and artists, was with the advance corps of the attacking army, and had considerable difficulty in getting on at all. The Prussian military authorities had small love for special correspondents, and we were indebted solely to ourselves for whatever information we got. To me this official stand-offishness did not so much matter as to my companions, the special correspondents. My business was to make pictures, theirs to find news. Nevertheless, I found it hard work sometimes to get materials for my sketches; and the risks I occasionally ran were greater than those which I should have incurred had I mixed in the thick of the skirmishes, which went on continually.

It was a cold, damp afternoon in October, and we were lying half-way betwixt Bonzonville and Gravelotte, about nine miles from Metz. The Prussians were slowly advancing upon that city, and the air was continually disturbed by the

vibrations of their cannon. A regiment near which I had remained all day was engaged in skirmishing operations with a French battalion, and from the top of a slight eminence I was endeavouring to make an effective sketch of the scene. Suddenly a white fog rolled over the valley and wrapped both bodies of combatants in its thick folds. I endeavoured to regain my quarters; but the fog increased in density, and I soon found it impossible to make headway against it. For some time I remained motionless. The noise of cannon and musketry died away, and I heard the bugles sounding a retreat on both sides. Then I determined to go slowly back to my quarters near the village of Bonzonville. Unfortunately, I found it impossible to decide which was east and which west. I had been stationed on a round knoll or eminence, and I had walked about its crown so many times during my observations, that I was now unable to decide on the exact spot at which I had ascended it. At last, however, I came to a tree of which I seemed to have some recollection, and I descended the hill and walked, as I thought, towards Bonzonville.

By that time the plain was quiet, and I heard nothing save an occasional far-off bugle note. I walked on for an hour through the thick white fog, seeking for some familiar landmark. None came. I began to realise that I was lost. I stood and wondered what to do. Then I went forward again. A church clock struck the hour, six, close by. Clearly, I was near a village. I came to a road, and hastened along it, and presently fell into the hands of a French picket. I had walked west instead of east. I was at Gravelotte.

The picket marched me into the village, and led me before their colonel, a fierce-looking *militaire*, who glared at me from behind a table at which he was evidently writing despatches. 'What's this?' said he. 'A spy?'

Now, unfortunately for me, I cannot speak French, but my knowledge of German is extensive. I replied to the colonel's question in English. He shook his head. I then spoke in German, and his face grew dark. A soldier interpreted my answer.

'So!' said the colonel. 'A pretty story, indeed! He speaks German like a native, and professes to be an Englishman. Everybody knows that an Englishman can speak no other language than his own. An English artist, eh? See what papers he has.'

I drew all my papers from my breast-pocket voluntarily and handed them over. As ill-luck would have it, I had that morning made a plan of the surrounding country in my sketch-book. The French colonel looked at this narrowly, and nodded his head. 'As I thought,' said he. 'What is this but a map? Come, Mr Spy, what have you to say?'

'Tell the colonel,' said I to the interpreter, 'that I am no spy, but the special war correspondent of a great English newspaper, and that what I said before is true. These are my credentials—bid him look at them.'

The colonel tossed the papers aside contemptuously. 'What of them?' said he. 'They may have been stolen, forged—how do I know? He speaks German—he looks like a German—

he has maps, charts, drawings on him—*enfin*, he is a spy. Take him out and shoot him.'

A corporal tapped me on the shoulder and motioned me towards the door. I was so surprised at the colonel's last words that I stood motionless; but when I realised their full meaning I suddenly found tongue, and rated the whole group in forcible English. The colonel shrugged his shoulders, and repeated his commands, and the file of soldiers began to hustle me out. Before we reached the door, however, he stopped us. 'Spy,' said he, 'we will give you a chance. Tell us all you know of the Prussian movements, and we will consider your case.'

'I shall do no such thing,' said I. 'I am an English gentleman, and I will not do dirty work for either French or Prussian.'

'Take time,' said he. 'Think it over.—*Caporal*, call in a *sous-lieutenant* and two men.'

A young officer and two privates entered the room of the farmhouse in which we were standing and saluted.

'You see this man,' said the old colonel, pointing to me. 'Keep him safe till daybreak; then bring him to me.' He turned to me again: 'Think over my offer, Mr Spy. If you accept it, well; if you don't, you will be shot in the morning.'

The young officer and the two men marched me out into the fog again and took me to a cottage close by. I was placed in a room where a fire burnt on the hearth, and an oil-lamp shed some little light on a plain deal table. My guardians signed to me to sit down; and then one of the soldiers, after a whispered colloquy with the lieutenant, left the cottage, and presently returned with food and drink, which he set before me. Desperately placed as I was, I ate my supper; and when I had finished, filled and lighted my pipe. I thought things over, and could see no chance of escape.

'Monsieur,' said I, addressing the young officer who sat near me on the hearth, 'I shall certainly have to die to-morrow morning, if your colonel persists in his foolish conduct, and I should like to write a last letter to my friends. Will you have the goodness to provide me with writing materials?'

The lad responded in the affirmative, and bade one of his men fetch pen, ink, and paper. While he was gone, the young officer—who was certainly not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age, and had a frank, open face—looked at me curiously, and presently inquired if I was really an Englishman. He spoke English so well that I was surprised.

'Certainly I am,' I answered. 'And anybody but your colonel would have recognised as much. I am an Englishman, and what I represented myself to be when questioned.'

'I am sorry for you, sir,' said he. 'I wish I could help you.'

'Then promise to forward this packet for me,' said I. 'You can show it to your colonel if you like.'

He replied that he would do his best to oblige me; and I set to work at my letter. I wrote out a full account of my afternoon's adventures, and addressed it to the proprietors of my journal. Then I took off my watch and chain and rings

and laid them on the letter, intending to wrap them all up together. I had another ring in my purse, and I drew the latter from my pocket and opened it. As I did so, the bronze medallion escaped and fell from the table to the floor. The young officer stooped, and picking it up, laid it by my hand. The light from the lamp shone full on the inscription. He uttered an exclamation, and picked the medallion up again. I looked at him in astonishment. His face was flushed and eager; he stared at me with wide-open eyes. 'Monsieur!' he gasped—'monsieur! For the love of Heaven, tell me—this medal, where did you get it?'

'The medal?' I said. 'Oh, I got it some years ago in England.'

'But where?' he said. 'Where, monsieur? Ah, do not trifle with me—tell me where. For, see you, monsieur, I am Jules Malan!'

I looked at him wonderingly. This, then, was the Jules over whom the little Frenchman had waxed so eloquent on the racecourse at Doncaster.

'So you are Jules!' I said. 'Then you are the son of the man who gave me that medal?'

'And you are my father's benefactor,' he cried. 'It was you of whom he told us that day when he came home from the race.'

'Well, this is strange!' said I. 'But come, tell me something about your father. Is he back in his native France? Is he well? I have often thought of him.'

'Alas, sir, my dear father is dead, and my mother also. But let me tell you—we prospered in England, for my father had money left soon after your meeting with him, and he secured a free pardon for his political offences, and we returned to Paris. We were very happy, monsieur, until last year, and then my parents died. They never saw me in my uniform,' he added with a sad smile, as he turned the bronze medallion over and over in his fingers. 'Ah, monsieur, how well I remember winning this at the school in your foggy England! My father used often to talk of you and wonder if you preserved his memento. "See, thou, Jules," he would say, "if ever thou shouldst meet my benefactor and canst serve him, do it for my sake." And now I have met you, monsieur, and I would help you—and I cannot.'

'Never mind,' said I; 'perhaps your colonel will see reason in the morning.'

He shook his head at that, and relapsed into silence. For a long time no one spoke. The two soldiers nodded on the long settle; but Jules and I were wide awake. He kept looking wistfully at me: I for my part found it impossible to sleep. Somehow, I could not think the fierce old colonel meant to shoot me, but the mere idea was bad enough to howl over.

Morning came—gray, cold, cheerless. As the bugles sounded outside Jules and his men marched me into the colonel's presence. The old militaire was as stern and unbending as on the night before. He eyed me keenly.

'Well, Mr Spy,' said he, 'do you accept my offer of last night?'

My heart began to thump violently. 'No, sir,' I answered.

'Then you will be shot at once. Lieutenant'—

But Jules suddenly interrupted him. 'No, no, no, my colonel!' he cried, throwing his arms about me. 'No—no—it is my father's benefactor. Behold!'

He held up the bronze medallion. The colonel stared at us as if we had gone mad. 'What's this?' said he. 'Speak, Jules—here is some mystery.'

Jules told the story as only a Frenchman could tell it. When he finished, the old militaire shook my hand, embraced me, and bade me go my way. 'We are not ungrateful, we French,' said he naively.

I said farewell to him and to Jules, and within an hour regained my quarters at Bonzonville.

Well, that is a long time ago, and since then I have often called on Jules Malan and his pretty wife in Paris. We are great friends—for there is a tie between us which nothing can ever break. I shall never forget it, nor will those of my friends who know the history of my carefully treasured bronze medallion.

EXPERTS IN HANDWRITING.

AT the trial of the now partially forgotten miscreant Neill, the blackmailing letters which led to the detection of his crimes were easily identified as his, owing to the handwriting being very peculiar. It might easily have happened, however, as in so many previous cases, that the evidence of an expert would have been required to identify the writer. Such testimony is very frequently given, and is so much a matter of course when any doubt attaches to the authorship of letters, that it is hard to believe that it was ever regarded as inadmissible. Yet such is the case. The reform of legal procedure has gone ahead greatly during the last half-century, and many antiquated and absurd restrictions have been swept away, that with regard to expert evidence among them. It was formerly held that to allow opinions to be expressed as to the authorship of writings would complicate the issues, open the door for invidious selection, and raise points on which an unlettered jury would be incompetent to pronounce. In the Fitzwalter Peerage case, for instance, which was tried in 1843, the evidence of the inspector of franks at the General Post-office was rejected, on the ground that his knowledge of the disputed writings could not have been acquired by acquaintance with the writers, the signatures in question occurring in a family pedigree made in 1751. A similar point was raised before a full bench of the Court of Common Pleas in 1852, and decided in the same sense. It was not until 1854 that a remedy was provided for this very inconvenient state of affairs by a clause in the Criminal Law Procedure Act of that year which permits the judge, if he sees fit, to admit the evidence of experts.

That the innovation was necessary is proved by the fact that the permission has been largely used ever since, and has proved of great service, particularly in cases of forgery. To mention only leading instances: the evidence of experts greatly furthered the ends of justice in the Roupell case,

the famous Tichborne trial, and the Whalley will case of more recent years. This class of testimony is also frequent in County Court actions, where the morals of many of the suitors permit them to have recourse to the most objectionable expedients to gain the day. It is true that specialists in handwriting, like those who devote themselves to medical and scientific subjects, do not always agree, and this renders it necessary to accept their evidence with caution; but the advantage of having points of difference and similarity, which would often escape the notice of the average man, brought clearly to light, is obvious and important. On this point the opinion of the late Lord Chief-justice Cockburn, who tried an unusual number of cases in which expert evidence was introduced, may fitly be quoted. 'The evidence of professional witnesses,' he said on one occasion, 'is to be viewed with some degree of mistrust, for it is generally given with some bias. But within proper limits, it is a very valuable assistance in inquiries of this kind. The advantage is that habits of handwriting as shown in minute points which escape common observation, but are quite observable when pointed out, are detected and disclosed by science, skill, and experience.'

Giving evidence in court is, however, only a comparatively small part of the business of a handwriting expert. His main occupation is advising private persons, especially those who have received anonymous communications. Threatening letters to Irish landlords and others, slanderous post-cards, mysterious epistles signed 'A True Friend'—in fact, all the missives which cowardly, venomous, and illiterate people of a certain class are fond of inditing, bring grist to the expert's mill. The recipient generally has some suspicion as to the origin of these documents, and wishes to have his suspicion either confirmed or set at rest. Valentines, too, furnish a good deal of work, even in these days when they are less popular than they were. During the later part of February there is a plentiful crop of inquiries respecting communications received on the 14th of that month. It may seem strange that any one should spend time and money in ascertaining the source of such banalities, but the undoubted fact that they do is only another illustration of the power of curiosity and the feeling of injured dignity. Besides such applications as we have mentioned, there are many others. Disappointed legatees are apt to have doubts as to the authenticity of a will which has ignored them; holders of dishonoured bills desire to verify the signatures of accepters or endorsers; and autograph hunters are often anxious as to the genuineness of some illegible scrawl reputed to be that of a man of note. In various ways, therefore, the small class of experts—there are said to be only two in the whole of London—find a good deal of employment.

Regarding the methods made use of to determine authorship, specialists are naturally reticent. Some of them have admitted, however, the nature of the leading principles which guide them. The philosophy of the matter rests mainly on the fact that it is very rare for any two persons to write hands similar enough to deceive a careful observer, unless one is imitating the other. 'Fists,' like faces, have all some special idiosyncrasy, and the

imitator has not merely to copy that of some one else, but to disguise his own. By careful and frequent practice he may succeed well enough to deceive the ordinary man, but is rarely successful in baffling the expert. Even the most skilful culprit cannot wholly hide his individuality, as he is sure to relapse into his ordinary method occasionally. Then, again, great care has to be used, and this can be detected by the traces of hesitancy, the substitution of curves for angles, and *vice versa*, which come out very plainly when the writing is examined under the microscope, as it usually is by the expert. A plan of detection which has been adopted with great success is to cut out each letter in a doubtful piece of writing, and paste all the As, Bs, &c., on separate sheets of paper. The process is also gone through with a genuine bit of calligraphy of the imitator or the imitated, as the case may be. Comparison almost invariably shows that the letters are less uniform if imitation has been attempted, the writer being occasionally betrayed into some approach to his ordinary calligraphy, or into momentary forgetfulness of some special point in the handwriting he is simulating. No point is too small to escape an expert's attention. The dotting of *is*, the crossing of *ts*, the curls and flourishes, the intervals between the words, the thinness of the up-stroke, and the thickness of the down-stroke, are all noted and carefully compared. Where only a signature has been forged, and that by means of tracings from the original, the resemblance is often so exact as to deceive even the supposed author, but in these cases the microscope is generally effective in determining not merely the forgery but the method by which it was accomplished. It is some comfort to know that the cunning of the forger is overmatched by the scientific skill of the trained expert.

VISITANTS.

By ARTHUR L. SALMON.

THEY come to me at dawn of day
With whisperings of long ago,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

With notes of a forgotten lay,
That once so well I used to know,
They come to me at dawn of day;

And when in dusky aisles I pray,
They come on wings of music low,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

In scented blossoms of the May,
In winds that through my lattice blow,
They come to me at dawn of day.

They come from regions far away,
On summer showers or flakes of snow,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

Through everything I do or say,
Some tokens of their presence flow;
They come to me at dawn of day,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

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APPEAL CASES IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

AN appeal to the House of Lords is essentially and emphatically a last resort on the part of any litigant, and is also highly expensive. Moreover, it must be preceded by a long course of costly litigation in inferior courts, and an absolutely unassessable amount of mental wear-and-tear and of waste of moral tissue. But an explanation of the course of procedure may not come amiss, even to those who have no prospect of being concerned in a case appealed to the Highest Court of Appeal in the United Kingdom.

The first thing which strikes both the Appellant and the curious stranger about the House of Lords is, its utter unlikeness to any court of justice with which he has been familiar. The atmosphere is distinct and peculiar, and as different from a Sheriff Court, or Assize Court, or even the Inner House of the Court of Session, as can well be imagined. The whole area seems bathed in an air of calm repose and cool deliberation. There is no hurry and no excitement—no crowd of anxious witnesses, and no gallery of interested spectators.

If you have lost your case in all the lower courts, and are still convinced, or persuaded, that the law is really on your side—and strict law is the nearest approach to absolute justice we can look for in human society—and decide to appeal to the House of Lords, you find from the very outset that you are to have a wholly new experience. The familiar, if somewhat exasperating, 'Take Notice' of your former proceedings disappears, and you make acquaintance with a document addressed 'To the Right Honourable the House of Lords, the humble petition and appeal' of yourself, praying that the judgment in such-and-such a case be reviewed before Her Majesty the Queen in her High Court of Parliament.

But before even this petition can be lodged, you must obtain two Counsel of standing and repute to certify in formal terms to the Lords that they 'humbly conceive this to be a proper

case to be heard before your Lordships.' This petition must be printed on parchment—a costly item in the luxury of Appeal. With this petition, security has to be lodged for due payment of the costs to be incurred—namely, a 'recognisance' to the amount of five hundred pounds and a bond for two hundred pounds.

Supposing all these preliminaries to be completed, then the case for each side forming the subject-matter of Appeal has to be set forth for My Lords. It must be clearly printed in large type on quarto-sized sheets, and bound in book-form. Forty copies must be lodged, and of these, ten must be bound in purple cloth, with parchment slips inserted at each part of the case, thus dividing the book into sections—namely, 'Petition and Appeal,' 'Appellant's Case,' 'Appellant's Index,' 'Respondent's Case,' and 'Respondent's Index.'

No witnesses are called, of course, in an Appeal to the Lords, and therefore there is no cross-examination, no browbeating, and no sparring between Counsel. The facts are supposed to have been already thoroughly thrashed out, and it remains but to deliver the final and irrevocable fiat of the law upon the law of the case.

The ultimate arbiters who constitute this Supreme Court of Appeal are, nominally, all the Peers of the realm. Every Peer, of whatever rank, is entitled to sit and hear arguments in any case. But in practice the lay Peers, as distinguished from the legal Peers, do not attend, and they never attempt to exercise their constitutional right. The judges who actually constitute the House of Lords as a legal tribunal are—the Lord Chancellor, the Lords of Appeal-in-Ordinary—who are life Peers created for this special purpose—and such other members of the House of Lords as have held high judicial posts in the past—ex-Lord Chancellors and the like. Three such Peers are required to form a quorum, no matter how many lay Peers may choose to attend at the hearing or voting. In practice, though not by statute, both the hearing and the verdict are left entirely to the Law Lords.

During the hearing, the Lord Chancellor in his robes comes down from the woolsack and takes a seat along with his legal colleagues on the benches nearest to the bar, on the other side of which is accommodation for ten or a dozen Counsel and legal agents. Before each of the Lords is placed a small movable table to hold his papers and books of reference, &c. And then the business begins. But it is conducted in a very different manner from the proceedings of which you have had unhappy experience in the courts below. Here are no flurried witnesses, excited agents, anxious 'parties,' and dictatorial barristers.

The facts are before the House, in clear print and compact and condensed form. The Counsel for the Appellant proceeds to argue against the judgment of the lower court in the light of the facts and on points of law. But he does not orate, and argument takes rather the form of friendly debate in ordinary conversational tones. There is no hurry; and as points are raised and cases are cited, the attendants are engaged in bringing books of reference, &c., so that the Lords may verify quotations or refresh their memories. Now and again a Peer puts a quiet question, which either throws a new light or leads to fresh inquiry. Everything proceeds with calm and dignified pace, and for an example of patient, dispassionate perseverance there is nothing to excel the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal.

When the Counsel for the Appellant has stated his case, and the Counsel for the Respondent has, in the same conversational manner, replied; when the Lords have heard both sides with equal patience, and have elicited all the information they require to form a judgment on the various points presented, then the House adjourns, and the time comes for you to exercise patience. For when judgment will be delivered no man can say. The Peers require time for consideration, and the law must not be jostled.

At last, however, you hear from your agent that your case is on the paper for to-morrow's business, the House sitting at 10.30 A.M. Down you go to Westminster, and find yourself in the lobby, perhaps, with a small crowd of other anxious and excited Appellants and Respondents, whose cases are also down on the paper for judgment. Here also come the gentlemen in wigs and robes, who, being professionally engaged, may enter the sacred precincts by the big doors; while their brethren, equally learned in the law, but not at the moment professionally engaged, must wait their opportunity like ordinary civilians.

We will assume that you have obtained entry to hear what is officially called the 'Consideration' of your case. You find the appearance of the House somewhat different from what it was during debate. The Lord Chancellor is on the woolsack; and other four Peers, say, are on the benches near the bar, two on each side, and each with the little table again before him. Perfect silence reigns, and calm and deep peace pervade the atmosphere—whatever may be the turmoil in your own bosom.

By-and-by the Lord Chancellor rises from the woolsack, and, with slow and deliberate pace, descends to the clerk's table. Standing at the table, he begins to read from his manuscript:

'My Lords—in this case of *A. versus B.*'—and so on to the deliverance of his own opinion on the points. Then he returns to the woolsack, and a Law Lord rises and reads his opinion, perhaps at some length, but with clearness and argumentative force. Then rise in succession the other Law Lords, each not delivering but reading his opinion, some giving reasons at length, and some, perhaps, merely concurring in a few words with opinions already read.

Some Law Lords are habitually minute and painstaking in setting forth their reasons for arriving at conclusions, and in marshalling the arguments by which they fortify their reasons; but other Law Lords are as habitually terse and reticent, frequently concurring without stating either reasons or argument.

This, however, is the rule of the House, as fixed and immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians: that each Peer must read, not recite, his judgment from his own written or printed text, and he must read it standing, as if he were addressing the whole House, and not a long array of empty benches.

When all the Law Lords have finished reading their opinions, you realise, let us say, that they are unanimously in favour of the decision of the court below—which means the dismissal of your Appeal. This being so, the Lord Chancellor rises, but remaining by the woolsack, and turning towards right and left, as if the silent benches were peopled with listening Peers, thus pronounces, without pause or punctuation: 'My Lords, the motion before your Lordships' House is, that this Appeal be dismissed. Contents? Non-contents? The Contents have it. The judgment of the House is that this Appeal be dismissed, and that the Appellant do pay to the Respondent the costs of this Appeal.'

And all is over. Nothing remains for you but to pay the piper. The end is final, and you have only the consolation of reflecting that the highest legal luminaries in the world have, in the most impartial and dispassionate tribunal ever constituted, regarding your case in the light of strict law, and on principles of pure justice—decided that you are in the wrong. It has been a costly experience, but finality is not to be bought cheaply.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XX.

Oh, see ye not that bonnie road
That winds about the fernie brae?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night must gae.

THOMAS THE RHYMER.

It is three months since Pomona's birthday, and August is brooding hotly over the land, blazing on the poppies and the dusty roads, and throwing great heavy elm-tree shadows on the meadows, and setting the air quivering over the stubble-fields. Those three months have not been unmixed happiness to either Pomona or Sage; what fortunate mortal ever had three months' happiness unmixed?

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Lady Lester's life was ebbing gradually away ; and after another fortnight of trying to keep up the delusion that she would be better soon, and the pitiful pretence that Pomona was enjoying the season, with all the time an aching heart of anxiety, to be kept hidden like the Spartan boy's fox, though it drove with her in the park, was her partner at all the balls, curtsied with her at the drawing-room, jarred with its sad voice on the gay music of opera or concert, the girl was allowed to go down to Beechfield to share with the devoted maid the infinitely sweet, sad duty of caring for her mother's weakness and soothing her weariness.

'I have never had you so much to myself before, Mona,' Lady Lester would say ; and the girl would hardly be persuaded to leave her room or to move out of reach of her hand.

'Why should I not have been always with you like this ?' she used to protest, wondering at the tyrannical yoke under which we wilfully place our necks, filling up our life, short as it is, with a useless, wearisome routine, that is no pleasure or profit to ourselves or any one else, crowding out our real heart's happiness.

Now and then Lady Lester was well enough to be carried down-stairs, and just once or twice to be drawn in her chair along the terrace, and to stop for half an hour under the great fragrant branches of the cedar, looking with dreamy, far-away eyes at the sunny park, which had a strange unfamiliar look, as familiar things often have to dying eyes, perhaps from looking beyond them to the better country.

That coincidence of Maurice's calling the day Sage was at Beechwood was not anything very remarkable after all, except in Sage not knowing of his being in the neighbourhood, and even that was merely from her failing to realise that Crowcombe Rectory, where Maurice's old uncle lived, was within a drive of Beechfield, and that he and his wife and Lady Lester had known each other for many years. Why, even Pomona had found out that Maurice was related to their old neighbour at Crowcombe, and that, though he had not been there since he was a child, he was not unlikely to be staying there soon, so that it was no great surprise to her to see his card with those of Mr and Mrs Irby.

Since that first meeting with Maurice at Mrs Copleston's, she had met him repeatedly in that curious way in which, in the stir-about of life, two atoms that have never met before, once brought together, are continually jostling one another in a manner most incomprehensible considering the many millions of atoms concerned. After the first it was not, of course, always accidental that Maurice should be in the park at the time Pomona took her early ride ; and after a chance encounter, when Maurice was calling one afternoon at the same time as Pomona at Mrs Copleston's, that lady gave a helping hand, and took Maurice with her to several houses where she knew Miss Lester was to be met.

And now, by some strange caprice of Dame Fortune, who, like other ladies, appears sometimes the most openly manœuvring of matchmakers, these two were taken out of the gay throng, where Pomona would have been so surrounded by admirers that Maurice would have hardly had a chance to come near her, and sent off, as

it were, to the conservatory, or to sit out on the stairs through ever so many dances, they two by themselves. Pomona, to be sure, was nursing her mother, and Maurice was helping his uncle in some business of a tiresome, pottering description, that at once worried and interested, irritated and amused, the old man. But Crowcombe Rectory and Beechfield are only three miles apart, and Mr Irby often wanted to hear how Lady Lester was ; and when Pomona went for her daily walk or ride, on which Lady Lester insisted, what more natural than that those two should meet under the midsummer trees, or in the deep, ferny lanes, or by the lake ?

I do not think either Maurice or Pomona realised whither they were drifting during those midsummer days. With Pomona it was part of the strange, unreal life she was leading ; ordinary conventional life seemed to be set aside ; society and all its works were at a distance ; she wore the same cotton frock all day long ; there was no grand dinner spread at eight o'clock, but a tray brought up into the old schoolroom any time she pleased ; and so there seemed nothing out of the way in her daily meetings with Maurice, and the intimacy that those daily meetings brought about.

I am quite sure that at first Maurice had no intention of disloyalty to Sage. It cannot be held disloyal to dream wild, impossible lovely dreams ; who can help their dreams ? Nor can it be held disloyal in a poet or painter to draw in words or pigments beauty other than that of his own liege lady. Those days were a long intoxicating dream to Maurice, full of a fascination from which there was no escape, even if escape had been desired ; they were a poem of sweetest melody, a picture in which he and Pomona were represented as they were in *Lowlow's* picture.

It was always now 'poor, little Sage,' when he thought of her, for he did think of her, and wrote too, and more frequently and more tenderly than heretofore. Poor, little Sage ! I am afraid, when that feeling of pity begins to creep in, the love is a little on the wane, pity being only akin to love, not by any means the same.

When Maurice and Sage met in London, the day following that on which Sage went to Beechfield, there was much to hear and explain on both sides. Sage found a much more sympathetic listener in him, when she expatiated on Pomona's perfections, than she did in her father. But then, of course, Dr Merridew had not seen her, so could not be expected to understand the charm ; and Mr Ludlow's want of appreciation was one of those unaccountable perversities that the most excellent men are subject to. But Maurice agreed with all she said about Pomona in a quite satisfactory way, not too heartily, which is a very mistaken form of agreement, and apt to modify the unlimited praise which might otherwise be bestowed on the object under discussion.

But Maurice did not originate much in Pomona's praise, only echoed, sometimes even with a slight qualification, what Sage said of her, and left Sage with the impression that he would soon admire Pomona almost as much as she did herself, and that she had drawn his attention to several points he had not discovered for himself, though he quite appreciated them.

'And, Maurice,' Sage said, 'I want you to promise that you will not tell Pomona anything

about our engagement—indeed, you had better not talk to her about me, or it might slip out without your meaning it. I have quite set my heart on telling her myself, and I wonder why I have never told her already, for she is so sympathetic and nice. Do you know, Maurice, I was very near telling my aunt, Lady Lester, all about you, for she guessed, I don't know how, that there was some one I cared for; and she asked if you were very nice, very tender, very true, as if she almost knew all about you already. When I go down again, I will tell her.'

But Sage did not go down again, nor did she see Pomona during the fortnight she remained in London except dressed to go to the drawing-room, a lovely scene of satin and billowy tulle and ostrich feathers and diamond stars, too exquisite to be approached except at a very respectful distance, and too far off for any confidences to be possible.

Kitty was never tired of hearing that wonderful dress described, and after a few repetitions, Sage found herself making little additions, to heighten the effect. Kitty required a good deal of amusement and humouring in those days, for the headache and loss of appetite had not been so entirely mythical, and Sage found a very feverish, tossing, little person in bed when she came home from Beechfield.

'Maurice must not come,' was Sage's first thought; and Dr Merrieworth shrugged his shoulders, and wondered if smallpox or the plague would have kept him away from Sage's mother; and Sage, keen in defence of her hero, read the thought, and protested. 'Of course he will want to come; but it's for my own sake I'm going to ask him to stop away. It will make me so anxious and bother me, if he comes; and I don't want to think of anything but little Kit.'

And so she wrote an imperative, little note, smelling strongly of carbolic, and had to write it over again because a sudden tear splashed down unexpectedly on the paper at the thought of how, if she took the fever and died, she would entreat, with her dying breath, that Maurice might not be told, lest he should run the risk of infection.

Of course, that peremptory note had the immediately opposite effect of bringing Maurice to Dalston, as, deep in her deceptive little heart, Sage knew it would do, though she scolded him with tears of loving pride in her eyes for his rashness and disregard of her wishes; and she made such a glorification of his courage and self-devotion all the rest of the day, that Dr Merrieworth could not resist observing that a doctor did as much and a great deal more every day of his life and thought nothing of it.

'But you will not come again, dear,' she pleaded; 'promise me you will not come. I shall really, really be happier if you don't; and I shall be so busy, too, nursing Kitty, it will take up every moment of my time. I will send you a line every day to say how she is; and if you will write sometimes, it will be better even than seeing you, for I shall not feel anxious about you.'

Kitty was too ill during the days that followed to allow time for much thought, even of Maurice, in her anxious little nurse; and when the worst was over and Kitty, grown and long-legged and large-eyed, was creeping back to life, Maurice was called away again down to Crowcombe, to

help Mr Irby in that business to which reference has been made, and which brought him again in contact with Pomona, who had gone down to Beechfield a few days previously.

'Have you seen Pomona?' Sage asked in nearly all her letters. 'Have you been to Beechfield? Have you heard how Lady Lester is?'

And sometimes in his reply Maurice would mention that he had met Miss Lester, who looked well; or that his aunt had driven over to ask for Lady Lester, who was rather better; but he did not think it necessary—and why should he?—to recount how these meetings with Pomona were almost of daily occurrence. Nor did he relate how one afternoon, when he had called to inquire, Lady Lester had been on the terrace, and by some strange caprice, seeing that she had not seen any of her most intimate friends for weeks, expressed a wish to see him. He had sat for a few minutes on the stone balustrade by the side of her chair, under the great dark cedar at the end of the terrace, and she had smiled at him with the wan loveliness over which the cold shadow of death seemed already falling. He had helped to move her chair when she was tired and wanted to go in; and he had done it so gently and skilfully, that she had thanked him, and said she had never crossed the terrace with so little shaking. As she bade him good-bye, she smiled at him with a kindness out of proportion to the small service he had done her; and with a sudden impulse, he stooped and kissed the transparent hand that lay in his, and turned away with a strangely beating heart and unaccountable agitation, feeling as if, without a word, some understanding had been come to between them, some trust had been conferred and accepted; and meeting Pomona coming in from the terrace with a shawl that had been dropped, he took it almost authoritatively out of her hand, as if he had a right to care for her.

He went back to Crowcombe that evening more in a dream than ever, spell-bound by the magic of the great enchantress, love, with whose power he had often played, and whose growing bonds he had lightly twisted about him, conscious that at any moment he could break loose from them, like Samson from the Philistines' new cords. But now, like Samson shorn of his strength, he could no longer go out as before and shake himself free.

Mr Irby won every game of backgammon that evening, which was a great gratification to the old man, till he began to suspect that Maurice was not paying any attention to the game, which robbed his triumph of half its splendour; and his gentle old wife had to intervene with the bedroom candles to prevent an outburst of irritability.

'It was my fault, Richard, for I quite forgot to give him the letter that came by the second post, and I expect his thoughts were with his young lady in London.'

Oh! poor little Sage, I wish it had been so!

CHAPTER XXI.

Our eyes see all around in gloom or glow—
Hues of their own, fresh borrow'd from the heart.

KEBLE.

'DEAR LUDLOW—Thank you very much for your proposal that Kitty should come and recruit at Scar. She does not pick up so quickly as I should like and expected; and Sage, too, is not up to the mark, overdone a bit with the nursing and

anxiety about Kitty, though she declares she is all right; and I think sea-air will do them both good. The boys are going with their cousins to Broadstairs; so I will pack off the two girls to you the beginning of the week, and thank you heartily for the invitation.—Yours sincerely,
JOHN MERRIDEW.

There is a legend that ladies always put the most important part of their letter in the post-script, and I think men sometimes do the same, for in this instance Dr Merridew added: 'Do you hear anything of your young friend, Moore?'

Back again at Scar! Both Sage and Kitty would have declared any time since they left it, last September, that it was the one thing of all others they desired.

There was little alteration at Scar Farm since last year, except that Mrs Stock came out to meet them with a widow's cap surrounding her kind little face; and Job's coat no longer hung on the kitchen door, or his pipe on the mantel-piece, and all the bedrooms were adorned with a black-framed funeral card with a weeping willow and an urn, and a long inscription in the farmer's praise. Otherwise, the death of the master made little difference in the house or in the farm either, where, as a matter of fact, Mrs Stock had done most of the business for years past.

The studio was in no way altered; and in the bow window was spread just such another attractive-looking tea as had so often invited the attention of the Merridews' healthy appetites, but which now had no charms for poor Kitty, and to which also Sage could not attend till she had got her patient safely to bed. Even then, she sat longer than was necessary by Kitty's bedside, with an unusual shrinking from a *tête-à-tête* with her friend; and she had half a mind to ask Mrs Stock to bring her some supper up-stairs, and tell Mr Ludlow she did not like to leave Kitty. But it must be done sooner or later, and she might as well to-day as to-morrow face the inevitable question: 'Well, how is Maurice? When did you hear from him last?'

But after all, she had not to answer that question, for Mr Ludlow did not mention Maurice till tea was done, and then he said: 'I heard from Maurice this morning. I asked him to come down for a bit while you are here; and he hopes to do so.'

Just think what this silly little Sage would have missed if she had decided not to come down. She would have missed a beautiful, beautiful evening, with a sunset as heavenly as any of last year's, even that at the Landslip; the exquisite delight of seeing it all again unchanged, of meeting the old friends, of passing down the village street and getting a greeting from almost every door; finding her way to the beach, and seeing the grand old Scar Head growing dusky against the orange sky, just as it did that evening when some one had come out of the very sunset.

'Why, Sage,' Ludlow said, 'I do believe Scar air has done you good already. You don't look the same girl I met just now at Shingle Station.'

And she answered with a laugh of great happiness: 'I don't feel the same.' But she did not go on to explain that those few words of his

about Maurice had worked the cure, brought the light into her eyes and the colour into her cheeks, painted the sunset with more vivid crimson and gold, cast a glory over the sea, put a music into the gruff greetings, a sweetness into the air, and an additional grandeur to the rugged old cliff.

Sage felt a wild exuberance of spirits, which was hardly natural to her, being generally of a placid, undemonstrative nature, and enjoying things quietly; but this was the result of a sudden rebound from the depression that had been growing on her for the last month. It was all very well for her to go on telling herself over and over again that everything was quite as it should be; that she would much rather Maurice kept quite clear of all risk of infection, and that he only did so because she had so earnestly implored him. She could not help now and then putting herself in his place, and wondering if commands or entreaties or even threats would have kept her away if he had been breathing infected air? Of course he was away from London; but sometimes, when she could not sleep, and the nights were hot and breathless, and Kitty was restless and fretful, and the inexhaustible patience of the tender little nurse was sorely tried, she would have a slight rebellious swelling at the heart, with the thought of what a short journey it was up from Crowcombe, and of how soothing it would be to an aching head to rest for a minute or two on his shoulder. His letters, too, had been less frequent of late, which was another thing she severely contested with herself that she much preferred; she would not for worlds that he should feel obliged to write; and yet—and yet—if only he had known how, after one of those bad nights with Kitty, which invariably were followed by a day of great prostration, the sight of a letter on the table made life easier, and hope and cheerfulness more possible, he would have been glad to write constantly.

He sent her a box of flowers now and then, the kindness of which she exaggerated, poor little soul, to something quite heroic, though, man-like, he packed them so badly, usually also selecting geraniums for the purpose, that they were all knocked to pieces in the post, and presented a poor appearance when taken out by her grateful fingers.

When the idea of going to Scar was first mooted, Sage was quite sure that Maurice would come up to see her before they started, even if he did not travel down with them. But he only wrote to say how glad he was they were going down to Scar, and that he hoped the sea-breezes would soon set Kitty up again. He had not said a word about there being any chance of his coming to Scar, but that, Sage told herself now, was just like him, so that it should be a delightful surprise to her. And this also accounted for his not coming up before she left London, as, of course, they would meet so soon that it was not worth while.

Oh, the difference the prospect of his coming made in everything! Little Scar and the great cliff beyond and the wide sea and the sunset sky need have felt no vanity from Sage's rapturously expressed admiration, for I have an impression that Dalston, frowzy, dusty, and fatigued, would have looked quite as beautiful to her if she had

expected to see Maurice Moore walking up the street.

Owen Ludlow noticed the change in her with great content, and as he sat on the great rock by her side and heard her gay young voice chattering on with more life and merriment in its tones than was usual to it, he felt greatly relieved and reassured that it was only fatigue and anxiety about Kitty that had made her look so white and large-eyed and out of spirits when she first arrived.

'I must have as much of you as I can, little Sage,' he said, as they slowly climbed the steep little street where lights twinkled out from small windows and open doors at which stood groups of men who bade them a gruff good-night. 'I must have as much of you as I can; for when Maurice comes, he will monopolise my little friend, I expect, and I shall be left in the lurch.'

And Sage laughed a happy little laugh, and passed her hand coaxingly under Ludlow's arm. It was so pleasant once more to have it taken for granted that Maurice would want to monopolise her; there had been very little symptom of such a desire of late.

'When will he come?'

'Oh, very soon, very soon,' the painter said, pressing the little hand against his side. 'I'll wager that I shan't be allowed more than a day or two of my little friend's company.'

And Sage went up to bed with those words 'Very soon, very soon,' ringing in her ears, keeping time to her footsteps, that were fain to dance for very happiness on the creaking boards of the farmhouse staircase.

LEATHERN WINGS.

By FRANK FINN, F.Z.S.

IN marvelling at the strange forms of extinct animals which science is constantly bringing before us, we are apt to forget that many living creatures are quite as wonderful as those which have passed away. Those weird winged reptiles, the Pterodactyls, for instance, are not more strangely removed in structure and habits from their reptilian relations than are the modern bats from other beasts. In all essential points near relatives of such humble earth-dwellers as the hedgehog, mole, and shrew, the bats are nevertheless far the most aerial of vertebrate animals at the present day. Not one of them is as well fitted for walking as for flight; the membrane which joins the long fingers, leaving only the thumb free, extends down the animal's sides to his ankles and between the legs, so distorting those members that 'in their owner's ungraceful hobble on the ground his knees stick upwards and outwards. Thus, though he is more at ease when climbing, and can suspend himself comfortably by either thumb- or toe-nails, the greater part of the bat's waking life is spent on the wing. In the air he is most at home, and displays powers of flight far greater than those of most birds. He may not have the speed and endurance of some of the feathered folk; but for facility of evolution in a confined space he would be difficult to rival, as any one will admit who has had a bat-hunt in a room.

Two experiences of my own rise vividly before

me as I write. In the first instance, the bat was a 'flying-fox' of about the size of a pigeon, which one night entered my bedroom in a Zanzibar hotel. Becoming conscious in the darkness that some flying creature was passing and repassing over my head, I got out of bed and lighted the lamp, and found my visitor performing the circuit of the room with a steady even flight, very different from the fluttering progress of our own little species. He will soon get tired of that, I thought; and closing the windows, sat down to wait till he should be wearied, and allow me to capture him for the Zoo at home. Several minutes passed, and I began to think more active measures necessary, as he showed no signs of sinking exhausted; so, seizing a mosquito net, I started on an impromptu fox-hunt. I don't know how long it lasted, but the quarry put the light out twice by his flapping pinions, showed most disconcerting agility in rising from the floor and unhitching himself from the wall, when he was brought down or settled to rest, and finally escaped through a crevice in the party-wall which separated me from a passage with an open window. Whereon I sought again my virtuous couch, vexed and perspiring, but with a greatly increased respect for a bat's power of wing.

My next bat-fowling experience was a rather different one, though the result was the same. The species in this case was our English long-eared bat, and the scene of the hunt a room in a laboratory, whither I had gone with a friend to work at night. Wishing to examine the little creature alive, and then release it, we pursued it with dusters for about an hour. At the end of that time, as we were far more exhausted than the bat, and had lodged most of the dusters on the top of a high cupboard, it occurred to my companion that he did not want to catch the poor thing, and we opened the window and left it to its own devices.

In addition to displaying such activity on the wing, bats have considerable power of extended flight, the Indian flying-fox having been known to board a ship two hundred miles from land; and they are found, with birds, on very small and remote oceanic islands. These they must have reached by fair flight, unless they had the good fortune to meet with a floating log; for, though a bat swims well, it would probably find much difficulty in rising from the water, did it settle to rest, as many birds are known to do.

Yet, though the bat has so well won its way to what is popularly supposed to be the realm of the birds, it has not received much favourable recognition from humanity, which lavishes adulation on the undeserving. For 'the light-minded fowl,' as a Greek dramatist calls them, treat their gift of wings with a sad lack of appreciation. Let a bird get on an oceanic island free from terrestrial foes, and unless it is obliged to fly for its food, it proceeds to wax fat and lazy, and in the end loses its power of flight altogether. It finds out the short-sightedness of this policy when, in after-ages, man arrives at that island. But that is by the way.

The bat's weakness, however, as well as its strength, lies in its wings. If the delicate finger-bones, which stretch the membrane like umbrella-ribs, or the membrane itself, be damaged, the

animal is disabled. Indeed, a method of capturing bats practised by the inhabitants of some of the South Sea islands shows that the wily savage has appreciated this. Armed with a thorny bush on the end of a long bamboo, he stealthily approaches a flying-fox which has settled to feed on a fruit-tree, when a dexterous blow will tear the bat's skinny wing and bring it to the ground; an acceptable addition to the hunter's commissariat. The flying-foxes are relished as food by the inhabitants of the countries where they are found; and certainly a creature which lives on fruit ought to be good eating. Their heads are wonderfully like that of a miniature fox; and their large eyes suggest that they find their way by sight, of which sense the small insectivorous bats would seem to be almost independent, as blinded specimens, in the experiments of Spallanzani, proved to be able to avoid obstacles to their flight as easily as those which could see. This power bats owe to their highly developed sense of touch, the large sensitive surface offered to the atmosphere by the broad naked wings enabling them to perceive an object before they touch it, probably by the difference in the resistance of the air. And the huge ears and complicated nose-appendages found in so many insectivorous species also subserve the purpose of guidance, though they certainly do not add to the animal's appearance, the facial aspect of some bats being past description hideous, while they are just as offensive to the nose as to the eye. One very ugly naked species exhales so detestable a perfume from a pouch under its chin, that an artist who was taking the portrait of one of these delectable animals was almost made sick by the stench. One cannot wonder that the attributes of the blood-sucking vampire have been wrongly given to several hideous American bats, especially to that species named 'Vampyrus spectrum,' from a mistaken notion, indeed, since it is frugivorous. There being no flying-foxes in the New World, some of the insect-eaters have adapted themselves to a fruit diet.

Nevertheless, two species have been proved to suck the blood of other animals, though these are not nearly so ill-looking as some of their harmless relations. And in the Old World there are bats which prey on the smaller members of their own family, and on other creatures that they can catch, such as birds and frogs. Considering the general attributes of the bat-kind, it is not to be wondered at that mankind should have borrowed their claws and angular wings wherewith to garnish those grotesque creations of the imagination known as dragons. It is true that it has been suggested that the Pterodactyls gave the first idea of dragons to humanity; but this is unlikely. In the first place, several geological periods intervene between the last Pterodactyl and the first man; and in the second place, the artistic mind notoriously revels in the production of monsters whereof it may be just as safely affirmed that they never could have existed, as that they never did. It has given the 'worm' of our ancestors a rhinocerotid head, birds' feet, and an incandescent breath—why, therefore, should it flee to fossils for the paltry detail of wings, when the bat was close at hand to supply them?

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the Pterodactyls were somewhat dragon-like, especi-

ally the larger species; for though most were of moderate size, not exceeding that of a crow or a flying-fox, and some, even, no larger than sparrows, yet the largest attained a spread of wing of more than four fathoms. These wings, though like those of the bats in being expansions of the skin extending to the limbs, differed from them somewhat in detail. In the bat we have a free thumb and four immensely lengthened fingers; in the Pterodactyl the fingers were free from the wing membrane, except that corresponding to our little finger. This in the volant reptile was the largest of all, a long, tapering, jointed rod of bone, and the main support of the wing, which was a long and narrow one, something like that of a swallow in outline. As the Pterodactyl's hind-limbs, like those of the bat, are weak and more or less involved in the wing-membrane, it is extremely unlikely that it could sit up and perch or walk like a bird, as some have suggested; its terrestrial or arboreal promenades, therefore, more probably took the form of a bat-like crawl on all-fours. Its head, however, was more like a bird's than a bat's, having a long snout, armed with teeth or a beak, or both, and large eyes. Feeding on insects, and probably also on fish, the Pterodactyls must have borne some resemblance, when on the wing, to the terns or sea-swallows of our own day, with their large heads and long narrow wings. Whether, as they wheeled and swooped over a shoal of fish driven to the surface of the sea by the rush of the great reptilian whales of the period, they indulged in the vocal performances of the modern sea-bird, is of course only a matter for speculation. Probably they were more gifted with voice than our modern reptiles. And these are not entirely dumb, as the bellowing alligator and chattering house-lizard prove; while, on the other hand, some birds have got no further than the well-known reptilian hiss. To talk of the colours of Pterodactyls may also seem to recall the method of the German scientist who, in the solitude of his study, evolved the camel out of his inner consciousness; yet we constantly find that the more aerial creatures are the more brightly decorated; the little 'flying-dragons' of the present day, lizards whose long movable ribs support a skinny parachute, are as gaily coloured as butterflies, while even their terrestrial relatives are often exceedingly beautiful. So that it is more than possible that some at least of the Pterodactyls, like Mr Oscar Wilde's dove, rejoiced in 'silvered wing and amethystine throat.'

Speculation fails us somewhat, however, when we begin to inquire into the origin of these old pliers of leathern pinions. The links which bind these strange creatures to other reptiles are wanting. And, curiously enough, as far as fossils go, the case is similar with the bats; for all fossil bats are just as truly bats as are the living species. Fortunately, however, there exists a 'living fossil,' which, though it could not have been the ancestor of these flying beasts, yet very clearly points out the way in which such anomalous creatures might be developed. This is the Galeopithecus of the East Indies, a creature which is neither cat nor bat nor lemur, and yet has been at different times called by all these names, and finally herded with the mole and shrew tribe, mainly because it will not fit in anywhere else. It is a tree-climber, and apparently a vegetable feeder, and is one of

those creatures which fly by a parachute formed by a flap of skin along the sides, extended by the limbs; the most perfect of parachutists, for this web extends between the hind-legs and between the toes, enabling the animal to glide as far as seventy yards at a time. Besides some points in its internal anatomy, the webbed hind-feet forbid us to regard the 'cat-monkey' as a surviving incipient bat; but, nevertheless, from some form very much like it we may easily imagine that the present rivals of the birds were developed. That leather will ever surpass feathers as a material for wings is very unlikely; the Pterodactyls, though in the height of their power when the birds began in the feeble-winged, half-reptilian Archæopteryx, have yet entirely died out ages ago, without leaving any descendants. Skin-winged reptiles had reached their highest perfection, and a different stock supplanted them, which flew by feathers. One reason of this may have been that a feather-wing is so much less liable to irreparable injury than one of membrane; and the Pterodactyl's wing, stretched on a single support, must have been thrown out of gear even more easily than a bat's. Were not birds essentially creatures of the day, for true night-fliers are few among them in proportion to the many that love the light, it is possible that the bats themselves might never have conquered their present share of the empire of the air.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER II.

TWENTY years bring changes into all lives, and those of Mildred and Charles Russell were not likely to be exempt from the universal law. The vicarage of Denleigh, which had been their home for all that time, had been the scene of both births and deaths; and by the time that their eldest son was twenty-five, and Ena a pretty, gray-eyed damsel of twenty, there was but one other child, Bijou, a fragile, petulant, self-willed, little mortal of twelve, left to share with the other two their parents' love. For that she had not an equal claim with Dick to talk of 'father and mother,' Ena never dreamt.

The immediate removal of the family from the Hampshire curacy to the Yorkshire town had of course made the keeping of Jack's secret a comparatively easy matter; the more so since, from the day he received it until the present, Sir George Daintry had deigned to take no notice of the letter which gave him information as to the existence and present position of his grandchild. So Ena had grown up exactly as her father desired, regarding herself as the eldest daughter of the house, and claiming as her right the affection which she most fully returned. Never for one moment had either husband or wife regretted the adoption of the baby, who had won for herself so warm a corner in their hearts.

As to Dick, before he left home, four years ago, he had believed that the world contained no one so bright and helpful and lovely as his sister Ena. In which, of course, he was mistaken. But his was a pardonable error, and one to be rather cultivated than discouraged on the part of brothers as a race.*

Except for the loss of the little ones, upon whose waxen faces hot tears had fallen, and each of whom existed still as a memory in at least two hearts, poverty had been the one trouble that had fallen upon the vicarage. The small private means which had emboldened Mr Russell to accept his present incumbency had some time ago been swallowed up in the failure of a bank. Happily, Dick had then just completed his university course, and was already looking out for a tutorship, which might tide over the period that must elapse before he should be of age to follow in his father's footsteps and take Holy Orders. And upon the very morning that brought tidings of the crash, there came also a definite offer of a post, with a salary so tempting that, under the circumstances, it could not be refused; even although the condition attached to it—that he must undertake not to leave his pupil until the boy of thirteen should have passed his seventeenth birthday—must have the effect of delaying Dick's own ordination.

The lad of whom he thus received the charge was extremely delicate, requiring constant change of air and scene, always away from England. Therefore their long companionship, now drawing to a close, had been spent by both pupil and tutor in almost incessant travelling, which had never once brought them within sight of home. And at the present moment, when Dick's long-desired return was actually approaching, there was much anticipation and counting of days in Denleigh vicarage.*

'No letter this morning from him,' remarked Ena, standing, tall and slim, beside the already deserted breakfast table, and turning over the small pile of recently arrived correspondence.

'I daresay that Frank Roberts has taken him off on a fresh wildgoose chase to the other end of the world,' grumbled Bijou, of the long lashes, and—truth to tell—rather vain air. 'Dick isn't free for three weeks yet, remember, and that boy will have his pound of flesh!'

'What an unpleasant comparison,' remarked her father, who had just entered; 'and specially in regard to Frank Roberts, who really has been as good as gold to Dick.—Milly, my dear, apropos of gold, pray, where did you put that money that I left on my study table yesterday morning?—And, Ena, will you get out my thin overcoat? Really it is too warm for the thick one, now that May is in.'

'Shall I put away the other, dad?'

'No. I've hung it in my wardrobe, and let it stay there. I may use it once or twice at night even yet.—But about the money, Mildred?'

'I didn't see any, Charlie. I wish I had!' with just her old, merry laugh. 'How much and what was it for?—Don't look so bothered, old fellow.'

'But really I *am* bothered. It was too large a sum to lose, dear. Wakelin brought it yesterday for the pupil-teachers' salaries, and that I might get rid of the National Society's account. There was over twenty pounds. I must have left it on my table, when I was called away to baptise Mrs Brown's child. I paid Clarke on my way home, I remember.'

Mildred nodded. Clearly, she understood all about Clarke.

'When I returned, the other matter had escaped my memory completely. The money must have gone though, during my absence, or the sight of such a pile would have reminded me. I never thought of it again until I wanted to take it down to the schools, and then it had vanished. Only I made sure that you had it.'

'Not I!—But you've dropped it inside a drawer or somewhere. I'll come and help you to hunt.' With which she slipped her arm through his, and rubbing her head caressingly against his shoulder, looked up into his worried countenance with a smile. If any one could, chase away gloominess from that face, where of late years clouds were apt sometimes to gather too quickly, it was certainly Mildred; just as surely as Charles was her consoler in those moments of weariness and depression which fall to the lot of high-spirited beings like herself.

'It will be in the middle drawer, at the top of everything. Now see if I am not right!' she told him cheerily.

But the prophecy unfortunately proved a false one. And even Mrs Russell began to look grave when, after emptying every familiar receptacle and customary hiding-place, she had to acknowledge that if her husband had, in a fit of abstraction, deposited the money in some safe corner, he must have taken remarkable pains in making a selection.

'I wouldn't care so much if Wakelin hadn't had a hand in it. But he is always so particularly unpleasant to deal with.'

'Not much worse than some of the rest,' responded Mrs Russell. For the south-country-bred folk had never grown accustomed to their north-country parishioners, with whom, on their side, neither of the pair were favourites. And the constant intercourse with the brusque, unrefined neighbours had neither blinded 't' passon' to Yorkshire failings nor altogether opened Yorkshire eyes to Hampshire virtues. Hence a state of constant friction, as unsatisfactory as it was irritating.

'Found it, mother?' came at that moment in Ena's bright voice, as she stood in the doorway. 'No? Then let us call Jane. She may have moved it.'

But Jane, a respectable, middle-aged woman of scrupulous honesty, which had stood the test of ten years in her present situation, professed herself as ignorant as the rest of the world. And gradually perplexity merged into anxiety.

'I must be off; my chicks will be waiting,' cried Ena at last. During eighteen months she had held the post of governess to the two young daughters of the same Mr Wakelin whom the vicar had just characterised as 'particularly unpleasant.' But, whatever the father's faults, Ena loved the children, and anticipated with genuine pleasure the hours spent each day in their instruction.

It was a large and important as well as perfectly new house, that towards which, five minutes later, she was hastening.

'None o' your old, nasty, pokey cribs for me,' Joseph Wakelin had declared, immediately after the lucky *coup* in iron which had brought him

his fortune. Whereupon he had set to work to build this red brick, imposing, comfortable, vulgar edifice, which he had then stuffed full of furniture, upholstered in startling colours, but affording the maximum of physical ease. Nowhere could sofas and couches be found of less artistic form, of cruder hue, or with more irreproachable springs and cushions than at 'The Hall,' the designation displayed in scrolls of iron-work above every gate.

It so happened that, quite out of the usual order of things, Ena that morning encountered the master of all this splendour upon his own doorstep.

'Late, ain't I?' he exclaimed, recognising her presence by a simple nod. But Ena was not so thin-skinned as Mildred. Possibly residence amongst these folk from childhood had blunted her perception of their peculiarities. 'Wasn't particular bright this morning, so I slept in. The changes in the weather don't suit me. It's like a furnace to-day, and so it was yesterday. How your father manages to walk about in that Inverness of his beats me!'

Ena laughed. The vicar's hatred of the cold was a constant source of wonder to his hardier flock.

'He's got his thinner coat to-day,' she retorted. 'Even he thought the other too heavy. I hope you'll be all right soon.'

'Thanks. By the way, if I go to the schools, shall I be likely to find his reverence? I rather fancy the walk there instead of going to the office,' with a guffaw at his own confession of idleness.

'I trust so, I'm sure. But when I started, all the house was upset searching for the pupil-teachers' salary money. You know the vicar's way of mislaying things; and money's no exception.' With which she passed on, never guessing at the suspicions already at work within her employer's brain.

'And that chap Clarke is bothering for his bill. What made Russell so bloomin' pressing to have cash instead of a cheque, as he always has had afore? I've fancied at whiles as pride would have a fall. Maybe it's tumbling now.' And though he did not add 'Hope as much!' it is quite probable that his sentiments ran in that direction. His resentment that the vicar would never admit him to the confidence and intimacy of an equal—for class-pride was certainly as great a failing upon the part of Charles Russell as was purse-pride upon that of Joseph Wakelin—had long ago influenced his mind against the man whose whole annual wealth would not have afforded him a week's income. To be able to despise the clergyman as he believed that he was despised—such was his pet though unacknowledged ambition. Almost he fancied that he saw his way to its fulfilment when, twenty-four hours later, he sat and talked over the strange occurrence of the vanished money with the vicar in his study.

'I can find the coin nowhere. Mrs Russell and I have searched the house from cellar to garret. If it had flown to the clouds it could not have disappeared more unaccountably,' exclaimed the clergyman, whose pallid face and red-rimmed eyes told of a sleepless night. 'I can't imagine what to do next in the matter.'

'Then you don't deny you had it from me?'

'Deny? What do you mean, sir?' firing up instantly. 'Of course I had it. Your insinuation.'

'Oh, blow my insinuation,' coarsely. 'What about burglars?'

Charles Russell drew himself up; but, though his voice was cold and his face hard, he still replied to the question. In truth, he understood already the false position in which this loss had placed him, and realised that his reputation demanded an answer to all inquiries, howsoever unpleasant.

'Very unlikely, though still possible. The window is not on the ground-floor. And any one entering from the hall during the daytime could scarcely fail to be observed. Though, as I have said, it is just possible that might have been managed.'

'And servants?'

'There is only Jane. All the parish is acquainted with her, and would vouch for her integrity. No! Whoever was the thief, it was not Jane.'

'He's a fool,' the other decided, listening and watching. 'Has he used it? At least he'd better try and throw the blame somewhere. But no! He'll save his conscience that far.' Then aloud, with a look of the utmost insolence: 'So the scamp is as usual "Mr Nobody, or the cat"—with a scoffing laugh that positively chilled the blood in his companion's veins. This man, with all his presumption, would never venture to behave with such freedom had not his vicar fallen very low in his estimation. So the clergyman believed, at any rate. But even now he was not prepared for what was to follow.'

'Look here, Russell,' the other said, bending forward in his chair and speaking with a show of indulgent good-nature. 'I understand. I'm just as cocksure as you are that Clarke's bill was settled within an hour after I left this house! I'm out and out certain, too, that you haven't twenty pounds to repay—well, call it the loan! You make a friend of me, and I'll do my best for you. Come now. 'Tain't every man would, after as much.'

Nor, had the confidence been accorded, would he have betrayed the trust. Only to be recognised and acknowledged by the vicar as a benefactor was his sole desire. He had really no wish to lower the cleric in the eyes of the world, or to see pretty Ena's father—he was quite fond of Ena, he assured himself at this point—publicly dishonoured.

For a few seconds there was silence in the room, a silence which could be felt. Then, very slowly, and with a face of ashen whiteness, Charles Russell rose to his feet. 'Sir! Mr Wakelin!' he thundered. 'Do you dare to harbour such an opinion of me, and to tell me of it to my face? Go!' pointing to the door, 'go, and do your worst! But never cross my threshold again.—Go!' as the other, in pure astonishment at the outburst, remained motionless. 'Again I command you, go, lest I forget my office, and kick you out of the door!'

'Father, there's a gentleman named Daintry down-stairs in the drawing-room, who is very anxious— Oh, I beg your pardon! I thought you were alone,' were the words that interrupted this crisis, giving Mr Wakelin time to gather his

wits together, and falling like cooling drops upon the flame of the clergyman's ire. But it was the manufacturer who replied to Ena's announcement.

'He will be in a second! I'm off! And don't you suppose I'll ever bother you with another offer of help. Miss Russell, you needn't come to my house again. The missis can find some un better than a thief's daughter to teach my little gals. Good-morning to you.' With which parting shot he departed, stamping down the stairs in a fury, and slamming the hall door behind him; yet carrying away a conviction, which had been growing stronger during every moment of the interview, a conviction of Charles Russell's entire innocence. That it was a conviction which he intended neither to act upon nor admit, did not in the least prevent his recognition of its presence in his most unwilling mind.

'BARRA IN THE MINCH.'

'THE real Barra is in the Minch,' said the speaker sententiously; and then added, with emphasis, 'the real, rich, valuable Barra is under the sea; the rock they call Barra is only for the huts and the landing of the boats.'

While there is much truth in this, where a fleet of six or seven hundred splendid herring-boats fill Castle Bay with wealth and activity, yet there is another Barra above water of much interest. Although 'far amid the melancholy main,' with the solan geese from St Kilda flitting constantly about it, the island is by no means the miserable rock we are occasionally informed by those who have not made it a study, or who have only seen the herring-debris-covered rocks. The bay itself, formed by the island of Vatersay, lying opposite, is a splendid haven; and the old castle of the McNeills on the islet off the pier gives a look of picturesque antiquity to the general view. Vatersay sands whiten and brighten the opposite shore of this great herring centre. The North Harbour is scarcely inferior to Castle Bay itself, and enables every portion of the waters surrounding, whether towards the Atlantic or the Minch, to be fished with safety. Although little over a thousand feet in height, the position of the island makes the view extensive and commanding; and during the herring-fishing season it is also a wonderfully busy and interesting scene that presents itself to the eye from the summit. The Laurentian rocks have been triturated by the constant gales rubbing the loose stones and particles violently together, until considerable humus has been formed in places; while the western shore is a magnificent stretch of the finest sand, that is ever shifting and lifting under the restless winds and waves. These sands were a constant source of danger to the adjoining arable land, where the western valley slopes to the sea, until a former factor succeeded in fixing the higher stretches by planting bent thereon. This has continued to extend, with its long siliceous roots that bind the shifty particles together, until a great extension of grazing land has succeeded.

Over this ground the botanist may ramble with amazement and delight, wondering how, even in the early spring, when Skye is black and dreary, these inner sands are rich in verdure and gay with flowers. This is the more surprising as the sands are mostly silicious, with far less admixture of disintegrated shells than might have been anticipated. For the wild coast outside only permits the limpet to flourish, and even these are few in number, and must maintain a most precarious existence. But the mild air, moisture-laden from the south-west, however violent at times, is kindly in its result; and even amid the apparently barren rocks of Castle Bay, flowering plants are numerous throughout the year. One gentleman in July gathered somewhere about two hundred; whilst a party of students in a few hours' ramble round the island during August collected within twenty-five of the same number. Wherever any humus had gathered, these plants were numerous and varied. To this humus the sea has added to an important extent, more especially within the last generation. For the great herring and cod and ling fisheries mean a collection of debris sufficient to enrich a great extent of arable land if properly employed. But here we find a strange commingling of care and recklessness on the part of the inhabitants, who fight violently over every square yard of land, and yet throw into the sea the hundreds of tons of herring garbage that ought to be transferred from 'Barra in the Minch' to Barra that rears its head above it.

The people of Barra are a race of hardy seafarers, and are admirable boatmen, while they possess a very considerable stock of clever ponies among them. These ponies are considered the lineal descendants of the Spanish ponies of the Armada, and have always been famous trotters across the mile of sand of Cockle Bay which is their favourite raceground. The ponies, too, have done the work elsewhere allocated to the women in the Hebrides, and with their panniers have carried the peats from the higher moors to the clachans. The crupper spoils the look of the ponies for sale, unless caught at an early age; but the use of these animals has probably been beneficial to the women, saving them from exhausting hard work when very young. However this may be, the men of Barra do not compare in physique with those of Lewis, whose women undergo the burden and heat of the day to a greater extent.

In old days the food of the people is said to have largely consisted of cockles boiled in milk; but of late years a large business has been done in sending tons of cockles from the famous bay to the English markets. Great recklessness has as usual been shown in the depletion of these beds, whenever the prospect of gain stimulates the regardless use of what is common property. So long as they were only used for local consumption, they stood the strain for centuries; but when shipped without consideration in the wrong

season, and no care given to the beds, the result has been very injurious, and may remain so for a time.

In the old 'kitchen middens' of some extent in the west, shellfish are the prevalent remains, along with occasional fragments of the antlers of the deer. These could scarcely have belonged to this small island, and were probably the result of raids elsewhere by the turbulent M'Neills, whose stronghold on an islet in the sea rather points to a race of seafarers. Indeed, whoever seeks to enjoy Barra must be almost amphibious. Peat grows plentifully on the western slopes, and assumes strange appearances where the swift streamlets from the heights undermine it in long subterranean passages, with occasional larger cuttings, as if underground dwellings were about.

The pasturage, as we have seen, is rich and varied, and a fine stock of Highland cattle browse on the north end of the island, which herd at one time belonged to a brother of the famous Macgillivray, whose classic descriptions of the haunts of the sea-fowl may have been largely gathered from these wild Hebridean shores.

Barra out of the Minch is indeed well deserving of closer study, while 'Barra in the Minch' has not yet been developed to its fullest possibilities. This quaint corner is an epitome of the old times and the new. The fish-pond alongside the old castle, with the garden near the shore opposite in a little dell, are indications of the mode of existence of the chief; while the huts of loose stones and turf, the thatch green with verdure, the oats and potatoes scrambling amongst the rocks, tell of the desperate struggle for existence of the old-time vassal. Then the old broch nodding at the Atlantic tells of a still prior ownership; while the M'Neills' judgment-seat, with the place of execution just behind, recalls the rude prompt autocracy of the feudal times.

A short stroll leads to the less picturesque but more important modern conditions, where rival curers have erected wooden shanties, and piers, and curing-houses; and the air, and rocks, and water force on nose, and feet, and eyes the presence of King Herring. It brings into the island much money; it eliminates the old-world simplicity and purity of life. Although Roman Catholicism still controls the multitude, and the bottle of holy-water is hung on the bow of the boat, contact with the outer world has emancipated the minds of the people to a large extent. They still potter away over a few yards of oats or a patch of potato-land. They still spend too much time with their hands in their pockets. They still remain too often ashore when they might do well digging deep from 'Barra in the Minch.' But this time of transition will pass. They have become dissatisfied with their condition; this will lead to dissatisfaction with themselves, the first stimulus to future advance. The steamer of The Island Route has been gradually creating a new Barra, and a small town has already replaced the clachan of a dozen years ago. The failing fisheries will return, and 'Barra in the Minch' be gradually transferred to Barra that so boldly and gracefully dominates the western seas.

There is an admirable and well-managed modern hotel, built by Lady Gordon Cathcart, to develop the island; so that no inconvenience need be experienced by the ordinary visitor. A run

from Oban, therefore, can be readily made, and a dip taken, with little hardship on a summer day, into quaint old-world conditions far removed from the experience of the ordinary citizen.

MORE HOSPITAL STORIES.

POLICEMEN IN HOSPITAL.

By G. B. BURGIN.

POLICEMAN X 274 was inclined to be pessimistic, although convalescent. Whenever I could spare time from my other duties in the hospital, I would run into his ward and remind him that although he had been hard hit by a brick on the back of the head in a street row, life still had its compensations. There yet remained a little formality to be gone through on his complete recovery, when he was to be presented with a small cheque by the presiding magistrate of his district for having tackled Redheaded Mike single-handed, and utterly unmindful of the affectionate tokens of regard showered down on him in the shape of anything which came handy by the enthusiastic friends of that Ilibernian swash-buckler. One of these tokens—namely, the brick—had smashed in his head; but the head of Policeman X 274 was very thick; so was his helmet; hence the brick had only incapacitated the worthy policeman from duty for some two months, and not 'kilt him entirely.' Still, Policeman X 274 remained pessimistic. He said that the brick had not only upset him, but his theories as well, and that he now felt it his duty to become an ardent Conservative. This was after I had enlarged on the practical part of Socialism to be met with in London slums. Policeman X 274 raised himself up in bed, and waving an imaginary truncheon, delivered himself thus:

'You'll excuse me, ma'am, for contradicting my betters; but Socialism's mostly talk. So is all other "isms," if you looks into 'em on your beat of rainy nights, when you've got time to think things out. Folks preaches Socialism and travels first-class. When a man here and there acts up to it, he's mostly queer in his head, and we generally runs him in. They all talks of going shares, these Socialists; but it's mostly other men's property they wants to divide. In the "force," we most of us sticks to our own shirts and handkerchiefs—when we've got any. There was a young Doctor I knew, ma'am—used to see him on my beat frequent—who'd talk to anybody, and give away his clothes ever so free. This young Doctor used to attend Socialist meetings when he was on duty, and the other Sawbones would chaff him because he hadn't time for nothing else. The hall where these meetings was held was on my beat, and sometimes people would be a bit thirsty.

'Socialists in the back streets, having nothing to lose, is apt to pick up odds and ends permissive-like sometimes, and somebody's got to be run in. This young Doctor kept on spouting at the meetings till the other doctors got sick of equality and the rights of man. Everything down was to go up, and everything up was to go down.

'Well, one night, there was a man knocked

down, and me and a mate took him to the hospital. Just as we was standing in the entrance, the young Doctor came running up very excited like. "Officer," he says, "come in here and arrest 'em all. They've stolen everything they could lay their hands on." So I goes up to his room, and there was nothing in it but a carpet. Curtains, pictures, furniture, were all gone. Then he takes me to one room with a gray-haired surgeon sitting in an armchair and wearing a smoking-cap. "Officer, do your dooty," he says. "That's my chair and cap, and he's got my best trousers on." Then he takes me to another. "Officer, this fellow's stolen my table, and bed, and washstand."—"Don't be an idiot," says this man, quietly smoking. "In the first place, you've got to prove it's your bed; in the second place, you've no more right to this bed than I have: each man is as good as any other man; and when a man hasn't got a bed, the best thing he can do is to take some one else's and stick to it—if he can." And so they all went on, till he began to see I couldn't take up the whole hospital staff, and promised to give up Socialism if they'd return his things, which they did, and stood him such a supper afterwards, he couldn't tell who'd got his trousers and who wore his cap.'

After Policeman X 274 got well, his chief idea was to testify his gratitude to me by bringing 'cases' whenever there was a chance. One evening he came to the hospital with a small but mischievous-looking boy. 'Do you know this youngster, nurse?' he asked.

'No.'

Policeman X 274 was disappointed. 'I thought you knew everything, ma'am. This youngster can't tell his name, but said something about a hospital. Just come from the seaside. Put in charge of an old lady at Brighton. Old lady very deaf. Told us to take him to the hospital: she didn't want him. He'd pulled all the feathers out of her parrot. If you could have seen that parrot, you'd have believed it. He was as naked as original sin, ma'am, and twice as ugly.'

Policeman X 274 departed; but the doctor in charge objected to giving the child a bed for the night. The child, however, was evidently used to hospitals, and proceeded to make himself comfortable. The next morning, his anxious parents appeared on the scene, as well as the old lady, the latter explaining that it was the parrot she had wanted taken to a hospital, but that the stupid policeman had gone off with the child, and left her precious bird in a state of nudity. Fortunately, it was warm weather, and she hoped her dear parrot would get over his scandalous treatment. I rubbed a little vaseline on the bird's ungainly person, and she went away contented.

Policeman X 274 wiped his perspiring brow when the old lady had departed, parrot and all, and accepted a douceur from the boy's grateful parents with an ease evidently the result of long practice.

'That's what comes of trying to do your dooty, ma'am,' he said. 'It's usually the tother way round, though. All the women are very kind, and it's the men don't like us. The old ladies from the country always calls us "officer"'

or "sergeant," and though you know they're "kidding" you, it's pleasant, all the same. But men are always pleased when a bobby comes to grief. I was trying to get into a 'bus once, and slipped. I daren't let go of the handrail, and was dragged along on my stummick half-way down Cheapside. The conductor was up on top and didn't see me, and no one inside tried to stop the 'bus 'cept a sweet old lady who asked her husband to interfere. He looked out. "Oh, it's only a bobby," he says, without lifting his hand; "and there's plenty more of 'em where he comes from. They're always dragging other people through the dirt. Now, it's his turn." Americans are very different. One old lady tried to get me to go to New York to take care of her, and said she wished the police would emigrate there, 'stead of the Irish.

But the duties of the London police are not confined to looking after the welfare of old ladies. When an unfortunate man has attempted to commit suicide, he is generally taken into a hospital by policemen, one of whom accompanies him to the ward and remains there until he is relieved by another member of the force in plain clothes. From that moment up to the day of the patient's departure, a policeman is in constant charge. If a man has tried to kill himself by jumping through a window, he is often picked up with a broken leg, sometimes two. When he is settled in bed, he is comparatively safe; at any rate, there is no fear of his getting up; but he has to be watched always. Patients who have attempted to commit suicide are kept under observation, even if they may appear to be thoroughly sorry for what they have done. A man who has cut his throat might do himself harm by meddling with the bandages, although in cases of this kind they are specially planned to reduce the risk of interference. X 274 once brought in a pretty young girl who had jumped out of a window and broken one thigh. She puzzled me at first, with her low sweet voice and beautiful Irish eyes. All who saw her felt that the tragic side of life was before them, and that this poor girl had been cruelly treated by

Fate, Fortune, Chance, whose kindness,
Hostility, or blindness,
Plays such strange freaks with human destinies.

It transpired, however, her temper was very bad, and that after a few words with her husband about 'another lady,' she had thrown herself out of the window 'to spite him.' He came to the hospital and assured her that she had no reason to be jealous at all, and evidently thought there was nothing unusual in the step, or jump, rather, which she had taken to prove her superiority to other wives.

Sometimes X 274 would bring to the hospital elderly people who had made very feeble attempts to do themselves bodily harm. They settled down so comfortably in the ward, and were so glad to get there, that the presence of a policeman seemed a farce. They had no intention whatever of making any further attempts on their lives, because the first one had given them all they wanted: they were in the required haven, with every intention of making a very gradual recovery. There the policeman on duty would—especially if it were X 274—prove an

acquisition to the whole ward, and lend a hand at any job which did not take him too far from his charge's bed. Generally, he and his charge would play draughts or dominoes, and discuss Home Rule in the intervals between games. As a rule, a member of the force is a more desirable caretaker than an ordinary male attendant who thinks—as one of them told me—that 'minding deleterious patients [I think he meant 'delirious'] is an easy way of earning a living.'

Policeman X 274 when on duty in the ward suffered much mental anguish from the different views taken of his interesting charges by casual visitors. 'Dear me,' said one elderly spinster, 'do you mean to say that man actually tried to cut his throat?—How very interesting!' Then she turned to her companion: 'Tried to cut his throat, my dear!—Would you mind asking him, officer, if he did it with a razor or a kitchen knife?' In this instance the 'patient' had some sense of humour. Raising himself on one elbow, he beckoned the visitor to approach. 'I allers does it with a chopper,' he said with a ghastly chuckle. 'You wait till I git out, and if you likes to come down our Court, I'll show yer.'

Very poor people, as a rule, who had 'a friend or brother there,' as the poet puts it, were not much shocked by the awful nature of such a deed as attempted self-murder. They would often discuss the pros and cons with X 274 quite dispassionately, and seldom asked when his 'patient' would be discharged. In the first place, they usually did not want him back; and in the second, they knew that there was a little indispensable formality before a magistrate which might necessitate a certain period of imprisonment ere the 'patient' was allowed to return home again.

I soon got on very friendly terms indeed with X 274. He brought in accidents, called for reports, carried wounded children to me, or discovered their friends in a manner which was simply marvellous. I had only to tell X 274 I wanted the relations of a wounded child; and he would shortly return with a whole crowd of people, who invariably told me that 'the gentleman said you wanted us, ma'am, and that if we didn't come at once, begorra, he'd make us.'

'Yes, ma'am; I finds "workus ladies" very trying, poor old bodies,' X 274 one day admitted in response to a question of mine. 'There was one old lady who got to know me so well, I hadn't the heart to spoil her enjoyment. "Now, you dear good man," she used to say to me, "I've had sixpence subscribed by a few kind friends for a little liquid refreshment. Here is twopence (she never said "tuppence," like most people. She'd been a real lady, she had—kept a school once) for you in case the—the sun gets to my head, when I shall expect you to have the goodness to escort me to Lockhart's Cocoa Rooms, and to call for me after I have had a slight nap."—The "sun" got to her head reg'lar, ma'am, and I'd take her to the cocoa place, and make her comfortable in a corner, and fetch her some tea when it got out again. They knew her ways at "The House," and never got uneasy about her. When I was off duty, I'd slip into plain clothes, offer her my arm, and take the old lady back again in style. "Policeman, I thank you for your

courtesy," she'd say to me, with a little old-fashioned bow. "You have a feeling heart, and I hope you will one day become an Inspector." Then the poor old body would toddle in and go to bed quite happy. One day, "the Duchess" (that's what they called her) didn't come. She'd asked 'em to give her little old Bible to "that dear, good, patient policeman, with her love;" and then she died. I changed my beat after that. I couldn't stand it when her reg'lar day out came round and she didn't turff up.

'Now, factory girls is different,' continued X 274 meditatively. 'I was going over Waterloo Bridge one day, and my helmet come off in the rain and wind. I ran after it. "Don't kick it, sir; please, don't kick it," said a voice. I stopped to see what was the matter, and the helmet rolled under a wagon wheel and was squashed. "Got yer that time, sergeant," said the voice. It was one of them cheeky factory girls, ma'am, and she'd done it on purpose, to get my helmet squashed.'

'It's anxious work being on a City beat,' reminiscently continued X 274. 'You get to know a lot about other folks' business too. It's amazin' what old ladies will do. Why, I've had one stand in the middle of a crossing and explain she'd just been to the Bank. Then she'd put her hand up to her chest in an anxious sort of way, so as any thief within a mile could see where she'd shoved her money. I've actually seen old ladies from the country stand just inside a Bank and put their money into their under-pockets or the bosom of their gowns. They'll do the same thing coming out of stockbrokers' offices, and then be surprised they're robbed. I often wonder any of 'em gets home safe, though some country folks in 'town are mighty suspicious. The young men who come up on 'scursions hides their watches in their trousers pockets and forgets to tuck in the chain. It's wonderful work being on a beat nigh Exeter Hall, too, when the May Meetings is on. A rum lot of people comes to those meetings, and they're mostly main pleased with themselves. Noah's Ark isn't in it when it comes to some of the clothes the old uns wear. The young uns mostly gets new boots to come to town in, and tries to seem as if they didn't hurt; but you see 'em looking in all the windows, and standing on one leg to ease the other foot.'

'The old Quaker ladies as come to town for their meetings is very different, and mostly smells of lavender all over. There was one old lady I remember at Charing Cross once. She'd got into the wrong 'bus, and the conductor handed her over to me to look after. She was just like a bit of old china or a wax image, and had white ribbons to her bonnet, and a bit of white stuff round her throat to match her snow-white hair. She must have been about eighty. When I took her across the street and put her in the right 'bus, she stretched out her little bit of a hand and shook my big un quite heartily, and says: "Friend, I am much obliged to thee. When thou art eighty, I hope the dear Lord will raise up as good a friend for thee. Lord bless thee." But they ain't all like her.'

The next time I saw Policeman X 274 he was brought in on a stretcher, after having stopped a pair of runaway horses. I insisted that I should

nurse him. During his delirium, I found out that at one period of his career he must have been a coachman. He'd sit up in bed quietly enough and then begin to pull off his quilt and fold it up tidily, saying he shouldn't want a rug, and would have it on the driving-box. Then he'd talk to the horses, as if he could see them, or begin to fold up his blanket just like the counterpane. When he started on the sheet, I would go quietly up to him and say: 'I think it's going to rain to-day; I wouldn't fold up the rug if I were you. Just keep it across your knees. Then you'll be all right.' He would answer me quite sensibly: 'Very well; that's 'll right. A shower 'll lay the dust.' Now, he's pulling round a little, and will be taken off to the country as soon as he's able to move. There are rumours of promotion and another presentation when he comes back. He deserves both.

IS AN ICE AGE PERIODIC?

THERE was a period in the distant past, we are told, when the climate over the northern hemisphere, above the fortieth parallel of latitude, was far more genial and equable than it is at present. During many consecutive ages this vast region enjoyed an alternation of long mild summers and short mild winters. In the vicinity of the Pole the earth was free from the incubus of the desolating ice-sheet, for even the circumscribed area of glaciation coeval with the period of human history had no existence.

A climatic condition so beneficent is delightful to contemplate. The more inviting does it appear in recollection of recent wayward tendencies of the British weather, such as sharp and protracted winters, ungenial summers, and generally mixed and uncertain seasons. Then the pleasure of confident belief that Boreas, the blustering terror of the year, was deposed, and his throne dissolved for several thousand years; that no more could the tyrant vent his fitful moods in icy blasts that skirmish into the heart of spring, and even chill the breath of summer. No creeping glacier or crushing icefloe would paralyse the efforts of Arctic adventure. The Pole itself, and the North-west Passage, once the goals of heroic endeavour, would be accessible to the ubiquitous tourist, whose course would lie along pleasant waterways, and in sight of shores clothed in the luxuriant verdure of almost perennial summer.

But disastrously for such fanciful speculation there is the dual nature of the cosmos to be reckoned with. The universal law of compensation balances one extreme of vicissitude by imposing another of a precisely opposite character. The genial period would be merely an oscillation—a swing in one direction of the terrestrial pendulum. The long period of warmth and luxuriance must be preceded, or followed, by that calamitous agency an Ice Age of equal duration.

At such time the heat energy of the then short fierce summer is ineffectual to dissipate the cumulative effects of the long cold winters. Immense glaciers would be formed—glaciation would gradually spread southwards from the Pole until a considerable portion of the northern hemisphere,

including the greater part of Britain, was buried beneath an ice-sheet one thousand feet or more in thickness. The natural features of the land would be torn and scarred, the population driven out or destroyed, and the puny works of man ground and pulverised into effacement by the enormous abrading and crushing force of the moving masses of ice.

A vast interval of time has elapsed since the end of what is known as the Great Ice Age. The tracks of the glaciers are plainly visible. The glacial deposits, clay, moraines, and boulders, are abundant and distinct. But the testimony of the rocks is imperfect as regards a correct approximation of the period when that stupendous phenomenon prevailed; and absolutely void of evidence respecting its recurrence in the future. So vast and incomprehensible are the intervals of time involved in these cyclic changes, that such a tremendous agency might well be thought peculiar to a long past geological epoch. An ice age has therefore been regarded as an evolutionary phase of the distant past impossible to recur. So far from having only an archaeological interest, ice ages are not without significance for the future of the human race, however remote. The agencies that produce them are still operative. An ice age will assumably occur when the earth's orbital situation again favours glacial development.

It is probable that from time to time certain stages in the earth's perturbation may transiently influence climate in a minor degree. A series of cold winters and cheerless summers, for example, may find an explanation in planetary influence. Indeed, Sir Robert Ball refers to these cold winters as premonitory of the dread climatic vicissitude, an ice age, which he maintains is destined to recur within a measurable, though distant, period.

A distinction must be held between weather periodicity and the gigantic cycle of climatic change. Sun-spots, for instance, influence the weather from year to year. But their influence is fleeting, and well within the limit of normal climatic range. The great sun-spot of February 13, 1892, indicated a maximum of solar activity. Resultant maxima in certain terrestrial phenomena were evidenced by unusual magnetic perturbations, remarkable auroral displays, terrible inundations and tornadoes in America, and a disastrous hurricane in Mauritius. It was suggested that a sun-spot of such unusual magnitude and grandeur, by affecting solar radiation, might have caused the sudden fall in temperature which followed its passage across the solar disc. Sun-spots, however, do not so affect solar radiation. Probably the true cause of thermal fluctuation at such times is atmospheric disturbance by the magnetic property of the solar heat-rays.

From century to century the relative position of the earth in the plane of its orbit is, within certain limits, never precisely the same. The form of the earth's orbit and the direction of the earth's axis are constantly changing. These two perturbations constitute two distinct cycles of change, differing vastly in the time of their completion. Their progressive motion is exceedingly slow. The utmost limit of orbital eccentricity is only attained in a gigantic period of time. But during the waxing and waning of the orbit there are many revolutions of the line

of equinoxes, caused by the polar rotation of the earth, each rotation occupying a net period of twenty-one thousand years. There are also slight and temporary aberrations of the earth from its true orbital path. These may exercise some passing meteorological effect; but they have no bearing whatever upon climatic change.

The planets of our system are tugging at each other with prodigious might; so great is the energy of planetary attraction, that when expressed in tons it surpasses comprehension. One result of these disturbing forces is to alter the earth's nearly circular orbit into an elliptical course, which as gradually changes back again into the circular. The utmost attainable eccentricity of the orbit would by itself appear to be too unimportant to cause extensive glaciation. The orbital form must therefore be associated with the polar rotation. This is a kind of swaying motion of the Pole about the axis, something similar to that of a spinning-top when about to fall. The Pole describes a circle in the heavens, causing an apparent revolution in a contrary direction of the twelve constellations in the ecliptic known as the signs of the zodiac. As the earth sweeps along in its majestic course, a consequent small annual change in the direction of its axis brings the point where the equator intersects the ecliptic a trifle farther to the eastward of the position of the preceding year. An apparent retrograde motion of the ecliptic results, which is known as the precession of the equinoxes. A complete revolution of the line of equinoxes occupies a net period of twenty-one thousand years.

It is therefore not the eccentricity of the orbit alone, nor the polar rotation alone, that can produce an ice age or a genial age, but a certain obliquity of the orbit, which is the combined and net result of both the perturbations. The effect of the earth's position at the period of greatest orbital eccentricity is to disportion the length of the seasons, and the mean daily sun-heat, in either hemisphere, and thereby to induce two opposite climatic extremes, glaciation in one hemisphere co-existent with interglaciation in the other hemisphere. An ice age, say, in the northern hemisphere, and a genial age in the southern hemisphere for a period of ten thousand five hundred years. Then, as the Pole swings round half a circle, and inclines the earth's axis in an opposite direction, the southern hemisphere becomes glaciated, and the northern hemisphere genial, for a like period. So slow are the terrestrial motions which contribute to these phenomena, and so vast a period must consequently elapse before the earth can extricate itself from its extreme position, that two or more ice ages may alternately occur in either hemisphere.

The astronomical theory of climatic change is attractively set forth in Sir Robert Ball's admirable little treatise on the subject. While properly disclaiming any particular novelty for the facts and inferences, the theory is therein discussed in the modest and unpretentious spirit of true scientific research; and the argument is conveyed in such familiar terms, that any lay reader possessing a rudimentary knowledge of planetary motion can readily grasp and assimilate the conclusions.

At first sight it is difficult to realise the ade-

quacy of the greatest attainable obliquity of the earth's orbit combined with the polar rotation to produce the extraordinary thermal changes claimed as a consequence. With reference to this difficulty, Sir Robert Ball emphasises two essential elements in the astronomical theory. Misconception of them has hitherto vitiated deduction from planetary perturbation: one of those elements is the comparatively small diminution of solar heat necessary to set up glaciation; the other is the true 'proportion of summer and winter sun-heat received by either hemisphere.

In estimating the thermal changes requisite to induce extensive glaciation, it would be entirely wrong to reckon the heat given out by the sun according to the average measure of summer and winter heat upon the earth. Suppose these to be respectively sixty degrees and thirty degrees; the proper zero to reckon from will be the temperature of space, which, at a very moderate estimate, will be three hundred degrees below the zero of Fahrenheit. Therefore, the entire heat given out by the sun, reckoned from the temperature of space, will be respectively three hundred and sixty degrees and three hundred and thirty degrees. Consequently, a reduction of the earth's summer or winter heat to the zero of Fahrenheit would constitute a loss of only one-twelfth or one-eleventh of the entire heat given out by the sun.

Then as regards the due proportion of sun-heat. The heat-measure received by the whole earth must be considered as a constant quantity, every year alike. But the vital point in this connection is that the yearly heat-measure received in either hemisphere is unequally distributed over the year, in a fixed and unchangeable proportion. Suppose the yearly heat-measure in either hemisphere be denoted by the number 100; then the proportion of summer heat will be 63, and of winter heat 37—no matter what may be the value of the yearly heat-measure received by the whole earth, no matter what degree of eccentricity the earth's orbit may have attained. At all times, and in every aspect of perturbation, the proportions in either hemisphere will be 63 and 37.

At the present time, in the northern hemisphere the sun is above the equator one hundred and eighty-six days of the year—that is to say, the summer in the northern hemisphere is now seven days longer than the summer in the southern hemisphere. Were the earth's orbit to permanently retain its present form, this difference of seven days in the seasons of the two hemispheres, being about the relative maximum, would continue to alternate between the two hemispheres in accordance with the direction of the earth's axis.

But when, in the lapse of ages, the earth's orbit reaches its greatest eccentricity, the difference in the length of the seasons in the two hemispheres will amount to thirty-three days. One hemisphere will then enjoy a long spring-like summer of 199 days with 229 heat-measures, and a short mild winter of 166 days with 136 heat-measures. The climatic conditions of the other hemisphere will be exactly the reverse of these. During the same period it will experience a short, fierce summer of 166 days with 229 heat-

measures, and a long rigorous winter over which will be spread only 136 mean daily heat-measures. The climate in the one hemisphere will be genial; that in the other hemisphere will be glacial. Notwithstanding the greater heat of the glacial summer, the earth passing much more rapidly through its perihelion, and the season being so much shorter, the fervid sun-heat will be inadequate to dissipate the accumulating deposits of the long cold winter. Great glaciers will form, and the desolating ice-sheet will spread itself over a vast area—a stupendous agency of destruction and calamity.

The astronomical theory of an ice age advances not one step beyond a simple thesis based upon demonstrable results of scientific research. The precise extent of planetary attraction, and its effect in periodically dragging the earth into an elliptical path, are familiar enough to the astronomer; and the resultant thermal changes are assumably calculable. The main purpose of the theory is to approximate the periods of these great climatic vicissitudes which the testimony of the rocks, however full and conclusive in other respects, is too imperfect to reveal. Thus the astronomer, with his unassailable evidence, comes to the aid of the geologist. In the astronomical theory he exhibits a potent agency in the cosmical evolution, and supplies a unit and a measure to hitherto indeterminate periods of geological time.

An ice age, as Sir Robert Ball reminds us, is not catastrophic. There is no sudden transition from smiling luxuriance to bitter desolation. The development of this stupendous phenomenon is as gradual as the planetary configuration that brings it forth. Very many generations of men will flourish and pass away before even the initial stage of another ice age is reached. Whether the next ice age will be as severe and overwhelming as that which has left its indelible traces upon the face of nature, or whether its intensity will be modified by the altered condition of the earth, is a question more properly in the domain of the physiographer.

MEMORIES.

A SONG.

O LOVE, since we two bade good-bye,
The regal roses' rich perfume
But calls the wild tears to my eyes,
And brings me dreams of pain and gloom.
'Twas 'mong the roses, O Sweetheart,
That all our farewell words were said;
Each summer from their graves they rise;
But you to me are dead, are dead.

The dearest treasure that I hold
Is just one rose your lips did kiss;
His golden store no miser hoards
Nor prizes more than I do this;
Yet bitter are the tears mine eyes
Upon its withered petals shed;
Poor ghost of glory once mine own,
Like it, your love is dead, is dead.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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EGYPT FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

THE Archæological Survey of Egypt undertaken by the Egyptian Exploration Fund is proceeding under favourable auspices, and the results of each year's discoveries seem of increasing interest. Last year, several artists were sent out to make fac-simile drawings of the wall-paintings in tombs belonging to the eleventh and twelfth dynasties—that is, of a period about two to three thousand years B.C., or approximately five thousand years ago. These drawings, supplemented by portions of the original wall of a tomb which had been shattered by an earthquake, rendering the removal possible without any destruction on the part of the explorers, have recently been exhibited at the residence of the Marquis of Bute, and present many special points of interest. The freshness and beauty of the pigments employed in these very ancient frescoes are most remarkable. We are accustomed to look with wonder at the works of what we call the 'old masters,' and to think the colouring of Orcagna, Cimabue, and Giotto marvellous after the lapse of five or six centuries; but here we get colours which have stood the test of ten times that period, and yet retain their freshness and beauty almost unimpaired, so that you may trace the delicate gradations in the plumage of a bird, and thus classify numerous varieties of ducks, evidently domesticated and carefully bred; and even in the hieroglyphics the birds are so carefully portrayed that the species designed is easily recognisable. Three species of domesticated dogs appear with characteristics resembling those of to-day. There is a great lean-bodied, long-legged creature which might be the ancestor of our greyhound; but the legs are much thicker, and it is altogether more clumsy and less graceful. Then there is a dog possessing the characteristics of the boarhound, but with a mottled coat somewhat resembling that of a tortoiseshell cat. This colouring is also observable in the third species of dog, which has a strong affinity with the modern spitz or 'dachshund,' having a long body

and short bandy legs; but the latter characteristic is not so decidedly marked as at the present day. This little dog would seem to have been a favourite with the Egyptians at that remote period, for two of the kind are depicted, a male and female, one accompanying a lady in a close palanquin. It may here be remarked that a dog very closely resembling the one here portrayed is still found in South Africa, where it is bred and highly esteemed by the Hottentots, who even make the women nurse the puppies with their own children. This dog, known as a 'brach-hond,' is long-bodied and short-legged, but not so bandy-legged as the dachshund; the colouring also is more like that of the ancient Egyptian dog, being mottled, and often spotted with red like a cow.

There is also a cat, large and gaunt and fierce, certainly not our domestic tabby, but something approaching to the wild-cat. Whether this was the variety dedicated to Pasht, and of which so many mummies are found, can hardly be determined by the painting; but probably it was intended to represent that sacred animal.

The types of mankind shown on these very early paintings are of peculiar interest. There is the swarthy Egyptian ploughman, holding the primitive wooden plough, not, however, of the earliest type, which was only a crooked pointed stick driven by hand, whereas this is drawn by an ox, and has a cross-handle, painted red. Then there are the bearers of the palanquin, two of whom appear to be shaven, as was the manner of the Egyptians; whilst a third wears a full crop of hair or a wig, probably to denote superior rank. In another painting, rank is shown by the leopard-skin robe, worn apparently by an overseer, who is directing two workmen; and it may be remarked that even to the present day the leopard skin denotes the priestly caste, medicine-man, or chieftainship, in all parts of Africa.

Perhaps the most interesting of the human figures depicted is a group, or rather procession, of red-haired, light-skinned, blue-eyed people, supposed to be Lybians, the men bearing in their

hands crooked clubs resembling boomerangs, and having other weapons, notably a huge knife, thrust through their shaggy red hair; whilst the women carry their children in baskets on their backs; and two are depicted bearing monkeys instead of children. Conventionally, the Egyptian women are always represented as much lighter in colour than the men, and two groups in these paintings are especially remarkable. In one, two women are represented standing facing each other, one foot raised, touching that of the adversary, one hand being also placed on that of the other, whilst a round object, supposed to be a bladder, is attached by a long string to the hair of each at the back, hanging down to the shoulders. This is evidently a game, in which the performers whirl round and strike each other with the ball or bladder attached to the hair; and it is easy to see that, if the ball were not very light, the game might be an exceedingly rough one. In the other group, two women tossing balls are seated on the backs of two other women, the supposition being that when they fail to catch, they in turn become horses for the others. These two games of ball strike one as new, and especially noteworthy from the performers being women. The great peculiarity in all these human figures is the extraordinary length of the fingers and toes. In those days, it was evidently a mark of beauty to have a long foot and hand, and the artists must have complimented their subjects by exaggeration in these points.

Here, too, we may see the mode of making fire in the twenty-fifth century B.C., for we see a man represented using a fire-drill such as is still in use among some uncivilised races, which consists of a thong or bowstring twisted round a pointed stick, inserted in a very dry board, the thong being pulled rapidly backwards and forwards until fire is produced by friction. This is of course an advance upon the earlier practice of rubbing two sticks together, which is the custom among very primitive savages, and upon the drill twirled in the hand, which is also still in use.

The figures and hieroglyphs of these tombs, which are situated in the rocky ground on the east bank of the Nile, in the provinces of Minieh and Assiut, in Upper Egypt, differ from the generality of Egyptian hieroglyphs, which are usually incised in the granite, whereas, in these the figures having been first traced on the stone, the interspaces were then chipped away, leaving the design in relief, these raised figures being afterwards very carefully and beautifully painted. The Arabs have taken advantage of this raised-work, and have diligently chipped away the figures from all the fragments which have fallen into their hands, either out of pure love of destruction, or more probably in order to sell the painted hieroglyphs thus detached as amulets. This shows the necessity for completing the Survey as soon as possible, in order to preserve these precious relics of hoar antiquity from the hands of the modern spoiler, for the value of these paintings and hieroglyphs in illustrating the history of the world cannot be over-estimated. In them we see life as it existed in the most civilised country of the world three thousand years and more before the birth of Christ; the manners and customs, dress, and even the amuse-

ments of this remote time are here revealed to us. We can trace their commerce with distant lands, their modes of navigation and agriculture, their method of trapping birds, as well as the game they hunted and the water-fowl they domesticated, all so faithfully delineated as to be unimpeachable witnesses of the truth of ancient historical records; whilst the inscriptions enlighten us as to the names and exploits of their rulers, probably with some exaggerations and embellishments, yet on the whole trustworthy as to matters of fact, and incidentally throwing light upon much that is obscure in the writings of ancient historians, both biblical and secular.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXII.

Night brings us stars, as sorrow shows us truths :
Though many, yet they help not ; bright, they light not ;
They are too late to serve us ; and sad things
Are aye too true. We never see the stars
Till we can see nought but them. So with truth.

BAILEY.

'SAGE.'

No answer.

'Sage !' again, louder.

Still no answer.

'Sage, are you asleep?' with some irritation, for though that week at Scar had done wonders for Kitty, and she was beginning in many respects to shake off invalid ways, she had been so used for the last three months to have immediate attention paid to her slightest word, that this extraordinary silence on Sage's part was not to be endured patiently.

Owen Ludlow was occupied that August with a larger and more careful study of Scar Head than he had ever attempted before, from his favourite point of view for observing the sunset effects, from the rocks a little way along the shore beyond Scar. And here, day after day, his easel was set; and hard by, in a nook among the rocks, a comfortable resting-place for Kitty was contrived where a high rock cast a shade even at mid-day; and cushions and rugs accommodated themselves to an easily tired back; while, if she stretched out a hand, already a little bit less white and limp than when she came, she could lay it on cool brown seaweed, over which the sea washed at high-tide, and could pop the little knobs when she had sufficient energy.

Owen Ludlow was not at hand when Kitty spoke, though his easel and canvas still stood there. He had gone back to see if there were any letters by the second post, and had found a perplexing one for himself, which, however, had not prevented him from bringing down one for Sage directed in Maurice's hand, a letter which he knew had been anxiously expected all the week. He came and dropped it over her shoulder into her lap as she sat on the rocks, and then he walked on along the shore towards the point, pondering his own letter, with only one glance round at her radiant face as she held her lover's letter, examining the direction and postmark with a sort of childish pleasure in prolonging the infinite delight of opening it.

Kitty's voice sounded to Sage as if it were a long way off; but the last words seemed to take

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hold of her senses, which were a little numbed and confused, with a sudden shock. Both be drowned? Well, that would be an end of a lot of trouble. It really would be difficult to get Kitty up that steep bit of beach all by herself; and the tide had a way of creeping in and turning those large stones into islands, and deepening and spreading, and then rising and covering one point after another, till there was nothing but smooth water, with the quiet moonlight over it. It would be a very easy way out of life's perplexities, and she would not be leaving Kitty. She had promised mother to care for little Kit, and she would not like to leave her so weak and ill. But if they were both drowned, they would be together, and mother would not need to say, 'Where's Kitty?' when they met.

She did not really mean it, of course. If such an impossible thing had happened as that they should have been surrounded by the sea, and Owen Ludlow should have forgotten them, and the dozens of kind hearts almost within hail in the village above been unconscious of their peril, depend upon it Sage would have fought desperately for her own life and for Kitty's. You know when people have had a sharp blow on the head, they are a little bit stupefied just at first; and it is the same when the heart is struck—the senses are dulled and blunted.

'Look ye here, Missy; shall I carry the little maid up the hill? She don't look fit-like to carry herself, and the clouds be coming up thick over you, and maybe we'll get some rain.'

It was Ben Caster who spoke, and he must have been close by while Sage was resigning herself and Kitty to a watery grave. And before they were half-way up the beach, Mr Ludlow overtook them, and relieved Sage of the burden of shawls and cushions with which she was laden, declaring that he would go back and fetch the rest after tea, as the tide would not be up there for a couple of hours.

On that former occasion, not yet a year ago, when trouble had befallen Sage at Scar, she was allowed the luxury of solitude and quiet in which to recover her bearings and face the future. She had no need then to speak of what she felt, still less to pretend to feel other than she did, and to swear that black was white, and cruel wrong right, and that she entirely agreed and was content with the new turn events had taken. Now she must collect her forces and arrange her line of defence with the smallest delay possible, for at any moment Ludlow, knowing whose letter he had dropped into her lap, might ask the natural question, 'Well, when is he coming?'

And then she would have to say that Maurice was not coming; that he would never come again; and, moreover, that it was quite right he should not come; and that she entirely agreed with all he said, and with the wisdom of ending the engagement between them. And then she would have to take up the cudgels for Maurice, even against herself, for she knew that Ludlow would be very angry, and would not pick his words in speaking of Maurice's behaviour; and she would not listen to that; and so, perhaps, she would lose her friend as well as her lover.

She might really have put off the dreaded explanation till the next day, for Kitty was tired

and exacting, and Ludlow went off after tea, and did not return till after Kitty was in bed, and when Sage might quite reasonably have gone to bed too, as Mrs Stock pressed her to do, being also struck by the girl's sad look.

'Twere just how my poor, dear husband looked before he had his first fit; and I says to him, "Job," says I, "whatever is the matter with you?" And he looked kinder skeered like, and asked for a drink of water—being a teetotaler, and that strick as he wouldn't touch a drop of brandy, not if it were ever so; but seeing as you ain't that way, leastways, not pledged to it, I'd recommend just a leetle drop, as I takes it myself nows and thens when I gets the spasms, though not one as approves of leetle drops took promiscuous.'

But Sage declined Mrs Stock's offer, and begged her not to sit up any longer. So Mrs Stock went creaking up to bed; and Sage was left just for a few minutes quite alone in the quiet studio, with the great white moon looking in at her, cruelly recalling that moonlight night when her poor, little love-story had begun.

She went out into the great moonlit stillness, on which the soft murmur of the sea below gently fell; and just for a moment she let her poor, little, forlorn self go, and cast herself down in the dewy grass under the old apple-tree, with her arms round the mossy trunk, and let the sobs that were stifling her have their way, and shake the small, prostrate figure in its passion of grief.

'Sage! Sage!' Ludlow's voice called to her from within. 'Why, I thought you would have gone to bed, child. I had to walk into Shingle to send a telegram.—Why, what have you been about? Your dress is quite wet. Have you been sitting on the damp grass? What an incorrigible little Cockney it is! never thinking of the dew.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

Yes, and he too! let him stand
In thy thoughts, untouched by blame.
Could he help it? if my hand
He had claimed with a hasty claim?
That was wrong perhaps—but then
Such things be—and will again.
Women cannot judge of men.

MRS BROWNING.

Before telling of the conversation between Sage and Owen Ludlow that night, and of poor, little Sage's gallant efforts to shield her lover from the just reprobation of his friend, I must tell of Ludlow's letter which had occasioned him the walk into Shingle that night. It was one that most artists would have hailed with delight, and with almost incredulous delight moreover, seeing that it was a fancy price that had been put on Mr Ludlow's picture, for it was a letter from his agent in London to say that the picture was sold at the price put upon it, and a cheque for the amount paid in to his banker's. 'I did not think it necessary to telegraph to you before accepting the offer, as, with all respect to your picture, the price put on it seemed such as to preclude any chance of a purchaser; and I believe it is only because the lady has some special fancy for it, some likeness in one of the figures I think it is, that she offered what some might consider an out-of-the-way price for it; and as these fine

ladies' caprices are not to be reckoned on to last long, I thought it better to close the bargain before she changed her mind about it. The purchaser is Lady Lester, of Beechfield and Park Lane. Her solicitor, Mr Freestone, came about it with the cheque ready drawn; and as the picture has been at our place since the Academy closed, and was still in its packing-case, I told him it should be forwarded to her ladyship immediately. —Hoping that you will approve my prompt action, believe me, &c.'

Now, as Owen Ludlow had lost all pleasure or interest in the picture since that interview with Pomona, he had not the same feeling about selling it which had impelled him to put a fancy price on it; and if it had been any one else in the world but Lady Lester, he would have been quite contented to let it go and hear no more of it; but somehow, as coming from her, it seemed the price of the actual Pomona in flesh and blood, not the Pomona in paint on canvas. There had been no sense of barter or exchange twenty years ago, when he gave his little girl to Lady Lester, though, indeed, the price he gained then was comfort and freedom from galling responsibility; but now, the cheque seemed like the completion of the bargain, and the idea of a man bartering his own flesh and blood for coin of the realm revolted him. And then, too, he guessed wonderfully near the mark at what Lady Lester meant, and how she had interpreted his meaning in that miserable picture. She had taken it as a threat that he might lay claim to this beautiful, proud, young beauty, and drag her away from her brilliant position; and the price he casually put on the picture, just because he thought it was beyond the outside limit of possibility for any one to give, had been interpreted as the price of his silence.

Such, indeed, roughly speaking, had been Lady Lester's idea. Little by little, from one and another, she had found out about the strange likeness; and Pomona had told her about her meeting with the painter, this Mr Ludlow, who did not take her fancy, though Sage liked him so much. Pomona had thought that Martin's warning not to talk about Mr Ludlow had been a nervous fancy of the anxious, old servant; but certainly the subject did seem to excite Lady Lester most unaccountably, and she so often recurred to it and questioned and cross-questioned the girl about the interview, that Pomona grew quite unhappy, and privately consulted the doctor as to whether undue excitement about trifles were ever a symptom in cases like her mother's, and was reassured by him that, in cases of great bodily prostration, the mind and nerves could not be expected to keep their usual steadiness, and that the only thing was to avoid agitating subjects as much as possible.

Mr Freestone, who came down frequently to Beechfield, and to whom she gave instructions as to the purchase of the picture, was inclined to think that illness was affecting her mind, in this sudden whim for the possession of a picture that she hardly seemed likely to live to see, and which she apparently had no particular wish to see either, as she directed that it should be taken to Park Lane and remain there till further orders.

'Well, one comfort is she can afford it; and

Miss Pomona will never miss it out of her big fortune; and if she did, she would be the first to wish that half the estate should go, rather than Lady Lester should be thwarted in her smallest wish.'

It was with the greatest relief and satisfaction that Lady Lester received Mr Freestone's letter announcing the purchase of the picture, and enclosing the agent's receipt; but two days later a telegram arrived which upset her terribly, and made Pomona declare that no telegrams in future should be taken to her. It was from Mr Freestone: 'Some difficulty about picture. Artist declines to sell, but hope to arrange the matter.'

'To which Lady Lester telegraphed in answer: 'Double the price if necessary.' A message over which Mr Freestone sighed and pondered deeply, considering how far it was right to carry out the wishes of a person clearly out of her mind.

When Owen Ludlow came back from Shingle, having despatched his telegram to his agent, bidding him, if possible, stop the sale of the picture, his mind was much more composed; and accordingly, he was much more observant, and Sage's dress, wet with the night-dew, and her wan little face, did not escape his notice, nor the nervous twisting and untwisting of her fingers, as she sat in the window with a bar of moonlight falling across her lap, where those tell-tale hands lay, while her face was carefully turned away from the glow of the red-shaded lamp on the table.

'The beggar's not coming,' Ludlow said to himself. 'Pon my word! it's too bad, and I shall tell him so, first chance.'

It was a little mortifying to Sage to find that, after her great self-control and composure, he should have remarked that there was something amiss; but still it made it easier to begin, and she said: 'I wanted to tell you that it is all over between me and Maurice—and,' going on quickly, in order to prevent what was likely to follow the sudden angry movement of Ludlow's arm and the laying down of his pipe—'and I think it is quite the best; and I quite agree with him.'

'May I ask the reasons, if there are any?'

'Yes; but you must not ask like that. You must be very kind to your little friend, for, though it is quite right, it is a little bit hard.'

'Yes, dear, tell me.'

'I have really known it all along,' she said; 'but he has only just found it out, that it is folly going on with this engagement of ours, when there is no prospect of any end to it. You see, he cannot get any situation that would enable him to marry, though several have turned up that would not have been so bad if he were not married.—Dishonourable? Hush! you must not dare to call him that, not to me.—You did not really mean it. It is my happiness he is considering all along, and he is quite right, for I should be miserable if he were not happy. If I had been like Pomona.—Oh! Mr Ludlow, I have never envied her before, but I can't help feeling it now. All that beautiful place and everything—I don't care about it for myself; but if I could have given it all to him—and I think I could have made him happy.' And here the poor, little voice, that had quavered and choked more than once, broke down utterly.

She was sobbing hysterically now ; and he got up and paced up and down the room, angry with Maurice, pitying her, bitterly blaming himself.

Presently, when she was calmer, she got up and came to where he stood, at the other window, moodily gazing out into the night. She had dried her eyes and even managed a little pitiful smile, that was more pathetic than her tears.

'You must not be angry with him,' she said ; 'it is quite right. It is just as much my doing as his. I think if he had not written to put an end to it, I should have done it. I am going to write to father to-morrow and tell him. I think he will be glad. I don't think he ever really liked Maurice. I've got father and Kitty and the boys still -and you,' she added shyly, holding out her hand. 'You will still be my friend.'

P I M E N T O.

EVERY one must be familiar with the spice whose black grains, large as duck-shot, are known indifferently by the names of Pimento, Allspice, and Jamaica Pepper. This spice is the dried berry of a tree, the Pimento, found in the island of Jamaica, where it grows naturally to the height of some twenty or even thirty feet ; and it is from Jamaica that the whole of the allspice put annually on the markets of England and the Continent is exported. Though a native of Jamaica, the pimento is not found distributed throughout the island ; it refuses to grow upon the lower coast-lands, and only comes to its greatest development on the mountains that occupy the interior of the island and slope away to the sea. The northern parish known as St Ann is the chief district of the pimento cultivation, forty thousand of the ninety-five thousand acres there cultivated being returned as devoted to pimento. Another species of pimento, known specifically as *acris*, is also a native of Jamaica, and from the leaves of this tree the aromatic principle of the well-known bay-rum is extracted ; but its cultivation has for some reason or other been neglected by the colonists.

The cultivation of the pimento exhibits some remarkable differences from that of other spices. In the first place, it has not been found possible to rear healthy plants from the seeds, and were it not that nature came to the help of the grower in this respect, the output of spice must, as soon as the present trees became old and unproductive, diminish and at length cease. Whatever may be the reason -and it does not seem that any one has taken the trouble to seriously seek for it—it is a fact, as many experiments have demonstrated, that seeds planted in the ordinary way produce only weakly plants, which, when they have arrived at the age when one might expect them to produce fruit, are either barren or bear only a meagre crop of berries. No greater success attends the attempt to increase the stock by means of slips ; and so fully have these facts been proved, that no grower endeavours to rear his own plants, but leaves the work to the birds that throng the trees when the seeds are ripening.

One has only to see the numerous seedlings springing up throughout the pimento groves to acknowledge the wisdom of this course. In this

way, the original plantations, or 'walks,' as they are called, were established, and at the present time, when it is desired to stock land with pimento, the following plan is adopted. The ground, chiefly forest, having been chosen, a party of wood-cutters is employed to fell the huge trees, whose trunks are left lying where they fall as a protection to the young plants that will spring up by the beneficent action of nature. The smaller growth of bush and the limbs of the trees are gathered together and burnt, their ashes forming a manure. The land, thus cleaned, is planted with provisions, and being virgin soil, yields a bountiful return of yams, cocos, and plantains. After the lapse of some months, one may see springing from the soil in different places the young pimento plants with their fresh green heads of aromatic leaves. Care must now be taken to keep away the cattle from the young plantation, until, indeed, the trees have grown sufficiently to put their foliage beyond the reach of the cows' teeth, as the temptation the spicy leaves offer is one not to be resisted, and a bite is generally fatal to any further development of the plant. After two or three crops of provisions have been taken from the soil, further cultivation ceases, and the short grass which only awaits its opportunity soon grows thick and sweet over the place where once the forest giants flourished. In two or three years, the pimento plants have grown sufficiently to allow of the pasturing of the cattle in the walk, and for the future the pimento grower has only to keep the ever-springing bush cut away, and to gather in August what crops the seasons send him.

Owing to the haphazard way in which the trees have been planted, one must not expect regularity in their disposition in the walks, and, as a fact, they are seen gathered into clumps, or scattered singly about the narrow valleys or swelling hill-sides, and not arranged in rows, as in other forms of cultivation. Mingled with the pimento, however, are the oranges, the prolific Seville and the sweet variety, limes, lemons, and other fruit-trees ; not to mention those forest trees that have been saved to give shelter to the cattle ; and the general view of a walk from some neighbouring hill is wonderfully effective by reason of the diversity of foliage. Perhaps the best time to visit the plantations is when the pimento throws out its blooms ; then each tree is wreathed with masses of pale white flowers, whose fragrance spreads far and wide, and reminds one vividly of the poet's words :

Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest.

Around the sweet flowers hum thousands of small wood-bees ; and a million tiny insects crawl and creep among the petals, offering a rich feast to the humming-birds and other insect feeders. Too short, however, is the period of feasting ; for in a few days the tiny petals curl and wither, and fall in a white cloud to the earth as each breath of wind stirs the leaves. The walk loses its interest until the berries have swollen and are fit to be gathered.

In August, if the weather has been propitious, and if no storm or hurricane has swept the trees of either blossom or fruit, the pimento grower prepares to gather in his harvest. Early in the

week he gives notice to his headman that on the following Monday 'pimento-picking' will commence; and straightway word is sent to the surrounding villages. As a rule, each property has its own work-people, who live in the neighbourhood and work upon the plantation throughout the year; and it is to these that the grower looks for help in harvest-time. But if the property is large, or if the spice-berries are ripening quickly under a hot sun—for they must be gathered just before they turn black—it may be necessary to summon additional pickers. These are easily got; for the work is not heavy and the pay good. As they are paid by results—that is, on the amount picked—every man brings his wife and any children he may have able to pull the spice from the stem, and in this way the weekly earnings of a family may be considerable, considering the rate of wage of the country.

Early on Monday morning the gang of pickers will have gathered before the owner's house. Grouped together as they usually are, they form to a stranger rather a picturesque assembly—the men in shirt and trousers, with their formidable 'machetes' or cutlasses tucked under their arms, or stuck into the ground before them; and the women and girls in red and white turbans, with their garments looped up around the waist, so as to give greater freedom to the feet in walking. Each party is well supplied with large open bamboo baskets, the inevitable black iron pot for cooking, and calabashes or gourds for carrying water from the house into the walks. Large, coarse bags, in which to bring home the spice, are served out by the owner; and presently the whole company have scattered to their work. Their method of gathering the pimento is simple. One of each party of pickers, generally a lad—though the women and girls frequently perform this part of the work—climbs the trees, breaks off the heavily-laden branches, and drops them to the ground. If he is expeditious and skilful in his work, the 'breaker' will not take a long time to strip a tree of its spice, leaving it, from the loss of the branches, in rather a ragged condition. It is his business to keep the pickers constantly supplied; and as soon as he has 'broken' a tree, he descends, and carries the great bundle of branches to where they sit with their baskets before them. Immediately on receiving the spice, they proceed to take branch after branch in the left hand, while with the right they pull the round berries from their stems and let them fall into the baskets. In this way a practised picker will gather some seventy pounds of the green berries in the day, provided, however, the season be early and the pimento plentiful. On some properties, a different method of separating the spice from the branches is adopted, but this is only when a careful supervision over the workpeople is not exercised. A sheet is spread upon the ground, and the negro, grasping the branch in one hand, thrashes off the berries with a small stick, thus gathering a greater amount, as compared with the other method, but at the same time bruising the skin of the berry by his blows, and consequently reducing its market value.

As it is found that pruning the pimento is followed by serious consequences to the tree, in that the branch cut invariably dies back to the

main stem, which, however, does not occur when the branches are broken, the annual gathering of the spice not only relieves the tree of the burden of its fruit, but leaves it in a condition to put forth in a short time new shoots. As a confirmation of this statement, it may be mentioned that in the year following a poor crop, when the trees have not been extensively broken, the yield is far less than ordinarily, presumably because the trees have not been pruned in the process of gathering the pimento.

The scene in the walks when the picking is in full swing is both curious and interesting. As one rides through, the different parties of pickers may be seen, each sitting in a semicircle at the foot of some tree, busily occupied with their work. Not far off is a fire, over which is bubbling the iron pot containing the mid-day meal of vegetables; and at times one of the party leaves his work to attend to it. In the midst of a shaking pimento-tree, the 'breaker' is seen snapping off the branches of spice and throwing them to the ground, where they fall lightly by reason of the leaves attached to them. If the tree be young, and he dare not risk his limbs upon it, he has a long crooked stick, by which he can easily bring the bunches within reach of his arm. There is usually much chatter and laughter, for the negro is merry hearted; and if the spice be plentiful, he can reckon upon making a good day's wage. Towards evening, when already the sun has nearly dipped behind the forest hills, the negroes begin to return from the walks, the men bearing the heavy bags of spice upon their heads, the women the baskets, and the children the iron pot, the calabashes, or other belongings of the family. The scene of interest is now transferred to the barbecues—those great stone terraces on which the coffee and pimento are dried. Up the steep steps struggle the heavily laden men, and throw their burdens with a thud upon the barbecue. Now commences the work of measuring the quantity gathered by each negro. A flour-barrel has about one-third of its length sawn off and the ends removed, and this serves as the accepted measure. Being filled with the green and black berries, it is lifted up, leaving a heap of spice on the barbecue. This is a half-barrel, but the remainder of the barrel is also used as a measure, and is termed the quarter-barrel. When each picker has had his spice measured, a ticket is given to him indicating the amount he has earned; and on Thursday evening he exchanges this ticket for money.

For some days before the commencement of the picking, the barbecue-man—generally an old negro whose active days on the plantation are about over—has been busy making 'rakes' or brooms of the fan-palm, or in sweeping clean the terraces for the reception of the produce. And now that the first day's gathering is on the barbecues, he proceeds to spread out the pimento with his solid rakes until it covers the smooth surface to the depth of an inch. The whole area of the barbecues, frequently extensive, is divided by low ridges of stonework into terraces of varying extent, and connected with one another by openings in the stonework divisions. As fresh supplies of spice come in from the walks, the several divisions get quickly filled, since the gathering of one day is not mixed with that of

another until the whole crop has been cured. Under the burning sun of the tropics, the berries soon change colour; in one day they will have turned from a pale yellow-green to a light straw tint; and the barbecue-man is kept busy as the curing proceeds in turning them over with his rakes. He does this in the following manner: starting at one end of the long terrace, he pushes his rake before him down the length of the pimento spread out on it, so that there is formed a wide furrow, at the bottom of which the grains are thinly spread, while at each end of the rake as it moves a ridge is formed. As soon as he has completed one furrow, he repeats the process, commencing now from the end he has reached, and so continues until the whole surface is furrowed over. By frequent 'scoring,' as the process is termed, it is arranged that all the spice receives the full benefit of the sun's rays; and in six or seven days—or even earlier, if the sky has been cloudless—the colour of the pimento will have turned to a dull brown, its soft skin will have hardened to a leathery coat, and the stem dropped from the seed. By taking up a handful and shaking it at his ear, the grower can tell by the rattling of the kernels within the husk that the spice is cured, and he then puts it into bags to await the winnowing.

As the spice grows darker and darker and the end of the curing approaches, the anxieties of the grower and barbecue-man begin. Let but a shower of rain wet the nearly cured pimento and the value is at once depreciated, since it becomes mouldy; and no degree of attention afterwards will rectify the error. Hence, at the approach of rain—he can hear it falling far away in the forest, or see it rolling rapidly in a thin gray mist down the distant hills—the barbecue-man raises a shout, and at once the whole household is in movement. The grooms leave their horses, the cook her pots and pans; the other house-servants come fleeing out of doors; the owner and his family and the visitors run to lend their aid, carrying with them any brooms or brushes they may have caught up in their haste. Soon the barbecue seems to be alive, there is such a sweeping and raking of pimento, and bringing of palm-leaves and tarpaulins and boards—such a bustle and commotion to beat the weather. The rain is sweeping down the hills opposite; now it is in the valley beneath; two or three large drops are pattering down upon the heads of the workers. But the hard work is to be rewarded; the brown grains have been swept into a conical heap within the circular ridge in the centre of the barbecue, the tarpaulins are spread, then over these the palm fronds, and last the boards to keep all in place. Let the rain come; it can do no harm now. And it does come, racing across the broad terraces until they seem to smoke with the mist that rises from them: while the spouts of the gutters are shooting the water far out from the wall. For a good ten minutes the downpour lasts, and then passes on, and goes roaring across the far-stretching forest beyond. The sun breaks forth, and nature, refreshed by her bath, smiles once more; but the pimento so hardly saved is not uncovered that afternoon.

When the crop is cured, nothing remains to be done but to winnow and send it down to the

port. The winnowing or 'fauning' is done in a machine of American construction, in which the pimento passes through two or three sets of sieves, and is subjected meanwhile to a current of air directed upon it by a revolving fan. By this means the small unmarketable seeds, the stems and bits of plaster from the barbecues, are separated out; the clean spice is then packed in bags and sent away.

The price obtained at present for the produce is on the average about twopence-halfpenny per pound, and shows a great decrease upon that paid in years past. Unfortunately, there is every indication that a further fall is imminent, and in such a case it will no longer be profitable to gather the spice. All this seems to point to the fact that the taste of the public has changed with respect to spices, or at least that some other spice has taken the place in popular favour of the once favourite allspice. Still, about ~~one~~ and a half million pounds are annually exported from the colony, the value of which is estimated at one hundred and three thousand pounds sterling. Pimento thus holds the fifth place of importance in the exports of the island, being exceeded in value only by sugar, rum, coffee, and fruit; but one must feel regret that an ancient source of revenue to the colonists—for pimento has been exported almost since the occupation of the island by the English—should be in danger of ceasing altogether.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER III.

'WHAT on earth does he mean?' cried Ena, as soon as the sounds of that stormy exit had died away. Until that moment, neither of the two whom Wakelin had left behind had spoken.

The vicar threw back his still handsome head, and answered with a sort of fiery dignity which would have satisfied the greatest sceptic of his guiltlessness. As to Ena, however, she needed no such assurance: 'He means that I stole, actually stole, that abominable money! I!'

'My dear father!' with incredulous surprise.

'Yes; it is an absurd charge!' So absurd, indeed, that now he could actually laugh at the remembrance of it, the excitement of the moment leaving no room for apprehension of any consequences which might ensue. 'I am not sure whether I may not even find myself compelled to prosecute the man for slander. I must take a lawyer's opinion upon that.—Who did you say, by the way, wanted me down-stairs?'

The girl displayed a card, which she had been all the time twisting between her fingers. But she looked grave. Perhaps a prevision of the dangers ahead had come to her more quickly than to the vicar, in his indignant exaltation of spirit.

'Only a Mr Daintry. "Marmaduke Daintry,"' she read aloud, absently. Then: 'But how wicked of Mr Wakelin to utter such words! Suppose Jane or any one had overheard them!'

'They'll have every chance in future, I imagine,' somewhat grimly, as the angry sparkle in his eyes slowly faded. 'But Mr Daintry! Why— Of course I'll go to him. Surely,

surely it can never be Jack come to life again after all these years.' In the curious agitation caused by this second shock, following so quickly upon the first, such an occurrence seemed almost credible, and he never noticed the difference in the Christian names.

It was, however, a person altogether unlike the tall, genial lad whom he so well remembered as his boyish playmate, and equally unlike the gray-haired, stalwart individual into whom time might have transformed that familiar friend, who turned from examining a photograph of Ena as the vicar entered the drawing-room. And Mr Russell actually started as he beheld a rather stout, dapper, remarkably well-dressed man of about thirty coming quickly forward, with a look of the utmost ease and self-possession, to return his host's greeting.

'Of course you don't know me? How should you?' the guest exclaimed heartily. 'Never set eyes on me before. And yet I hear that you have a cousin of mine in your own house, treated as your daughter! Awfully good of you, really! Can I see her at once?'

His mingled calm assurance and eager presumption almost took Mr Russell's breath away. For many a long day he had scarcely even remembered the facts of Ena's birth, or thought of her in any different light from that in which she regarded herself—as his own eldest daughter. No marvel, then, that, instead of speaking, he simply stared. But Marmaduke was fully equal to that trifling embarrassment.

'Don't wonder you're surprised. Never was more so myself than yesterday, when Sir George's—my grandfather he was, you understand—will was read, and I found out that such a person as my cousin existed and flourished. Lawyers explained, and seemed quite up in the subject. But I'd never heard a syllable about her, not a syllable, I assure you! Frightfully bad form of the old boy to let her sponge on you all these years, whilst he kept me in the dark too, and then to leave her every stiver he could alienate from the estate, don't you know?'

Gradually dawn was breaking upon the clergyman's brain, almost stunned as it had been by two successive blows.

'Sir George Daintry is dead, then?' he managed to insert between the last sentence and that which he could see already hovering upon his companion's lips.

'A week ago; and quite time too. Oh, beg pardon,' with a laugh, both amused and heartless.

'Really, he was so specially ill-tempered'—

'De mortuis'—began Mr Russell solemnly.

'Oh yes! Very wrong of me. But to return to Ena. I've come as quickly as trains would bring me, to see her, and fetch her home. My mother says that of course it's the only thing. Proper sphere, and all that, don't you know?'

Evidently delicacy was not the gentleman's strong point. But it was a lack upon which Mr Russell did not feel himself called again to comment. Instead, he asked a question, or tried to do so.

'Your father'—

'Died when I was a shaver. He was Sir George's eldest son, don't you know? and owing to this clearance, I'm the head of the family now,' drawing himself up to his full, though

not very imposing, height of five feet six. 'Ah no! Title isn't on my card,' observing Mr Russell's glance. 'Haven't had time to have fresh ones printed yet. So much to do, you see. And that reminds me—mustn't dawdle here all day. By the way, I ought to have a letter for you somewhere. The lawyers fancied you might want credentials or such sort of rot. Though, naturally, I said that was rubbish.'

The signature of the note which he finally produced and handed over to its owner happened to be known to the vicar as that of a most respectable firm of London solicitors; whilst its wording was plain enough to dispel any doubts as to the bearer's identity, as well as with regard to his news of Ena's fortune. Before Mr Russell had reached the close of the few curt, business-like lines, he understood how completely altered were the prospects of the girl who had been to him as a daughter; and in spite of an aching in his heart at the idea of what this change must mean for Mildred and himself, had made up his mind how to act.

'Are you aware that Ena is in utter ignorance of her parentage?' he said, addressing the Baronet, who, too restless to stand still, had during the short silence wandered off again in the direction of the piano, and was diligently examining the music scattered about its lid.

'Is she? Oh, well, that's soon put right. Let me try the effect of three sentences,' with another laugh. 'See here: "Ena, my dear," I should tell her, "I'm your cousin, Sir Marmaduke Daintry; and your name is the same as my own. You're a rich woman too, and must"— Eh, what?'

'I was trying to intimate,' with some sarcasm, 'that I cannot allow that method of proceeding. Though you appear unable to comprehend its possibility, it is a fact that the intelligence that she is not my child, and is without natural claim upon my wife's love, will come as a terrible grief to Ena. Therefore, I must choose my own time and mode for explaining matters both to her and to Mrs Russell.'

Only by dint of indomitable perseverance did the clergyman succeed in getting so far. Four times at least his audience had sought to interrupt; now he was to be kept in check no longer.

'Oh, but really, don't you know? I can't consent to this. Grief to hear that she's an heiress, and cousin to a Baronet? Bosh! my dear sir, bosh! Had too much to do with women to credit that!'

'Where has he been brought up?' was the unuttered thought in Charles Russell's mind. 'One expects some gentlemanly feeling and behaviour from a man of his standing. But this is a regular bear.' Aloud, however, he merely responded, with cold dignity sufficient to quell even Joseph Wakelin: 'I have told you my fixed decision.'

Sir Marmaduke shrugged his shoulders. He could scarcely object further to the wishes of the man who for twenty years had carried out a duty which of right should have been undertaken by his own neglectful family. Yet the resolute words angered him. 'Then am I not to see her at all?'—gruffly.

'Not to-day. Should you be at liberty in a week's time to return, we shall be happy to

receive you. Possibly, if in the meantime Mrs Russell has heard from your mother, you may be able to persuade Ena to visit your home and make the acquaintance of your people. I do not wish to keep her from those to whom she stands in such near relationship. But'—

'Ah, just so! I understand,' throwing off the sullenness which had for a moment clouded his features. 'The mater wanted to write before, but I said where was the need for ceremony between relatives? This day week, then, for Ena. Afterwards, she and I, don't you know? may have a good deal to do with each other. Good-bye, good-bye.'

And absolutely before Mr Russell had quite grasped the meaning of that final hint and smiling nod, the man was in the hall, through the door, and out upon the pavement of the street. When, however, at length the laudable intentions of the Baronet did make themselves plain to the vicar, he smiled. 'Fortunately, we can trust Ena's taste,' he muttered, half aloud. 'But what will she and Mildred say to such a parting as this may involve?'

That was a problem very speedily to be tested, for, as he stood there pondering it, the door of the dining-room unclosed, and the sound of women's voices in earnest conversation reached his ears. In another second his wife and their adopted daughter entered together.

So entirely had the latter interview driven away for the moment all remembrance of that which had immediately preceded it, that he looked at the two grave, troubled countenances with wonder. Could they have overheard? Did they guess? But Mildred's exclamation immediately enlightened him.

'Oh, my dearest!' she cried, coming close up to him and throwing her two arms round him, as though to shield the man she loved from all trouble, 'how dared Wakelin say such an awful thing?'

It was one of her husband's characteristics that though he could be and often was spiritless and moody without any particular reason, real grief and anxiety had a tendency—at least in the first moments of trial—to brace him to meet the burden with courage. Often as it fell to Mildred's lot to support him under protracted worry or in imaginary woes, his was the stronger soul at such times as the present. And now he stooped smilingly to kiss the upturned face, passing one arm tenderly about her waist as he did so.

'My darling, don't worry yourself; it will all come right,' he answered. 'I am confident that the money will even yet turn up. If not, we must make it good.'

'But your reputation,' urged the wife. 'A clergyman is so at the mercy of people. One breath of scandal and he is ruined for ever!'

It was too true, and he recognised the fact. Yet he still smiled.

'Milly, this isn't worthy of you. My dearest, remember that I am innocent, and that, therefore, my reputation has a better Guardian than myself. As I said to Ena a little while ago, if necessary I should not hesitate to bring an action for slander against Wakelin, and that would, I am convinced, abundantly clear me.'

'Only it was so unlucky that you should have

paid Clarke! And then, too, you specially told Wakelin to let you have gold, not a cheque, for I happened to hear you speaking of it to him in the hall. Everything is against you!'

Charles Russell sighed. In the first excitement and anger with which he had met the charge, he had not estimated the force of these details, as now, for the first time, he was conscious of doing.

'Well, if necessary, we must confess the truth, love, and humble our pride to own that your single gold bracelet afforded the ways and means of pacifying Clarke! As to the cheque, now that I have closed my banking account cheques are most awkward matters to manipulate. Only last month I was vowing never to accept another for any large amount.'

'If only other people can be induced to see and understand as we do!'

He had seldom beheld his wife so overwhelmed. And all the time he was conscious of another trial for her lurking in the background, acquaintance with which could scarcely be postponed. Mr Russell's heart felt heavy as lead.

'We must trust that they will,' he answered, with a cheerfulness he certainly did not feel. 'But, my dear, there is something I have learned to-day which I must tell you. No, Ena, don't go. It concerns you almost more than it does ourselves.'

How the intelligence was finally broken perhaps none of the three ever exactly knew. To watch the look of pain deepening in Ena's eyes as he unfolded his tale, to feel the heaving of Mildred's bosom as he pressed her to his side, and still to be obliged to continue his story, made that hour one of the hardest in Charles Russell's not very easy life. But the words were uttered at last. Ena had been made to comprehend that though the love which had always surrounded her still remained, her claim upon it had vanished. She saw herself, rich indeed in the public esteem, but deprived by one stroke of father, mother, sister, and brother. And the whole of the little world in which hitherto the girl had lived and moved seemed suddenly to be split and rent to its foundations. With a sobbing cry, she sank down on her knees before Mildred, who was sitting on the couch, and buried her face in that familiar lap. A poor consolation seemed the promised fortune for all that she was losing! 'Oh, mother, mother,' she wailed, 'don't desert me like this!' Such an entreaty could meet with but one response. In another moment she was resting on the same breast where, long ago, she had wept out her woes, and Mildred's tears mingled themselves with her own.

'My sweet child, we shall never desert you. Your father left you to us, and we have always loved you. Do you think anything could separate us now?' she whispered reassuringly; whilst her husband took a short walk to the window, and then brushed his handkerchief two or three times across his face before applying it, with ostentation, to its more legitimate use.

'And just as Dick is on the way home, too. Oh, mother, what will Dick say?'

Mildred shook her head. 'Poor Dick! It will be a sad return for him altogether, I'm afraid. Troubles never come singly; but to-day has brought more than its share, I do think.'

'Though one can quite suppose that some people, with more sense than we've got, might regard Ena's legacy as a mitigating circumstance,' spoke up Mr Russell from his station across the room. But notwithstanding the rallery, he did not turn his head, or for the moment expose his own countenance to inspection.

'Legacy! What's a legacy?' from the ungrateful recipient. 'Who can suppose that money would make up for all that this has taken from me? Oh dad, you will care for me still?'

And so the scene went on, until gradually they had talked themselves into at least a partial realisation of the state of the case, and some slight resignation to its obligations.

'For that you ought to accept Mrs Daintry's invitation, and visit her, there's no doubt,' the vicar declared.

'Mrs Daintry? Oh, the Baronet's mother. What a trial for her to miss being my lady,' remarked Ena with a laugh, which, though but the ghost of her usual gay ripple, at least told of returning spirits. 'And how do you like Sir Marmaduke, father? You did not mention that.'

A difficult question to answer with combined truth and civility to the absent. Happily, however, whilst he hesitated, Mr Russell was spared the need for reply. With a fling the drawing-room door was thrown open, and Bijou danced in, dragging a tall, well-set-up young man by one hand, and sending her announcements ahead in her shrillest tones. 'It's Dick,' she screamed. 'I was digging weeds up in my garden, and found him, and he's come home to stay. He says so!'

Even Ena's troubles and Joseph Wakelin's suspicions were forgotten in the delight of that meeting and greeting. And Dick's protest that he wasn't a weed himself, whatever Bijou might consider him, was smothered in his mother's embrace.

• SOME EARLY LONDON CONCERTS.

THE modern lover of music has such plentiful fare provided for him well nigh every day of the year, that it is difficult to realise how comparatively recent is the great growth of concerts and musical entertainments of all kinds with which we are now so familiar. The pedigree of the London public Concert can be traced back to the later half of the seventeenth century. Before that period, private concerts were given from time to time by different members of the nobility; but the people generally had little opportunity of indulging a taste for high-class music, and had for the most part to be satisfied with entertainments given in public-houses by performers hired by the landlords. Sir John Hawkins tells us how in places like these 'half-a-dozen of fiddlers would scrape Sellenger's (or St Leger's) Round, or "Old Simon the King," with divisions, till themselves and their audience were tired; after which as many players on the hautboy would in the most harsh and discordant tones grate forth "Green Sleeves," "Yellow Stockings," "Gillian of Croy-

don," or some such common dance tune; and the people thought it fair music.'

Public concerts owe their direct encouragement to John Banister, who had won fame by his playing on the violin, and who succeeded the celebrated Baltzar as leader of Charles II.'s band of twenty-four violins. Pepys, in an entry in his Diary for February 1667, tells us the court gossip of the day—'how the kings viallin Bannister is mad that the king hath a Frenchman come to be chief of some part of the kings musique.' It was rumoured that he was dismissed the royal service for saying that English violins were better than the French—a statement which was no doubt regarded as heretical, opposed as it was to the prevailing court view as to the superiority of France in all questions of taste, and especially with regard to music. Banister's concerts, at the close of the year 1672, were advertised in the 'London Gazette' as follows: 'These are to give notice that at Mr John Banister's, house (now called the Musick School), over against the George Tavern in White Fryers, the present Monday will be musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future precisely at the same hour.' Four years later on, we read again: 'At the Academy in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields will begin the first part of the Parley of Instruments, composed by Mr John Banister.' The admission was at this time as a rule one shilling; and these concerts seem to have been held pretty regularly down to within a short time of Banister's death, which took place in 1679.

Another person who did much to promote a taste for music was Thomas Britton, better known as the 'Small-coal man,' who gathered a circle of music-lovers around him at this period in his unpretentious home in Clerkenwell. Among his guests were Woolaston the painter and Hughes the poet, as well as Dr Pepusch and Handel, who at this time had still his fame to make. To these weekly concerts, held in a long narrow room over his shop, the poet tells us that Apollo

Led his train,
And Music warbled in her sweetest strain—

the train including the beautiful Duchess of Queensberry.

More important than Britton's musical club was the founding in 1710 of the Academy of Ancient Music, for the practice of ancient vocal and instrumental music. This association was formed at the 'Crown and Anchor Tavern' in the Strand, under the direction of Dr Pepusch, the gentlemen and boys of St Paul's and the Chapel Royal taking part in the performances. The Academy had the honour of performing Handel's 'Esther,' the members appearing dressed in character; and its success is said to have led Handel to consider the desirability of establishing oratorio performances at Covent Garden. Fashionable society was at this period divided into factions, which grew out

of the rivalry of Handel and Bononcini, concerning which Byron wrote the well-known lines :

Strange that such difference should be
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The unfair ban, however, under which Handel was placed, was not shared in by the king and queen ; and a story is told of Lord Chesterfield leaving the empty theatre, in which an oratorio was being sung before the king, and giving as his reason that he did not desire to intrude on the privacy of his sovereign.

The oratorio—invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by St Philip Neri, as a counter-attraction to the theatre—was first made popular in this country by the author of the 'Messiah.' As organist to the Chapel of the Duke of Chandos at Canon's he was the first to introduce organ concerts, and did much to recall sacred music from the neglect into which it had fallen in England. St Paul's Churchyard was then a centre to which music-lovers gathered, and many of the neighbouring shops were famous for their musical instruments, temptingly exposed to the view of those who attended the services of the cathedral, held twice every day. The meeting of so many musicians in this vicinity led to the establishment of regular concerts at the 'Queen's Head Tavern,' under a certain Talbot Young. Later on, they were held at 'The Castle Tun,' and won a certain amount of fame under the style of 'Castle Concerts.' This tavern had once been kept by Shakespeare's friend and fellow-actor, the comedian, Richard Tarleton, and was situated near the famous 'Dolly's Chop-house,' in Paternoster Row. The old 'Tun' perished in the Great Fire, but was afterwards rebuilt, and in the new building the 'Castle Society of Music' gave their performances, assisted by some of the vocal talent of the operas.

Benefit concerts seem to have been given from time to time at the various theatres, one given by Signor Carbonelli, a celebrated violin-player, and pupil of Corelli, took place at Drury Lane in May 1722, its programme, which was divided into three 'acts,' including 'a New Concerto for Two Trumpets,' 'a Song by Mrs Barbier,' 'a New Concerto by Albinoni, just brought over ;' and a solo on the arch-lute by Signor Veber—a selection which shows the prominence of Italy at this time in all things musical, Carbonelli having been brought to England by his patron, the first Duke of Rutland.

An amusing concert bill of the time of Queen Anne, which has been preserved, enables us to form a good idea of the kind of entertainment then provided for the general public. The programme consisted of music, several opera songs, 'pleasant Dialogues and Commical Dances.' These dances, which were all to be represented in 'Habits according to the Fashions of the Countries,' included sketches of 'an Irishwoman,' 'a Spaniard and his Lady,' 'a French Peasant and his Wife in wooden shoes,' as well as 'Two Hugonots.'

The songs began patriotically with the 'Genius of England ;' the sombre character of 'O Land me in some Peaceful Gloom,' being followed by the brighter strains of 'Let all be Gay.' In those days of amorous swains and dainty shepherdesses, the song of 'Cynthia now is cruel grown' and 'Strephon the Bright' must have found a re-echoing response in the breasts of the Corydons and Strephons present. The Dialogues seem to have been quite in the spirit of the Christmas pantomime, including 'Since Times are so Bad'—apparently no novel theme, even in those days—and 'Oh! my Poor Husband,' irresistibly appealing to all married folk. This performance, which resembles a variety entertainment rather than a concert, lasted from six in the evening until nine ; and the price of seats was 'an English shilling the pitt ;' and an 'English sixpence the upper seats.'

Vauxhall was now coming into prominence with its al-fresco concerts, for which the celebrated Dr Arne, the author of 'Rule Britannia,' composed many of his best-known songs. Even in the days of Charles II. it seems to have been a place of popular entertainment, for Pepys tells us that he went 'by water to Fox Hall, and there walked in Spring Garden: But to hear the nightingale and other birds, and here fiddlers, and there a harp, and here a Jew's trump, and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty diverting.'

Ranelagh, too, was opened for evening concerts in the summer of 1742, when Beard was the principal singer, and Festing led the band. It was here, about twenty years later, that an infant prodigy, no other than the eight-year-old Mozart, performed on the harpsichord and organ several pieces of his own composition for the benefit of a charity.

The Madrigal Society and 'the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club' date from this period—the Catch Club holding dinners at the 'Thatched House Tavern' every Tuesday from February to June, when 'canons, catches, and glees' were performed by the members, prominent among whom at one time was George IV. This club celebrated its centenary in 1861.

More important, however, in the history of English art is the establishment of the 'Concerts of Ancient Music,' an idea originally suggested by the Earl of Sandwich : and it was out of this Society that the famous Handel Commemoration arose in 1784. Though it held its first season in rooms in Tottenham Street, it is with the Hanover Square Rooms that the history of the Society is most intimately connected, for it was here that Catalani made her first appearance, as well as Miss Stephens, who afterwards became Countess of Essex. Up to the close of the last century, however, the concerts were held in the rooms in Tottenham Street ; and for a few years in the concert room of the Opera House, before becoming permanently established in Hanover Square at the commencement of the present century. The Hanover Square Rooms were for some time carried on by Sir John Gallini—who had taught the children of George III. to dance—after a similar fashion to the rival establishment of Mrs Cornely's in Soho Square. Masquerades, 'festivos,' assemblies, and so forth, alternated

with more serious musical productions. The Rooms were first opened with a concert given by Charles Abel and John Christian Bach, who continued for several years to entertain the musical world here; while later on 'The Professional Concerts' were rivalled by those of Salomon the violinist, at which Haydn in the 'closing years' of the last century conducted his twelve 'grand' symphonies. Here, too, John Braham was introduced to the public as a tenor singer.

Meanwhile, the ancient concerts were patronised by royalty, and George III. would constantly show his interest in them by writing out the programmes of the performances with his own hand. Often, accompanied by Queen Charlotte, he was present at the Hanover Square Rooms, and is said to have had a chamber added to the side, called the 'Queen's Tea Room,' to which he presented a large gilt looking-glass. A special feature of these concerts was the total exclusion of all modern music, the pieces selected for performance having to be at least twenty-five years old.

While lovers of high-class music were being thus well catered for, we can catch a glimpse of the sort of fare provided for the mass of the population from a work by George Alexander Stevens, published in 1761, called the 'Adventures of a Speculatist, or a Journey through London.' An entertainment seems to have been then common under the style of *Comus' Court*, which appears to have contained the germ of the future music-hall. 'We went,' he tells us, 'to *Comus' Court*, as they call it—one Jack Speed's White Horse, Fetter Lane. These meetings were on the same plan as Sadler's Wells, where people might sit and smoke and drink, and hear singing, and see all the posture-makers and tumblers, yet only pay so much for liquor, and have all these comical fancies into the bargain. One plays with a rolling-pin upon a salt-box, another grunts like a hog, and a third makes his teeth chatter like a monkey.'

Much pleasanter must it have been to have heard Tenducci sing at Ranelagh, or Joseph Vernon at Vauxhall.

To revert to the ancient concerts—in the closing years of the last century two famous singers lent a brightness to these performances: Mrs Billington, who appears as St Cecilia on the canvas of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and Madame Mara, whose great merits were first fully appreciated in the Handel Commemoration at Westminster Abbey. Meanwhile, the Academy of Ancient Music closed its career in 1792. There was no dearth of good music, however, for Harrison and Knyvett had just set on foot the Vocal Concerts; and a little later on Mrs Billington, Braham, and Signor Naldi delighted audiences at Willis's Rooms; while Madame Catalani competed for popular favour in Hanover Square. In 1813 was established that still flourishing Society, the Philharmonic, whose concerts became associated later on with the Rooms in Hanover Square. The last concert held in these time-honoured Rooms was given in the year 1874; and the Club of to-day must be haunted by the musical echoes of many a bygone performance. Thus the opening years of the present century found the system of concert-giving firmly established; and the appreciation

for this class of entertainment has been ever since growing, as the enthusiasm of a St James's Hall audience can testify as far as London is concerned.

THE WINNING OF PADDON MANOR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

ON a bright morning of April 1813, I, Joseph Smerdon, mariner, stepped ashore on Dartmouth quay with as heavy a heart under my shag waistcoat as any man carried that day in Devonshire. You may judge if there were not reason for this, when I tell you that three weeks before I had been first-mate of an Indian called the 'Arcot,' having in her hold a venture of my own which must have brought five hundred pounds at least, and now this had vanished away.

Seven years had gone since I last saw England, much less my native place, which was Teignmouth. In that time I had voyaged the Indies up and down, in country ships for the most part, making here a little and there a little by trading on my own account. In 1811 I was master of a transport, when General Auchmuty went to Java, and happening to do some service there, when I returned to Calcutta the gentlemen of the company recommended me to the captain of the 'Arcot,' whose first-mate had died of the cholera-morbus. Of the voyage home there is no need to tell; but, alas! whether through fog, or misreckoning, or premature rejoicing, or all three, a March morning—luckily, a calm one—found us hard and fast on the rocks between Ushant and the Cape Finistère. This was in the days when we were at war with France, and the French *chasse-marées* were not long in finding us out, and consigning us to dismal 'chokey' (as we say) in Brest. But at that time a great number of honest fellows from our west country were free of the French coast, and willing to be of service to people detained against their wills in France or England; and so it happened that the 'Polly' of Dartmouth left Roscoff with Joseph Smerdon in her hold, as well as fifty tubs of cogniac, and a grievous smell of stale sprats, to deceive inquisitive noses.

But if a man is no more than forty-two, and a sailor used to ups and downs, a dinner such as I had at a tavern near the Butter Walk, and a quart of ale with it, puts a different look on things. And after all, I might have been much worse off; for my sea-boots, so old and worn that the Frenchmen thought them not worth taking, had stowed in their linings over a hundred gold mohurs, worth each a guinea and a half. So that I was provided against want for many months, as I reflected with satisfaction, sitting in the parlour window and looking out on the river, and the craft straining at their anchors in a strong ebb-tide, the green hills winding away to Dittisham, and the old gray castle on guard at the mouth.

Now, that you may understand my story, I must tell you something of my belongings. I was born and bred in Teignmouth; and my father was a royal-navy man, boatswain of the 'Oxford' at the time of his death. My mother had a brother named Jonathan Westcott, a

small shipbuilder at Teignmouth, who was good enough to allow me to make myself useful about the yard; and in due time I was apprenticed to him, till, my indentures being out and having no money to set up with, I took to the sea, and found my trade of good service to me.

Now, my uncle was not, I believe, a bad sort of man, and gave me no more cuffs and rope-ends than is necessary to make a boy stick to his work. But he loved money as well as any banian trader, and, as is always the case, this grew stronger every year. He took a hand in smuggling ventures, like most people there, and owned two ketches, carrying clay and moorstone sometimes as far as London. But the year before I left him, his prosperity seemed to increase, and no one could tell how. He had always lent money; but now he lent more, and he bought the 'Unity,' as nice a lugger as ever cleared her cost in two runs to Roscoff. Her skipper was one John Bickford, an Exmouth man, and whenever he was in port he would visit my uncle, and they would sit over their rummers till sometimes my uncle would have to be carried to bed.

That afternoon I bought shore-going clothes, of which I stood greatly in need, and then began to think of the best way to reach Teignmouth. A boat, of course, would have suited me best; but I could find none going there, and had no mind to charter one. The road by Tor Bay and St Mary-church was a bad one, and I resolved to take passage next morning in a boat going to Totnes; and so by the highway to Newton-Bushel and down Teign side—some fifteen miles in all. So I embarked early; and we went swiftly up with the flood-tide, while I smoked a pipe and watched the river wind and turn among the hills, and the woods breaking into young green; and the air of my native land was sweeter than ever after the stinks and fevers of the Indies for so many years. And when we came to the ancient town of Totnes, I landed at the bridge, and set my face for Newton, without other baggage than my gold and a good oak staff, such as we called a 'Plymouth cloak.'

I found Devonshire hills at first somewhat trying to my calves, after such long absence; but I knew where a mile or more might be saved by a right of way through the Paddon estate, belonging to Squire Hilliard. I found the stepping-stones on the bank, got over, and having crossed one field, rested at a stile to smoke. Just as I had seated myself, I turned my head, and beheld Squire Hilliard himself, a stern and active man of fifty, a terror to poachers and vagrants, coming towards me like Giant Despair whom I used to read of, and two keepers with him. I stood up and raised my hat, and he seemed astonished.

'Fellow,' he said, 'what are you doing trespassing here?'

'Your worship,' I answered, 'it is no trespass. This is a right of way, acknowledged this forty years, for the use of people going on their lawful occasions.'

'Ha!' he replied—'a sea-lawyer, it seems. And who may you be, and what is your lawful occasion, as you call it?'

'I am a sailor,' I said, 'as your honour sees—Joseph Smerdon by name, lately escaped from

the French, and going to Teignmouth to visit my uncle, Westcott the shipbuilder.'

'Indeed,' he said. 'Then you had best be going, for it is a long way. Give my respects to your worthy uncle, if he be yours, and tell him to drink less rum and more water.' With these words he went on his way, and I on mine, wondering why he should care if my uncle drank or not. But this meeting recalled to me that Squire Hilliard and my uncle were indeed acquainted, and the strange manner of their becoming so.

Two-and-twenty years before, Squire Hilliard had acquired Paddon, not by purchase or inheritance, but by winning it on a wager from a gentleman named Rendell. Squire Rendell was the wealthier of the two, for he owned Paddon, and another place called Darleigh, near Ashburton; while Squire Hilliard's land, Utcombe by name, was at Bovey-Tracey. Now, it chanced as they followed the hounds one day, Squire Rendell and his horse fell into a deep pool of Teign, and were got out with much trouble. At the hunting dinner that evening there was laughter at his expense, which so vexed him, that, having much wine aboard, he laid a wager with Squire Hilliard, of Paddon Manor against Utcombe, which was worth far less, that they should swim their horses out into Tor Bay, the one who should first turn back to lose.

So on a calm day they and some of their friends rode down to the Tor Abbey sands, and the two gentlemen entered the sea, both horses and riders barebacked. My uncle, as a responsible kind of man, was at hand in a sailing-boat, and Jack Bickford with him, as well as two or three gentlemen, who were to be the umpires. They swam on bravely till about a cable's length from the shore, when Squire Rendell's horse, which was leading, was taken with a cramp, the water being bitter cold, and went down bows foremost, so that his rider was very near to be drowned, for he could swim but little. They brought him ashore with all speed, and recovered him, while my uncle and Bickford went out and fished up the horse with a creeper. No one expected that Squire Hilliard would hold his friend to the terms of the wager; but he did so, being, as was known, heavily in debt to people in London. So Paddon was made over to him; but all the gentry thereabouts looked coldly on him; and he had, as we say, himself to himself, turning from a wild young fellow into a hard and disagreeable man.

I reached Teignmouth late in the afternoon, rather tired and footsore, by reason of new shoes. Little or nothing seemed changed there, in the little crooked streets smelling of tar and fish, any more than the hills around were changed, or the broad Teign, with the boys picking cockles on the mud flats, or the great red bluff of the Ness; and my uncle's yard was there, with a fishing-smack hauled up for repair. I walked across to the little house with the green door and rapped on it. An old woman opened it, and I asked if Mr Westcott were within.

'Iss fai,' she answered, 'but martial busy. Do'ee want vor to spake to 'n partic'lar.'

'Tell him his nephew is here,' I said.

I heard the word nephew, followed by some

growling. Then she came back, saying: 'Plaze to step in, zar;' and I entered the little white-washed room, with a window like a porthole looking on the yard, which I knew so well.

My uncle sat at a deal table with pen and ink, and a raffle of papers before him. When I had last seen him, he was a hale man, under forty; but he was almost sixty now, white-haired, and leaner and more stooped than he should have been, though his eyes were yet keen and his face not much wrinkled.

'Tes you, Joe, come back,' he said, looking up. 'Well, you'm growed to a vine man. And how's zea zarved 'ee zince 'ee wur vule enough to take to it? Zame as it do zarve most volks?'

I told him of my late misadventure, and he began shaking his head sadly. 'Vive hundred pounds, Joe,' he said. 'Ay, that's a tarrable loss, if you'm spaken the truth. Haven't 'ee got nothin' left?'

'Something I have yet,' I replied.—'But how is it with you?'

'Bad's the best, Joe,' he said. 'Trade be ari gone skat. The yard do pay about wages, and no more. If 'twasn't vor vree trade and my zavins, I'd be to workhouse.—The "Unity"? Caught, Joe, long ago. Her's a revenue boat now; but Bickford's revenue too, chief-boatman to Exmouth. Her'll be here to-night.'

I did not set much store by this, knowing that he would have said the same if he had owned all the town; and I promised to come again later and tell him more. When I did so, I found John Bickford with him, a man of fifty, short and stout like a capstan, with a face hard and red as a lobster boiled, and a look of exceeding honesty.

I told them some foreign experiences, to their great admiration, and showed a sample of what I had with me, at which they, as old hands at concealments, were amused. But at the middle of the second tumbler I observed: 'I forgot, uncle, a message for you that I was charged with to-day.'

'A message,' said my uncle. 'Who vrom, Joe?'

'From Squire Hilliard,' I said; 'and his word was, that you were to drink less rum.'

I saw the two look at each other, and Bickford said: 'Ay, a careful man he be now, not like when we knowed 'n vust along.'

'And Squire Rendell, how is he?' I asked.

'Died two year ago,' said my uncle; 'and his zon drowd up sojerin' and married. Zame as you maight do to the zea, Joe, if you'm a mind. There's Mrs Pearce, to Newton-Bushel—Kate Harvey that was—keep'th the "Bull Inn." A good place it be, but beyond a woman to manage; and if zo be's you can't pass what you'n got vor ten times zo much, 'twas vor nothin' you lived ten year with me and travelled the world vor twenty.'

It was clear that my uncle Westcott and his chum did not want to talk about the two Squires, for they turned it off in some such way whenever I would have inquired further. And this shows that a man may err as well in saying too little as too much, for I began to think that all was not right in that quarter. Then I retired to my lodgings; and Bickford, who seemed free of the house, to a room up-stairs.

In the morning I was up and about, and met some that knew me, and missed some I had known.

I did not forget to make further inquiries; and they told me that Squire Hilliard was no fonder of the neighbours than they of him, though reckoned an able magistrate. He was unmarried; and what company he had at Paddon was mostly people who had met him in London, where he sometimes went. But of the new Squire Rendell they could tell nothing. However, one thing I learned, that there was some sort of intelligence between my uncle and Squire Hilliard, who had been known to recommend him to people who wanted money.

My most pressing business just now being to change my Indian gold into guineas, I walked to Newton-Bushel, and the Plymouth coach took me to Exeter, where the money-changers were astonished at finding a seaman unwilling to be cheated. As I got down from the coach at Newton on my return, I perceived the 'Bull Inn,' of which my uncle had spoken. I walked into the bar and rapped on the counter. Nobody came; but at the back of the house I heard a woman's voice in anger, and a man's using very bad words. I took the liberty to go round and enter the stable yard, where I found Mrs Pearce very flustered, and a hostler fellow very drunk and foul-mouthed, while two or three more stood by and gaped. Without more ceremony I kicked him out into the road, where he lay howling. Then I turned to Mrs Pearce, who was beginning to cry, and led her politely into the parlour.

'A dirty, vilthy, drunken baste,' she sobbed. 'Never was I carled such names avore, and in my own house. I'll hav'n to justice, zo I will.'

'Never mind, Kate,' I said. 'I did the like for you at Denbury Fair once.'

'Massy zave us! be it you, Joe?' she exclaimed. 'An' where have 'ee been this twenty year? I've got thicky bead necklace yet you bought me to Denbury.'

My former sweetheart was now a plump, dark-eyed woman of forty, with hardly a touch of gray in her curly black hair, though she said it was a wonder it was not white, with trouble and vexation. She had been a widow some two years, and well off, with no children; but, as she said, 'the trade were not vitty vor a lone woman.' In short, before I took my leave, promising to come again speedily, I saw that the 'Bull' and all it contained were mine for the asking without any question of money. Mrs Pearce would not hear of my walking back the six miles, but the spring-cart must be got ready. Whilst waiting for this, a lady and gentleman on horseback stopped directly opposite the window to speak with some one on the footpath.

'Squire Rendell an' his new-mar'd wife,' said Mrs Pearce. 'Baint'm a handsome pair, Joe? Miss Lavis o' Chudleigh, she were, an' reckoned the best-lookin' maid in the county.'

'Not half what you were at her age, Kate,' I said. But this was a piece of poetry on my part, for the lady was truly handsome, not above two-and-twenty, tall and slim-waisted, yet firm and strong of figure, in her close riding-dress; in feature rather Spanish than English, as many are in our parts. But when I looked at her husband, I was amazed, for I knew him well, though I had never suspected who he was.

I have said that when we took Java I was master of a brig carrying troops. Now, in that

affair the Batavia fever and arrack wrought so upon our men that almost one-third of the force was unfit for duty, and a call was made for volunteers. I took the best of my men; and at the attack on the Dutch lines we worked a gun, as the General said, excellently well; and were not behind at the storming or in the enemy's camp. But though there was good fighting that day, none did better than Captain Rendell of the king's troops. He was the first man to enter the great redoubt, and ran through a gunner before he could put the linstock to a piece laid directly on our men. His sword—made by Government from hog'shead hoops—broke short, and a vile native, like a crushed wasp, ran a kris into his leg; but he caught up a rammer, brained one Dutchman therewith, and kept the rest at bay till a musket-shot brought him down. I was there as they carried him to the surgeons, and heard his name; but it is a common one in our parts, and I thought no more than that he had well upheld the honour of Devon.

All the way back in the spring-cart, which jolted so for all its springs that I would as lief have walked, I had much to think upon as to how I should shape my course. But reflecting on how I had lost the gains of years of danger in an hour, and Kate declaring that a sailor's wife was no more than another man's widow, in a month's time Captain Smerdon, as I had a right to call myself, after the command of the transport, was landlord of the 'Bull,' and had introduced discipline there, which was all that was wanted, Kate knowing, as we say, all the ropes.

My uncle was not present at our wedding, being laid up with rheumatism; but as soon as he was about again, he came over to Newton and stayed with us for the night. We gave him a most excellent dinner as well as supper, and he did more than justice to them. But he being used only to spare living, the consequence was that Kate woke me that night, declaring that she heard thieves in the house. I took a candle and a cutlass and went out, but found no one. Hearing, however, steps in my uncle's room, which was next ours, I went in, and perceived him standing in his nightgear fast asleep, but with his eyes wide open. I would have gone out again and made the door fast, lest he should fall down the stairs, but at that minute he spoke.

'Cut'n away, Jr x,' he said; 'don't 'ee lave a shred of 'n.' Then, after some mumbling: 'Three veet under, it must be, Jack.'

I knew that when a man is like this he will often answer questions, so I imitated Bickford's voice, who I knew must be 'Jack.'

'Why not your veet, zur?' I said.

'What a vule 'ee must be, Jack,' he answered. 'Water be too thick to see in, an' three veet deep'll catch 's knees so nice as may be.'

I nearly let fall the candle, as it flashed into my head what he was talking of; but before I could think of what to ask next, he spoke again. 'Iss zure, Squire,' he said, 'but vor cash down. Her deserv'th it vor the like of such vulishness.'

At this minute, Kate, wondering what I was about, opened the door hastily and upset a chair with a tin rushlight stand upon it. My uncle woke up, and seeing me stand there, with a

drawn cutlass, shouted 'Thieves!' and 'Murder!' till the whole house was aroused. I was so angry, that I could scarce trust myself to speak to Kate, and the rest of the night did nothing but kick and toss about.

For I saw clearly that in a few minutes more I should have learnt the whole of a vile conspiracy, planned by Squire Hilliard, and carried out by my respectable uncle and the honest Bickford, to rob Squire Rendell's father of his lands. This much I guessed, that the horse had not failed by reason of cramp, as was supposed, but from entanglement in a net or something of the sort laid there by them; and that my uncle had received a sum of money for this, which accounted for his sudden prosperity. But of this I had not a scrap of evidence or a word of writing to show, though goodness only knew what it might be worth to me if I could be the means of restoring Squire Rendell to his estate of Paddon.

But luck stood my friend, and in a way I least expected. Our business had begun to improve greatly, so that old Hawke of the 'World,' where the coaches stopped, grew jealous, and threw out nasty hints to the excisemen that I, as a sailor and my uncle's nephew, knew where to get good liquor cheap. So at last one day, as they came prying about my cellars, one of them, an impudent fellow named Curtia, said to me: 'I've had news for you, captain.'

'Have you so?' I said. 'Then out with it, Mr Gauger, and let's have it over.'

'Why, that precious pal of your uncle Westcott's,' he answered, 'Jack Bickford, the chief-boatman to Exmouth, has been bowled out at last. 'Pon my oath, I believe the fellow had good interest somewhere to keep h's place, for he's been hand-in-glove with the mugglers all along. But they found out that it was through him the whole force went on a wildgoose chase to Beer Head while a cargo was run at Starcross; so he's safe in Exeter jail, waiting for 'sizes.'

'Serve him right,' I said, 'for being a traitor to His Majesty.—But it will make no difference to me, whatever you may please to think.'

But it made a good deal of difference, for I saw that this was the time for a bold stroke, now that Master Jack was laid by the heels and could not get away. So the next morning the coach set me down in Exeter; and a crown to the turnkeys admitted me to that part of the jail where the prisoners not yet tried were kept.

THE 'MERMAID' AT THE ZOO.

VISITORS to the London Zoological Gardens should pay their respects to the most interesting of the many recent acquisitions, which is a young Manatee. This animal arrived in London in company with its mother; but she, poor beast, being bulky and short of breath, succumbed very soon to the frequent changes of conveyance which she had to put up with in order to get her to the Regent's Park. Weighing about half a ton, and being without the least capability of progressing on dry land, it is no wonder that the transport of the animal was a matter of the greatest possible difficulty both to her and her

conductors. The young Manatee, however, is well worth a visit; it is one of the most interesting animals in existence, and is, furthermore, not to be seen every day. It is true that the Zoological Society have had three or four Manatees in the last twenty years, but there has not been one on view for at least three years.

The Manatee shares with the Dugong of the eastern seas the distinction of being the only living representative of a group of animals which were once more plentiful. We find skeletons of extinct Manatees; and within the last hundred years, perhaps even more recently, a third member of the order, the Rhytina, has faded into extinction. This latter animal was, in point of size at any rate, a much superior beast to the Manatee, for it appears to have measured thirty-five feet of so in length; but, like many giants, it was of a peaceful not to say stupid disposition; and it had, moreover, no teeth to help it in convincing others of its right to continued existence; therefore, it ceased to exist. Very possibly, both the Manatee and the Dugong will follow in its departing footsteps, for they, too, are defenceless creatures, though they certainly have teeth; but these teeth are blunt and broad—useful for chewing the cud, but not to be relied upon for offensive purposes.

The great disadvantage under which the Manatee labours is its defectiveness of brain; the organ is small, and its surface is smooth, instead of being thrown into those folds, or convolutions, as they are more technically termed, which argue intelligence. In the long run, too, brain is more effective than muscle, even among animals.

In spite, however, of its intellectual defects, the Manatee has adopted a mode of life which will probably result in a longer lease of life to the species than if it had proved itself incapable of this alteration. We find the two species frequenting the rivers which flow into the tropical parts of the Atlantic; they occur, that is to say, in Africa and in America and the West Indies. The fact that they inhabit both sides of the ocean leads to the inference that they were once purely marine beasts; this assumption is of course strengthened by the fact that we meet with their remains in marine strata, rocks that have once formed part of the bottom of an ocean. So many marine creatures can also live in fresh water—the salmon is the most obvious instance—that it is not in the least surprising that the Manatee should have determined to change its habits. Now, this course of action must have been a move in the right direction, from, at any rate, one point of view. While grazing peacefully at the bottom of the sea, the Manatee would be liable to be interrupted by sharks and other carnivorous creatures of the deep, with which it would be entirely unable to cope. Such foes would be less abundant in rivers.

Why the Manatee, or the Dugong, should have—as some people think it has—given rise to the Mermaid notion is hard to understand; it would need, we should think, many additional rations

of grog to induce a sailor to make a detailed comparison between the shapeless, black, and bulky Sirenian and a damsel terminating in a fish. As has been suggested, 'Merpig' would be a more suitable name, though the Manatee indeed has not got the 'in'ards of a Christian,' as the pig is always said to have; its interior is constructed more on the plan of that of a cow, and, like that animal, the Manatee has a complicated stomach suitable to a vegetable diet. Its chief internal feature, however, is its enormous lungs; no doubt, these are contrived a double debt to pay, like the swim-bladders of certain fish. It is quite possible, from the habits of the animal, that it uses its lungs not only for breathing purposes, but also, when inflated, to enable it to rise to the surface of the water.

The Sirenian, as the Manatee and the Dugong are technically named, are, roughly speaking, hoofed animals, which have taken permanently to the water, just as the seals, and probably the whales, are carnivorous animals which have adopted a similar mode of life; and it is highly interesting to note that in both cases a certain amount of modification along precisely the same lines has taken place: in all these groups of animals, the hands—and the feet, if they are present—have become more like a fish's fin, while the whole body has assumed a form like that of a fish. In the whales and the Sirenians, the hind-limbs have almost completely vanished, leaving only the most inconspicuous traces of themselves. From this, one would argue that the whales and Sirenians have been much longer aquatic in their habits than the seals. The very first lesson that the student of zoology learns is not to judge by appearances; otherwise, the Manatee would be undoubtedly put down as a near relation of the seal, or perhaps even a fish.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

'A MERRY Christmas!' How the old words waken
A thrill and throb for many a Christmas fled,
For hopes fulfilled not, that the years have taken
Into their keeping, like the tears ye shed.

'A merry Christmas!' Let the happy chorus
Bring a new thrill, new freedom, new delight;
Past pain makes present joy but sweeter for us,
E'en as the dawn of morning after night.

'A merry Christmas!' Be ye thankful ever
For friendship that is left warm, sure, and strong,
For love that fills your hearts with high endeavour.
Live life anew. Ye do the Past no wrong.

'A merry Christmas!' Life has halting-places,
Where ye may pause in all the busy strife
To comfort those whose sorrow-stricken faces
Tell their own story in the book of life.

'A merry Christmas!' Raise on high the holly,
With spirits leaping at the sound of mirth,
Far nobler than all sorrow is your folly
That sheds 'good-will' and gladness o'er the earth.

HARRIET KENDALL.

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LANDMARKS OF A LITERARY LIFE.

FIFTY-TWO years ago a young English lady with literary aspirations sent to Messrs W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh, a prose article and a poem, which she had the pleasure of seeing inserted shortly afterwards in *Chambers's Journal*. The lady was Miss Camilla Toulmin, who afterwards became Mrs Crosland, and her name a generation ago was as well known to the reading public as those of Miss Edna Lyall and Miss Annie Swan are to the readers of to-day. The connection which Miss Toulmin thus formed with this *Journal* has continued from 1841 to the present day, though our gifted and respected contributor is now eighty-one years of age. Her early association with the Messrs Chambers soon developed into personal intimacy, and when on visits to London, the brothers were in the habit of calling upon her, and thus a close and lifelong friendship was established between them. In 1845 she spent nearly two months in Scotland as the guest of one or other of the two brothers, and in her volume of reminiscences now published (*Landmarks of a Literary Life*, 1820-1892. London: Sampson Low, 1893) she gives graphic and interesting sketches of what she heard and saw when in their society. She visited Peebles with William Chambers, where he and his wife had summer lodgings; drove thither in beautiful July weather by the Pentlands and the Moorfoot Hills; slept for the first time in her life in a 'box-bed'; visited Manor Valley to see the cottage of bowed Davie Ritchie, the prototype of Scott's Black Dwarf; went down the Tweed and saw Abbotsford; and was taken about to the many places of antique and historical interest in and around the little ancient burgh itself. Also in their company she visited the Trosachs, Loch Katrine, Loch Lomond, and Glasgow. While a guest in Robert Chambers's house she met 'Delta' and others of the Edinburgh literary celebrities of the day. She tells some interesting anecdotes of the early life of the two brothers, which she had from the lips

of William himself, but these we need not reproduce here.

To return, however, and begin at the beginning. Mrs Crosland was born (we presume in London) in 1812, and her earliest recollection—a wonderful instance of precocious memory—refers to a period when she was little over three years of age. This was the reception in London in June 1815 of the news of the battle of Waterloo. She relates what she had often heard her mother speak of afterwards, and what in these modern days of psychical research would have been deemed worthy of note. The news of the battle did not reach London till the evening of Tuesday the 20th June; but on the previous Sunday evening—the day of the battle—her mother was seated on a balcony of their house until past ten o'clock. 'She declared she saw in the clouds images of horses galloping, mostly with riders, but some, she said, riderless. From her description she implied that the phantasmagoria lasted more than a quarter of an hour. Of course, when the news of the battle reached London, the coincidence was thought extraordinary; but so many people smiled at what they evidently supposed fancy or delusion, that, in later years, she grew cautious as to whom she related the incident.' 'I believe, however,' the writer adds, 'she learned that one or two other persons had a similar experience that evening.'

On the Tuesday evening following, when news of the battle actually reached London, her parents were present at a weekly whist club to which they belonged, and the whist-players were in full enjoyment of their game when they were startled by the newsmen's horns, and the cries of 'A great victory—Buonaparty defeated!' and 'Courier!' 'The cards were thrown down—the gentlemen rushed into the street to procure the paper at any price the newsmen asked. The details were comparatively meagre, yet they were ample enough to convey some idea of the victory gained, and to break up the party, sending home several medical men who were present, and who intended to proceed to Brussels, and make arrangements to despatch medical students with-

out delay. The ladies also departed, for their task was to be up early to look out all the old linen they could find, and set themselves to work to make lint for the wounded.'

About 1838, when twenty-six years of age, Mrs Crosland—we call her so for convenience' sake, though she was not married until ten years later—seems to have begun to contribute to some of the leading annuals. These were still the days of 'Keepsakes,' and 'Friendship's Offerings,' and 'Books of Beauty'—a kind of publication long obsolete, and now only occasionally to be found in the cheapest rows of the second-hand book-shops. But good writers contributed to them—Scott, Thackeray, Disraeli, Ruskin, and many others who had names in the literary world. Some of these annuals paid their contributors well—Sir Walter Scott having received four hundred guineas for a short story which he wrote for the 'Keepsake.' In 1838, the 'Book of Beauty' was edited by that now almost forgotten author and woman of fashion, Lady Blessington, who accepted several poems by Mrs Crosland. The latter also 'wrote up' to engravings, as was generally the method of supplying the letterpress which accompanied these plates. The letterpress was required to illustrate the plates, not the plates the letterpress. Readers of 'Arthur Pendennis' will remember how Thackeray represents his hero as producing the beautiful poem, 'The Church Porch,' to meet the wants of a particular illustration sent him.

In the 'forties,' Mrs Crosland made the acquaintance, among other literary celebrities of the time, of Mr and Mrs S. C. Hall, and relates many interesting episodes in their lives as revealed to her while in association with them. Also Dinah Maria Mulock, afterwards Mrs Craik, author of 'John Halifax, Gentleman'—a novel which has retained its popularity in a marvellous manner. It was in 1842, at the table of Lough the sculptor, that Mrs Crosland had her first introduction to Robert Browning and Leigh Hunt. Browning, she says, was then a young man; 'but Leigh Hunt was the important guest, whom every one else was invited to meet.' So runs round the whirligig of time! She had no particular admiration for Leigh Hunt, but still was curious to see a man who, for at least a generation, had been prominently before the literary world. He played the Sir Oracle that evening, and harangued rather than conversed. 'He dwells in my memory as a thick-set man of nearly sixty, with fine dark eyes and whitened hair, with his portly person encased in a white waistcoat, which was amply displayed by his habit of throwing back the lapels of his coat and inserting his thumbs in the armholes of the waistcoat. In this attitude, and leaning back in his chair, he discoursed to what for the most part seemed an admiring audience. I must confess that he seemed to me the very type of self-satisfied vulgarity: a man without reverence, and consequently without the breadth of understanding which reverence gives.' 'Robert Browning, whom years afterwards I had the privilege to know well, spoke comparatively little that evening; but I was struck with the quiet dignity of his deportment, and his expression of commanding intelligence.'

The friendship of Douglas Jerrold was also one of Mrs Crosland's acquisitions in those years. She spent an afternoon in his house at the time the Candle Lectures were appearing in *Punch*. 'Towards the close of the meal a packet arrived—proofs, I fancy—at any rate Douglas Jerrold opened a letter which visibly disturbed him. 'Hark at this,' he said, after a little while; and then he proceeded to read a really pathetic, though not very well expressed letter from an aggrieved matron, who appealed to him to discontinue or modify the Candle Lectures. She declared they were bringing discord into families, and making a multitude of women miserable. I believe the letter to which I allude gave Douglas Jerrold great pain.' Mrs Crosland is of opinion that while Jerrold had the reputation of a wit, his witticisms bordered too nearly on tiresome punning to be of the first order. 'For example, on inquiring in society, about the year 1854, who a certain gentleman was, he was told, "Mr Mills, from Manchester." "Indeed," he promptly replied; "why, I thought all the mills had stopped there."'

To leave literary reminiscences aside for a moment, we have a very interesting notice of the famous engineer, the elder Brunel, the designer and constructor of the Thames Tunnel, through which thousands of our readers must have passed. The tunnel has long been overshadowed by greater engineering feats; but at the time of its construction it was regarded as a really great enterprise. The work was begun in 1825, and the tunnel was opened in 1843. Sir Isambard Brunel and his wife were old when Mrs Crosland knew them; but Lady Brunel told her of their way of life during the years when the tunnel works were in operation. 'They resided near the shaft at Rotherhithe, and, through day and night, every two hours a sample of the earth excavated was submitted to Brunel for his examination; and in accordance with its character were the instructions given for the next two hours of work. Writing materials were always ready in his bedroom at night, and a bell was so hung as to ring near the bed. There was also a lift by which the sample of soil ascended, and by which, in return, the letter of instructions was conveyed. This broken rest was at first a great trial; but, after a while, the habit of awaking every two hours was formed, and Lady Brunel declared that for months after the completion of the tunnel she and her husband found it impossible to sleep for more than that period at a time.'

In the summer of 1845, Mrs Crosland made the acquaintance of Mary Howitt. The former was long past the age and the inexperience of those who imagine that authors and authoresses should look different from other people, yet her first impression of Mrs Howitt was one of mild surprise at finding that lady such an exceedingly motherly sort of personage. She was of medium height, rather stout, with prominent features, slightly projecting teeth, and hair already gray, though she was not yet fifty. There was also about her a stamp of provincialism which she never quite lost. Her husband, William Howitt, was a very agreeable man if you agreed with his opinions, but was essentially pugnacious, with deeply rooted prejudices. Mrs Crosland

ventures to think that his wife must have required all her amiability to get along with him as well as she apparently did. The same thing has been said of Mr and Mrs Carlyle; but these rank among the higher interests of the literary world. Of Mr and Mrs Howitt, possibly not half-a-dozen persons will now think twice.

Among the American authors whom Mrs Crosland knew was Nathaniel Hawthorne. This was in 1854. She describes him as in the mid-prime of life, a stalwart man, with blue eyes rather small for the size of his head, but having a peculiarly soft impression. In society, she says, 'he was one of the most painfully shy men I ever knew. I never had the privilege of an unbroken tête-à-tête with him, and am under the impression that with a single listener he must have been a very interesting talker; but in the small social circle in which I first met him, it really seemed impossible to draw him out. We were only five or six intimate friends, sitting round the fire, and with a host remarkable for his geniality and tact; but Hawthorne fidgeted on the sofa, seemed really to have little to say, and almost resented the homage that was paid him.' He afterwards spent an evening in Mrs Crosland's own little cottage, and she observed him enter into an earnest conversation with Philip James Bailey, the author of 'Festus.' A dozen people were chattering round about them, but this did not interrupt their talk with each other; though, curiously enough, it was not till later on in the evening that each knew the other's name. Nathaniel and Bailey must here have discovered for themselves some elements in each other of a kindred spirit.

In the autumn of 1857, Mrs Crosland met Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in Florence, and was received by them very kindly in the Casa Guidi. Robert Browning ushered her, on her first visit, through one or two apartments to the drawing-room, where she met Mrs Browning. The latter was a little below the middle height, and the loftiness and spaciousness of the room served to accentuate the fact, as she approached with 'that gliding movement' which is now gone out of fashion, but which in Mrs Crosland's young days used to be called 'swan-like.' 'Her abundant hair, falling in long thick ringlets, was of chestnut brown, and her eyes were of a similar hue, with a softness and sweetness of expression not possible to describe.' On the occasion of another visit, spiritualism was the subject of conversation, and Mrs Browning was anxious to borrow from Mrs Crosland a certain book on the subject. Mr Browning broke in, somewhat vehemently, begging her not to lend his wife the book, as he did not wish her mind to dwell on such things. 'I remember,' says Mrs Crosland, 'Mrs Browning exclaiming rather warmly, "Robert, my soul is my own!"—though, with wife-like obedience, she yielded.'

These 'Landmarks' of Mrs Crosland's which we have thus briefly brought under review, are full of interesting matter of various sorts; and though many of the lesser celebrities of whom she writes are no longer celebrated, and though much of their work has passed into the dust-bin of ephemeral literature, yet the story our old contributor has to tell is worth reading; and we are glad that in her old age she has succeeded

in placing before the world a book so pleasant and so attractive, and hope it will light up her remaining years with something like a fresh accession of literary popularity and prestige.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

So the dreams depart,
So the fading phantoms flee,
And the sharp reality
Now must act its part.

WESTWOOD.

'I AM going to London by the early train. I'll be back to-morrow.'

'Why are you going? Oh, Mr Ludlow, don't go!'

'It's not to see Moore; you needn't be afraid. I'll give you my word not to go near him. Keep a brave heart, little Sage.'

'Are you going to see father?'

'No; I think not.'

'And you are quite, quite sure it is not *him* you are going to see?'

'Quite sure. It's some other business I have to go up about.'

Meanwhile, the business on which Mr Ludlow was bound was not apparently to be accomplished in London, for he went straight across to Victoria Station, and had soon turned his back on the great metropolis, and was hurrying along that line of railway which Sage had seen in its spring loveliness the day she had thought she was the happiest girl in the world.

Owen Ludlow, artist as he was, did not observe any of the beauties of the way; perhaps it was because it was a sullen, lowering day with thunder-clouds heaping themselves up in the west.

'Is Lady Lester at home?' he asked the dignified butler, who, with the assistance of two footmen, opened the door to him.

'Her ladyship is seriously ill, and does not see any one.'

Now Sage, he remembered, had told him she was ill; but he had not reckoned on her being too ill to see him.

'Can I see Miss Lester?'

'Not at home.'

And nothing remained but to tender his card and turn away, with a flat sort of feeling of having got up the steam for nothing, and nerved himself to do something he hated, and which must be done at once if it were to be done at all.

He left the regular carriage road to try a pleasant-looking short-cut down a glade, at the end of which the water glimmered cool and bright. And who should he meet as he went down the glade but Pomona herself, walking slowly towards the house, with such a radiance on her face and sweet light in her eyes as Ludlow had never seen since he wooed her mother in those golden days so long ago? Why should she have that look, walking alone under the August foliage? Had some wood-spirit been breathing love in her ear? some sylvan god wooing her?

But Ludlow had no time for wondering, or even for admiring, for he had to gather his purpose together, which had got strangely demoralised

since he turned his back on the house, and to silence those objections, which had gained new force since he had given ear to their voices.

She did not see him till she was close to him, and then she started as if she had been waking from a dream, and she coloured a warm, soft flush over face and neck, as if suddenly aware of a strange eye reading her inmost secrets; and her eyes sank, as if conscious of being too full of light and happiness to meet any other eyes but those that had looked into them last, and set that light and love shining by his burning look.

Owen Ludlow raised his hat, and she bowed, and was passing on, when he said, 'Miss Lester; and she turned courteously.

'It is Mr Ludlow. You must forgive me, but I did not recognise you. Have you been to the house?'

'Yes. I came to see Lady Lester on some business; but I am sorry to find she is not well.'

'She is very ill,' said Pomona. 'But will you not come back and rest? And perhaps you could tell me anything you wish to say to my mother, unless you would rather see Mr Hilton, the steward, if it is any business matter. I hope,' she added hastily, 'there is nothing wrong with Sage?—She is not ill?'

'No,' he answered; 'I do not think she is ill; but she has had an anxious time of nursing little Kitty, and she is not very bright.'

'But Kitty is better?'

'Oh yes, Kitty is getting well; but Sage has another trouble, and if you'll allow me, I will tell you about it.'

They had reached the house now, and she led the way through the garden and in by the garden door to the pretty morning-room where Sage had thought she would have been contented to sit all day; and she rang for tea, and entertained him in gracious, hospitable fashion, that made it more difficult every moment to begin the business on which he came.

The touch of fine-lady formality which had struck him at their last meeting seemed all to have gone; the slight frost had melted under the golden summer that was reigning in her heart; she had forgotten her dislike to the painter, which had never been very deeply seated, but which had been altogether washed away by the deluge of her love for one. Why! she would have taken the whole world into her arms just then, so beautiful, bright and happy a planet did it appear, and so big her all-embracing love.

Ludlow watched and listened to her with a sort of fascination. As Sage had said, the likeness to the picture, and so also to the original of the picture, was less striking the longer you were with her; and in Katharine there had never been so much of that bright, vivid fullness of life that was so remarkable in Pomona; so the resemblance ceased to jar on him, as it had done that evening in the studio.

But the matter could not be delayed longer, for Pomona was saying: 'I do not want to hurry you; but I always go up to my mother at seven, and you said you would tell me about Sage.'

And then he began. He had rehearsed the story over and over again in the watches of the night before and through the journey, for he had determined, if Lady Lester could not or would

not see him, to tell Pomona herself. But no rehearsing would make the story run smoothly, or make it appear the least as it had looked twenty years before at the Orchards with the apple blossom dropping softly all round.

He did not mention any names, but described the tall lady coming, and his final consent to her having the child.

'You let the baby go?'

'Yes.' It was Katharine's voice asking the question, and he answered guiltily, without offering any excuse.

'Did you ever see her again?'

'Not for twenty years.'

'And then?'

'I met her again.'

There was deep silence in the room, so deep, that a blossom falling on the pavement in the conservatory was distinctly audible, and the ticking of the tiny watch in the bracelet on Pomona's wrist.

He did not dare to look up at her, or to speak, though the silence seemed more than he could endure, and to be lasting for an eternity.

At last she said, with an odd, stiff sound in her voice, as if it were an effort to articulate the words: 'I understand you to mean that the tall lady was'—

'Lady Lester.'

'And the baby?'

'You were the little baby.—Pomona'—he turned towards her with a sudden emotion quivering in every limb and making his voice hoarse and unsteady—'Pomona'—

But she held up her hand to silence him. 'Wait,' she said. 'I must try to understand. Have you any proof of this?'

'Ask Lady Lester.'

'That is just what I dare not do. She is so ill that the slightest agitation might kill her. I am thankful this miserable story did not reach my'— And then, with a sharp cry, as of bodily pain, she covered her face.—'If this story is true, she is not my mother!'

And then again, with a great effort, she composed herself, and went on: 'But there must be proof if it is true.'

'I have the letters; and if Lady Lester's maid, Martin, is still living, she knows the truth of the matter.'

'Martin too!' The girl wrung her hands together with a gesture of despair, that was so pitiful that Ludlow could almost have wished to declare his story a lie, if only to bring back the gladness into the girl's face.

'If this is true—mind, I only say if—I do not believe a word of it without proof; but if it is true, I am not Pomona Lester.'

He stretched out one hand to her in mute appeal; but she drew back almost with horror.

'I must have time to think it over,' she said. And then, with a poor, little attempt to reassume her usual gracious courtesy of manner: 'I do not mean to be impolite; but I must ask you to leave me to think over all this you have told me. You see, I have a good deal to think about, and I had better be alone. If you could come to-morrow morning, I should be more myself, and could hear anything you had to say further. If you have the letters you spoke of with you, perhaps you would let me see them.—Thanks.

I need not say I will take care of them; and if you can come to-morrow?'—

'Yes,' he said; 'I will be here any time that suits you. Shall it be ten?' And then, impulsively, he stretched out both hands to her. 'Pomona,' he said—'Pomona, if I can in any way make up to you—if a father's'—

'No,' she said, and her voice sounded cruelly cold and clear—'No, if this terrible thing is true, which God grant it is not! there never could be anything of father or daughter between us. When you gave your poor, little child away, I think that came to an end.'

And so they parted.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of love that never found his earthly close
What sequel? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if it had not been?

TENNYSON.

It was a very hollow-eyed, changed Pomona who came down to meet Owen Ludlow next morning, and though yesterday you might have declared that most of her beauty consisted in the brilliant health and happiness in every line and tint, yet now, when the great eyes looked at you with dark circles of tearful watching round them, and the rose-tinted cheeks were white, and the lips wore a pitiful curve, she was no less beautiful; and there was a certain added dignity to her movements which perhaps had been hitherto too glad and girlish. And in the chill, gray, dawn, she had had a piteous, heart-breaking interview with poor, old Martin, who had crept in while her lady slept, to see what this sudden headache could mean, and the scared look in her young mistress's face.

She had stoutly denied at first all knowledge of the thing, and had grown angry, and scolded, till Pomona's hopes began to rise, when suddenly this broken reed, on which she was beginning to lean, collapsed, and Martin was kneeling at her feet sobbing, and confessing that it was all true, but imploring her not to say a word to her mother, as it would kill her.

She had had to comfort and soothe the poor old woman, and assure her that nothing should come to Lady Lester to agitate and harm her; and then, when she was alone again, she read the letters through once more, by the cold reasonable light of early dawn, with no longer even any hope that there was any mistake or delusion about it; and tried to think calmly of the change this would make in the future.

One thing was certain: Beechfield was hers no longer; it never had been hers. It was Sage Merridew's. She drew back the curtain and opened the window and leaned out; the sun was just rising behind the great beech avenue, under the broad shadows of which the deer couched in the dewy grass; down below, the lawn was white with the heavy moisture, and the soft fragrance of dewy roses mounted from the terrace. How beautiful it was! Perhaps Pomona had never fully realised its beauty till now, when it was hers no longer.

But there was some comfort still. On the table by her side was a little glass containing the small bunch of forget-me-nots she had worn at her belt the day before. They had flagged and drooped, but, with the usual power of recovery

in that flower, had revived in water, and now were as fresh as ever, the little blue flowers showing among the leaves as simple and sweet as children's eyes.

When those flowers had been picked and given to her, some one had said: 'My beautiful Pomona, if I could only prove my love! If this terrible wealth of yours did not come between us!' This was the comfort. With Maurice Moore at any rate, it would make no difference; or if it did, it would be a difference on the right side. It was not Pomona Lester, the rich heiress, he loved; without Beechfield and all its wealth, she would still be his beautiful Pomona, rich in his love.

And so, when she came down next morning to receive Owen Ludlow, though she was white and changed and hollow-eyed, she was not utterly prostrate; there was the little bunch of forget-me-nots in her belt, and a smile now and then on her grave lips and in her deep eyes.

Owen Ludlow had slept as little as she had; but wakeful nights and agitation do not leave so much mark in middle age as they do in youth, and he looked much the same as usual.

She handed the letters back to him as she entered the room, thereby avoiding the necessity of shaking hands as she bade him 'good-morning.'

'You have read them?' he asked.

'Yes; and I have also spoken to Martin. I fear there is little doubt of the truth of what you say.'

'I should not have spoken now'—he began.

But she stopped him. 'I am very glad you did. The terrible mistake has been not doing it sooner. I will not say a word of blame of my—Lady Lester; but a great wrong has been done Sage Merridew, and every day add to it.'

'It was on her account I came.'

'Does she know?'

'Not a word, and she need never know; only I thought'—

'Of course she will know. Do you think I would go on a day longer than I can help, taking her proper place, spending her money, wearing her jewels?' And hardly conscious what she was doing, suiting the action to the word, Pomona drew off, one by one, the rings from her fingers and unfastened the bracelet on her wrist. 'But I dare not tell my mother. And I have been thinking—if you will tell Sage—that it cannot—cannot be very long now—if she would wait till—it cannot be very long, and it will all be hers then.'

The girl's voice shook and broke, and in the silence that followed, Ludlow said: 'I want you to let me tell you about Sage, and why I made up my mind to come and speak to you.'

She made a little gesture to him to go on; her voice was not quite enough under control to speak.

'A week ago I should not have come. She was happy then. I don't know if she has ever mentioned her engagement to you? For the past six months she has been engaged to a young friend of mine, and there seemed every prospect of her happiness, for I believe he was sincerely attached to her. But within the last few days he has written to put an end to the engagement, and it is simply on the score of want of means. Sage, as you know, has no money, and he has

only a small allowance from his father, and has been trying vainly to get some small appointment which would enable them to marry. He says, and he is quite right, that it will be for the happiness of neither to marry into poverty, and so he set her free, and she is just breaking her heart about it.'

'Poor, little Sage!' Even in Pomona's great trouble she can pity Sage, as she lightly touches the flowers in her belt.

'I thought,' he went on, 'that if Lady Lester knew of this, she would not allow the child's happiness to be wrecked, and that, at anyrate, some share might be given her'—

'A share!' she interrupted, 'of what is all her own? But that will be all right now, but it cannot be quite directly. You will tell Sage, and she will tell him. There will be no need to part or break their hearts for want of means. Why did she not tell me about it? This—this friend of yours is, you say, sincerely attached to her?'

How strange women are! You never can reckon on them. There are so many unknown quantities to be taken into account in summing them up, and yet they have one thing in common, Ludlow thought—overpowering curiosity about love affairs. Who would have dreamed that, even in her great and evident distress of mind, Pomona should have cared to ask about Sage's lover? But then Ludlow did not know the meaning of that little bunch of forget-me-nots, or of the fellow-feeling that 'makes us wondrous kind.'

'Very sincerely. I am quite sure he feels this separation as much as she does, and nothing but the hopelessness of the engagement would ever have induced him to break it off.'

'You will tell her,' Pomona repeated, 'I would write to her myself, only I am much occupied with—Lady Lester. I am writing to-day to Mr Freestone, our—Lady Lester's solicitor, and I will ask him to arrange all the business matters as speedily as possible. Only, I am sure Sage will not press it while Lady Lester lives. It is only such a very, very short time to wait.'

She had risen as she spoke, as if to put an end to the interview; and he stood silent, looking at her, feeling miles away from her, utterly out of reach, helpless to comfort or advise, conscious that in the whole world he was the last she would turn to in her trouble. Father and daughter, and yet far apart as the Poles.

'Good-bye,' he said at last—'good-bye; and if ever'—

'Good-bye,' she interrupted quickly. 'You will tell Sage and your friend?'

'Yes,' he said; 'I will tell Sage and Maurice Moore.'

And then he turned to go out, but was stopped by a quick exclamation from Pomona.

'Who did you say? I beg your pardon. I did not quite hear.'

'Maurice Moore, my friend, to whom Sage has been engaged.—Good-bye.'

And then he went out, not knowing how his last words had given the cruellest stab of all to Pomona's heart.

'Is Miss Lester at home?' There was a glad assurance in the voice of the speaker, and a

forward movement, as if the answer were a matter of course, and there was no need of delay even to receive it.

But the man did not step aside to admit him, and the answer was so unexpected that Maurice Moore almost started on hearing it.

'Not at home.'

'Is she in the grounds?' Wondering to himself: 'Can I have missed her?—Had she come to meet me?'

'I think not, sir.'

'Is Lady Lester worse?'

'No; I believe her ladyship is much as usual.'

Maurice stared blankly at the man. What did it mean? But at that moment Pomona's maid came from the back of the hall, and Maurice's face brightened. A note? That was all right, and the first he had ever had from her; and he took the little packet and carried it away, to open when he got into that glade leading down to the water.

It did not take long to read. Inside there was a bunch of crushed forget-me-nots, and on the paper was written in Pomona's hand, 'For Sage Merridew.'

THE FLY COUNTRY.

IN a private letter from one of the pioneers of the British South Africa Company, the following passage occurs: 'We are all to be mounted; and it is taking the horses to certain death; we shall ride through the Fly Country till they die, and then foot it.'

Now, what is meant by this Fly Country, and why should it be especially fatal to horses? are questions of great interest, for they are intimately associated with the past and future of the Dark Continent. The fly referred to is that known as the Tsetse fly, which is thus described by the traveller Baines: 'The tsetse is little more than half an inch long, and rather more slender than a common house-fly. The abdomen is marked with transverse stripes of yellow and dark chestnut, fading towards the centre of the back, so as to give the idea of a yellow stripe along it; the belly, livid white; the eyes are purplish brown; and the wings, of dusky, glassy brown colours, slip one over the other, just as do the blades of a pair of scissors when closed, so that the tsetse at rest on man or animal may infallibly be known by this one token. It has six legs, and tufts of hair over its body; its proboscis, or piercing apparatus, is about one-sixth of an inch long; its sight and smell seem to be keen; its flight straight and rapid.' Here we have the picture of the most formidable opponent to the advance of civilised man in Africa; for wherever the country is unexplored, so that the big game remain undisturbed, there this deadly fly bars the way to those necessary animals the ox, the horse, and the dog, and reduces man to a beast of burden; for although, in the interior, donkeys and mules are supposed to be impervious to tsetse poison, on the coast they also often succumb to the deadly fluid injected by 'the fly.'

Livingstone describes and figures the tsetse with its lancet-like proboscis much magnified.

He says: 'The poison does not seem to be injected by a sting, or by ova placed beneath the skin; for when the insect is allowed to feed freely on the hand, it inserts the middle prong, of three portions, into which the proboscis divides, somewhat deeply into the true skin. It then draws the prong out a little way, and it assumes a crimson colour as the mandibles come into brisk operation. The previously shrunken belly swells out; and if left undisturbed, the fly quietly departs when it is full. A slight itching irritation follows the bite.'

Wild animals and the goat feel no more serious effect from the sting than man, and even calves are exempt as long as they continue to suck the cows; but dogs cannot be protected by being fed on milk. The effect of the poison on oxen and horses is most curious; they do not die at once, and indeed the symptoms do not appear for some days; but then the nose and eyes begin to run, the coat gets rough, a swelling appears under the jaw, and emaciation commences, to be inevitably followed by death, although, perhaps, not for months, the effects of the poison being hastened, however, by rain and sudden changes of temperature. Singular, indeed, is the effect of the bite, or, as the Boers call it, the 'stick' of this fly; for the carcass when examined is found to be almost bloodless; the cellular tissue under the skin is distended with air, resembling a number of soap bubbles; the fat is yellowish-green and oily; the heart so soft that the fingers can be made to meet through it; the lungs and liver are diseased; the stomach and bowels are pale and empty; and the gall bladder is distended with bile. Yet, as Livingstone says, wild animals nearly akin to the horse and ox, such as the buffalo and zebra, suffer no harm; neither do pigs, goats, and wild antelopes; but dogs suffer as severely as horses and oxen. The skin of an animal which has died from the tsetse shows all the punctures on the inside, with a ring of yellow mucus on the flesh beneath each puncture as large as the palm of the hand, and resembling the appearance of a snake-bite.

No certain remedy is known for the puncture of this terrible fly; the native doctors smear their oxen with dung mixed with milk; this is supposed to prevent the attack of the fly, which has a strong dislike to the smell of excrement; but this anointing does not always avail. Inoculation has also been tried without effect; but it is said that to administer the fly itself mixed with herbs gives immunity. Baines says the animal thus treated suffers dreadfully, and is brought almost to death's door; but when it recovers, it is believed to be tsetse-proof. The natives also send the young calves into the Fly Country during the day, bringing them back to be suckled at night, and believe that this renders them safe from the fly afterwards. But the best remedy appears to be sponging the animal with ammonia, or perhaps with carbolic acid and water. This has been tried with good effect, as also a decoction of the bark of the roots of the Wittegaat boom (White-bark tree); and some Boers profess to cure animals recently 'stuck,' claiming an ox for each horse thus cured. Baines also speaks of a horse which was cured by 'Croft's Tincture,' the famous South African remedy for snake-bite; and also of two oxen saved by Perry

Davis's 'Pain-killer.' They stood for three or four days with foam running from their mouths, as if the poisonous matter were being thus ejected. After this they began to eat voraciously, and recovered their condition.

A very curious fact in connection with the tsetse is that it affects certain spots, and is wholly absent from others quite adjoining. Livingstone writes: 'We had come through another tsetse district by night, and at once passed our cattle over to the northern bank, which, though only fifty yards distant, was entirely free from the pest. This was the more singular that we often saw natives carrying over raw meat with many tsetse upon it.' Natives can sometimes lead cattle safely through a fly-infected country by knowing exactly the patches to which they are confined, and thus avoiding them; but, as these patches vary according to the distribution of the 'big game,' their knowledge has to be recently acquired, or it cannot be depended upon.

As the tsetse invariably follows the big game, being known as 'the elephant fly,' it is driven always farther and farther into the interior by the advance of civilised man; but as ivory is one of the chief articles sought for by traders, it is evident that in order to obtain it they must also follow the game, and be subject to the attacks of 'the fly,' and this, from time immemorial, has been one of the chief causes of the slave-trade; for the ox and the horse being unattainable as beasts of burden, traders have seized upon the negro, and having purchased him as well as the ivory from the chieftain in possession of both, have compelled the slave to convey the ivory to the coast, where the bearer as well as the burden becomes valuable property. But as ivory becomes scarcer and more valuable year by year, it will, in spite of philanthropists, be more and more sought after; and if the slave-trade is to be effectually put a stop to, some mode of transport must be found which cannot be affected by the tsetse. The best of all is, of course, the 'iron horse,' which is capable of carrying heavy burdens without entailing suffering upon man or beast; but although a good beginning has already been made, and the Beira Railway has rendered approach to the interior practicable from that part of the coast, it must be many years before railways can advance into the heart of Africa, and meanwhile some beast of burden impervious to the tsetse ought to be found. Many have suggested the African elephant or the zebra; but no serious attempt seems to have been made to tame either for the purpose. Donkeys could hardly be taken in sufficient numbers, even if impervious to the fly, which seems doubtful; but the stout mule so frequently seen in Southern Europe might be employed advantageously. The Indian elephant and the buffalo might also be tried. It would, however, be better still could some medicament be found to render the ox and the horse available, for they are always attainable near the various ports, and would be far less costly than native carriers (not slaves), who have now to be hired to convey goods through the Fly Country, and who frequently refuse the task, or forsake the traveller just when most needed, and who, moreover, can only carry about fifty pounds each on a long march, thus rendering a great cavalcade necessary,

and making the cost of transport at least fourteen pounds a ton.

In the meantime the tsetse reigns, and, ludicrous as it sounds, affords protection to the lordly elephant, and opposes its tiny though formidable lancet—more deadly, and less easily avoided than the poisoned arrow of the Pigny and the assegai of the Kaffir—to the advance of the white man, who dreads this insect foe as much as the malarial fevers which so often prostrate him in the swamps and marshes; for, besides rendering transport difficult and costly, it places him at the mercy of the savage negro chieftains of the interior, who, by refusing to provide carriers, can render his journey abortive.

Thus indirectly the tsetse fly may be regarded as the ruler of the Dark Continent, although, happily, his power is waning, for when pioneers have done their work, and received the fiercest of the onslaught, the elephant and other big game retreat to more secure quarters, whither the fly follows, to be again encountered with certain loss by the progressive white man, but to be eventually exterminated, together with the big game with which it is inseparably associated.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE unexpected shock of Dick Russell's sudden arrival seemed, in some inexplicable way, to put a new complexion upon the rather complicated state of affairs at Denleigh vicarage. As to the cruel and malicious charge made by Joseph Wakelin, that assumed a quite cheerful aspect when this young, strong fellow, with his infectious laugh and happy eyes, had listened to the narrative given by his mother's lips, and then had torn all her fears to shreds, through the remnants of which more sun than shadow was visible.

'You were rather unwise, were you not, ever to let him hear of the loss? Happily, however, one gold piece is uncommonly like another, and I've quite a little sackful up in my port-manteau.'

'But, my dearest son, do you suppose we will rob you?' exclaimed Mildred, her eyes filling. 'If you've been economical enough to save out of your salary, it is yourself who should benefit.'

'So I intend,' he rejoined. 'And to settle old Wakelin's mind is the first of my many advantages. Why, mother, you never thought me selfish enough to be spending all my screw, did you? Only I had a fancy for bringing home a lump, instead of sending dribblets. Of course it is all yours and father's. Don't disappoint me by making a fuss now!'

'At any rate, my boy, we will gladly accept this sum as a loan, until my unfortunate memory reveals what I did with the original amount.'

'Then you don't believe it was stolen?'—in some surprise.

'No; I don't. The more I think about it, the more convinced do I become that I must have put it somewhere for safety. Only the question still remains, where?'

Thus the difficulty was, for the moment, solved. The pupil teachers and the National

Society were paid. And though, owing to Mr Wakelin's fostering care, the story of the loss spread about the parish, and was repeated with surmises and remarks which, had they come to Dick's ears, might have proved detrimental to the peace of the community, the matter was, outwardly at any rate, smoothed over and forgotten.

In regard to the change in Ena's position, however, all was not such plain sailing. For twenty years had these two young folks been taught to regard each other as brother and sister; and if the surprise caused by Sir George's will and the news of Ena's real parentage had come without any preceding interruption to their intercourse, probably the old relationship would scarcely have been disturbed. Such, however, had not been the case.

To Ena, indeed, Dick seemed the same Dick as of yore, only a little older, a trifle more sedate, and a good deal less boisterous and condescending. Also foreign travel appeared to have had upon him the unusual effect of bringing out a tendency to bashfulness unnoticed in earlier youth.

But with the man, matters were far otherwise. When he quitted home, he left behind him a child playfellow, with long flowing hair, and ankles quite plainly to be beheld below her dresses; a child who had been the sharer of his boyish scrapes, the innocent admirer of his wildest escapades, and the sympathising recipient of his university confidence. As a child she had still lingered in his memory during the years of absence; and certainly he would have been less startled to find the same romping, undeveloped girl awaiting his return, than he was at receiving the greeting of a pretty, well-dressed, but quite grown-up young lady. This was not the Ena that he remembered, but altogether a transformed and more impressive personage. And so great was the alteration in herself, that it scarcely occurred to him as extraordinary that her standing towards himself should be different also, and that, in fact, as well as fancy, he had lost his sister Ena for ever.

At first, a sort of shyness fell upon him. When, morning and evening, Ena lifted her face for his kiss of greeting, he blushed; and though he always gave the required caress, he was sensible that perhaps it might have been better to have refrained—a notion which never crossed Ena's brain. But gradually the shyness, though it did not altogether leave him, gathered about itself another and more pleasant sensation. As the days wore on, Dick found that the blank in his life caused by the loss of a sister was becoming more than filled. He discovered that his plans were in some sort governed by Ena's arrangements, and that the thought of her was apt to exercise an influence upon his movements. Last of all, he arrived at the sage conclusion that he must always have had an instinctive realisation that he was not her brother, and that he was extremely glad that the truth regarding her had at length been proclaimed to the world at large. If only they could still keep her to themselves! Yet that was exactly where the hardship lay, that just as she had acquired a new interest and value in his eyes—a value quite unconnected with gold or silver—she must be carried off to make fresh acquaintances, possibly to be inveigled

into a disregard of older and more familiar friends.

'I hate the idea of your going amongst strangers and forgetting all about us,' he exclaimed moodily on the evening before Marmaduke's expected arrival. Mrs Daintry had already written to Mrs Russell, expressing the hope that Ena might travel to Rushton under her son's escort; and Mildred had not seen her way to refuse so natural and proper an invitation. Therefore this was Ena's last night, at least for a while, in the house which from her infancy had been her home.

It was one of those warm, summer-like evenings that sometimes render May such a charming month. The sun was setting behind the houses opposite, and shooting great red rays of glory all athwart the sky. The whole air seemed full of the fading crimson light, which fell upon Dick's dark head, gilding it to bronze; whilst it reflected itself in the brightness of the girl's gray eyes as she stood by the drawing-room window and looked out upon the strip of town garden beyond.

'As though I could ever forget,' she said, soberly and with a quiver in her voice. 'What opinion must you have of me even to say such a thing, Dick?'

He laughed a little. 'It wouldn't be easy to tell you exactly what opinion I have had and still have of you,' he said. 'When I was away, Ena, never a day but the remembrance of you was with me, keeping me, I do believe, very earnestly, from much evil. At that time you used to seem like the child-sister I had left behind.' He paused, finding, apparently, some difficulty in continuing. But she was not looking at him, and therefore did not observe the flush that had crept over his face.

'And now all that will be altered,' she said. 'I'm not your sister! And you'll get to love Bijou more than me; and I shan't come and keep house for you in your curacy; and— Oh, it's perfectly horrid!' With which final outburst of harassed petulance she covered her face with her hands and began to cry, much to the disturbance of her companion.

'Don't, dear, don't!' he implored. 'Ena, you understand just as well as I do that I shall never, never care for that silly Bijou as I do for you.'

The assurance went far to rally her spirits. Truth to tell, Ena was by no means a perfect character, whatever one benighted mortal might consider her. And since she had received the unwelcome tidings of her own rightful place in the world, and consequent loss of all those relationships which had hitherto constituted so great a part of her happiness, there had sprung up in her heart a little, unacknowledged jealousy of Bijou, whose position in the home and household of course remained as of old. Now, therefore, though she did not withdraw her fingers, the voice from behind them sounded almost cheerful as she uttered one word of reply: 'Really?'

'Really and positively. Don't you think,' half timidly, 'that a friend can be quite as nice as a sister, Ena?'

A search which she had been for some seconds diligently conducting in her pocket, here terminated in the distressing discovery that her hand-

kerchief was missing, an idea which entirely drove away all others.

'I wish you'd lend me your handkerchief,' she murmured in the most lugubrious tone. 'I can't imagine what has become of mine.'

That was irresistible to Dick, who was himself as perfectly aware as the lady was absolutely unconscious, that he had been trying his 'prentice hand at love-making. To have his affectionate protestations nipped thus in the bud would have been annoying, had it not been so utterly comic. With a hearty laugh he produced the desired implement. 'Happily, it's a clean one,' he said. 'Ena, you're very little changed, after all! Even governessing hasn't made you prim! Pray, how often used you to have to borrow these articles of your pupils?'

'About once a week,' diligently mopping. 'But they had loads; so, what did it matter? Oh Dick, how hateful of you to have made me cry. It has spoilt all my beauty!'

'Has it?' looking into the flushed countenance and shining eyes.

But the thread of conversation was broken, and he could not take it up where it had been dropped. Besides, Mrs Russell at that moment entered, full of instructions as to the packing. Therefore, when Marmaduke Daintry next day carried off his cousin, pouring showers of information the while upon her devoted and bewildered brain, Ena went in ignorance as to all that Dick had desired to convey, and, indeed, with even a little soreness in her innocent heart that, at parting, when she said good-bye to him, he had not kissed her as usual.

Rushton House was a large and handsome building, of a type very different from the spacious but tasteless dwellings of Mr Wakelin and his brother magnates at Denleigh. The ancient gray walls frowned down upon a garden where old-fashioned flowers were allowed to bloom luxuriantly, and where carpet bedding was mainly conspicuous by its absence. But as the victoria, which had been sent to the station to meet Sir Marmaduke and Ena, bowled quickly along and drew up at the hospitably open door, the breeze came to her laden with the scent of early roses and fragrant lilies of the valley.

'What a grand old place!' she exclaimed, in honest admiration. For a wonder, there had been a momentary pause in the Baronet's stream of talk.

'Awfully jolly, don't you know? A little ramshackle and all that. But money will soon put it to rights. Sir George would never spend anything, but scraped and hoarded in the queerest fashion. Don't intend to go in for that sort of stinginess myself. However,' recollecting that here was a fine opening for a compliment, 'he had so lovely an object for whom to hoard and save, that now I wonder much less than I used at his odd ways.'

'Do you mean me?' with a slight stare of astonishment. 'It's very kind of you to say such nice things. But as Sir George had never even seen me, why'— And she wound up with a quizzical laugh just as the horses came to a stand-still.

In the hall, a tall, rather stately woman was awaiting with some eagerness the new-comer.

Hers had been a sorrowful life, and its troubles had drawn deep lines upon the high forehead and round the once rosy mouth. Married very young to a man for whom she had no love, Cordelia Daintry had been left a widow with two little sons before reaching her twenty-fifth year. Of these boys, her heart had fixed itself upon the younger, and him she watched droop and die in his childhood. The elder lad was at that time at a school, selected by his grandfather—upon whom they were all entirely dependent—solely on account of its cheapness. Here, amongst rough boys, of far inferior rank to his own, the future Baronet was educated, in spite of his mother's remonstrances. Flattered by the masters on account of his prospects, bullied by the boys because of his lack of pocket-money and hampers, Marmaduke grew year by year more unmanageable and less attractive. No persuasions on the part of his daughter-in-law could induce Sir George to incur the expense of a university education for his heir. Nor, indeed, did the youth, who preferred complete idleness, desire it for himself. And Cordelia had the mortification of seeing in her son, upon his entrance into such society as the neighbourhood afforded, a vulgar, underbred representative of a once fine race.

To his marriage she now looked forward as the one hope of saving him from the consequences of past years. If he could but meet with some sweet, gentle girl, whose soft voice and winning ways might have a softening influence upon his coarse manners, and whose money might enrich the estate, impoverished by Sir George's will, Mrs Daintry's ambition would, so far as it yet survived, be satisfied. And as Marmaduke had, upon the first blush of the affair, loudly announced his intention of 'making up to the little impostor' named by his grandfather as so large a legatee, the lady's anxiety to behold Ena may be better imagined than described. It was an anxiety very speedily set at rest, for the worn, rather tired face and the wistful look that crept into her hostess's eyes as she held out her hand in welcome, touched Ena's warm heart. The girl lifted her face and kissed her aunt.

'My dear, I hope you have had a pleasant journey?' It was the customary inquiry, but made in so refined and musical a voice that Ena almost started. Why, oh, why did the son bear no nearer a resemblance to the mother?

'Very, thank you. The'—

'Well, Ena may have enjoyed it. But as to me, I'm downright famished. Thought perhaps they'd have offered one a glass of beer or something at the vicarage; but no such luck.'

Mrs Daintry saw Ena's colour rise.

'I am sorry that you were not in time for luncheon,' the girl exclaimed; 'but I fancied that I heard my mother ask you'—

'Mother! She's no mother of yours! Just look here, Ena; the best thing you can do now is to drop all that rot, don't you know? Old Russell and his wife'—

But even his rattling tongue was silenced there, as his cousin, to whom he was handing a cup of tea, prepared by Mrs Daintry, waved it on one side and stood up. 'Sir Marmaduke, you had better understand something once for all,' she said. 'Mr and Mrs Russell have been more than parents to me during the years when your grand-

father would have left me, as he left my mother, to starve. The next slighting word that you utter against them will compel me to leave your house and to consider yourself from henceforth as a stranger. Thank you,' reseating herself, and accepting the cup he still held. 'Yes, cream; but no sugar, please.'

Not another word passed upon the subject, for Mrs Daintry was too wise to undertake an apology, and her son was actually cowed. But Ena had fought her battle, and her sense of love and gratitude were not again wounded.

Blind as Sir George's grand-daughter had proved to Dick's earliest attempts at winning her, she was quite unable to close her eyes to the persistent efforts of her next suitor. That Sir Marmaduke destined her to occupy the honourable and coveted position of a Baronet's wife had become, within twenty-four hours of her arrival at Rush-ton, as obvious to herself as to the rest of the world. Nor was he one likely to show himself a laggard in wooing or in explaining his wishes, which, within a week, he did in fact accomplish. Certainly, considered as that of a lover, Sir Marmaduke's method might be pronounced unique. The opportunity which he selected to make Ena acquainted with the glory in store for her was one afforded by Mrs Daintry's absence upon a shopping expedition, from which a headache had detained Ena. Later in the day, however, the cool breeze tempted her out, and she started to walk down the avenue to the park gates, where she might probably wait for the returning carriage and drive back with her aunt to the house. But circumstances were too strong for her. She had not accomplished half the distance, when she encountered her cousin, who forthwith announced his intention of accompanying her, and then and there proceeded to expound his views of their future.

'So glad to see that you and the old lady take to each other,' was his first, happily worded, remark. 'She's awfully fond of you, Ena. Thinks you altogether out of the ruck, not in the least one of the common or garden sort!'

'Very good of her!' with an uncontrollable little burst of laughter.

'Oh, not at all, not at all! Any one can see that you were well born, and all that, don't you know? And the mater thinks so much of blood and good breeding, that otherwise things mightn't have been pleasant. Never do for you two, living in one house as you'll have to do, not to agree. She has the right to remain here always.'

'So she ought to have,' indignantly.

'But some girls wouldn't say so. I declare I was struck all of a heap, don't you know? at one time, fancying what battles there might be between her and my wife. But now that's settled comfortably for all parties.'

'Indeed? Allow me to congratulate you. I was not aware of any engagement.' She spoke half in mischief, half with the intention of showing the complete futility of his hopes. Anything would be better than to allow him to indulge in the impracticable dreams which she and her wealth—especially the latter—had induced, though to listen to a formal declaration of his passion was not an occupation which Ena

desired. Sir Marmaduke, however, quickly rose to the bait.

'Oh, come now, Ena,' with a laugh. 'Where's the use of coyness between you and me? The whole county is talking about the way we stand to each other, though I've never actually told you in so many words that I wanted you. There! confess now that you ain't so ignorant as you pretend!'

She flushed all over her face at his boldness. It seemed to her little short of an insult thus to have taken her consent for granted. 'Pardon me. Whatever may be my ignorance, of one thing I am very certain—I shall never be your wife.'

But he only laughed the more loudly. 'Nonsense, my dear. You don't mean to tell me that you're one of the sort that would rob a man of half the fortune that properly belongs to him, and give it to some other chap? Got you there, eh, Ena?'

The sound of advancing wheels told her of speedy interruption and deliverance; yet, ere that happened, she desired to guard against any repetition of such an interview. 'Here's the carriage coming,' she exclaimed, standing still and facing him. 'But before it reaches us, let me be quite plain and frank with you. Believe me, it is best. Nothing that you can say or do, no taunt and no inducement, will ever make me marry you. Please accept this as my final answer.'

For a second or two he stared at her, all the jocularity dying out of his countenance, and a ferocious anger taking its place. At last, very slowly, he turned away. 'Then I'll be seeing after some one else,' he remarked, 'and the sooner you're off these premises the better. I was a fool, or I'd have taken in what all that talk about brother Dick meant! Fancy preferring a parson to a Baronet!'

But by that time Ena was seated in the victoria, offering pretty welcomings to Mrs Dainty, who, upon her side, found it extremely pleasant to be thus petted and made much of by a fair girl who might some day be to her as a daughter. Not the less, however, was Ena's mind fully made up upon the necessity for quitting Rushton House with all decent haste.

With regard to the broad hint concerning Dick, she thrust it out of her memory for the moment, though she did not as yet fully realise to what it had opened her own eyes. She instinctively comprehended that it was one of those matters that must be considered in solitude and quiet. For it had brought her heart and her brain face to face.

That evening, as Mr Russell returned homewards after a long afternoon of visiting in the poorest parts of his parish, he paused to pat on the head a little, curly-haired youngster of about seven years old. The boy looked up at him slyly from under his long eyelashes, the pale, unchildlike features lighting up the while with some feeling at which the vicar did not guess.

'Do you know me, my lad? Are you one of the Sunday-school boys?' he asked kindly.

'Not o' yourn noo. Feyther, 'e 'on't let me goo no more theer. I'm to goo t' Methodists,

coom Soonday. 'E says as thees stole some mooney, and as I shall larn that sort o' thing quick eno' wi'oot trooblin' passon for't.'

Mr Russell's caressing hand fell limply at his side. So, whilst he had been content to fancy the whole trouble at an end, the scandal had been growing day by day, until it had reached a pitch when a child dared fling it in his teeth! No wonder that Mildred started at the sight of the drawn visage that encountered her gaze when, as usual, she went to the door to admit her husband, or that they sat together far into the night over the study fire—the evening had closed in chill and foggy—discussing the terrible little narrative.

'I can see nothing for it but a prosecution for libel against Wakelin,' exclaimed Charles, as at last they wearily rose. 'And I hate to go to law with one of my people.'

'Yet it is for the sake of your people that you must clear your name,' urged Mildred, almost timidly. 'For their sake as much as for our own and our children's.'

'Clear my name! Even the heaviest damages would scarcely do that now. A clergyman's reputation must be above suspicion. To think that my parishioners, after all these years, can believe such evil of me! It breaks my heart.'

YARMOUTH BLOATERS AND RED HERRINGS.

To the herring, for which Yarmouth is so famous, the town owed its first inhabitants. Its site was originally a sandbank in the sea, and was buried beneath the waves until some time in the fifth century, when it began to lift its head above the water. As soon as it had become completely emancipated, the fishermen who resorted to the neighbourhood in pursuit of the shoals of herring, found it was a convenient spot on which to dry their nets. They next erected on it tents, and other temporary shelters for the accommodation of themselves and of the merchants who came to them from London, Norwich, and other populous centres. As the advantages of the site as a fishing station became more and more apparent, the temporary structures gave place to dwellings and sheds of a permanent character.

For the Yarmouth boats nowadays the herring-fishery begins soon after midsummer, and lasts for some eighteen or twenty weeks. At the beginning of the season the boats go into the North Sea and meet the shoals off Scarborough and Grimsby. Very gradually the fish make their way southwards; and the Yarmouth men keep with them until they have passed the little town of Southwold, on the Suffolk coast. In October the fish are off Yarmouth, and are then in their prime. As if anxious to be taken at their best, they come quite close to the beach, so that small shore-boats are able to take part in their capture. These boats are manned by three men, and carry nets which reach a total length of half a mile.

The regular fishing-boats carry nine or ten men and a boy, according to the size of the vessel. If all the space below deck was devoted to the accommodation of the crew, the amount that

could be allotted to each individual would appear to a landsman as most uncomfortably circumscribed. But the hold has to contain the fishing-gear and the fish as well as the men, and consequently the captors are packed about as closely together as their captives. The long hours of arduous toil are unrelieved by anything approaching comfort in bed or at board. There, to quote the forcible words of one of the men, 'it is hog-lying and hog-feeding.'

About one hundred and forty fishing-boats are registered as belonging to Yarmouth; and the neighbouring port of Lowestoft, which, so far as the herring-fishery is concerned, is another Yarmouth, has a like number. Each of these boats, when new and fully furnished with fishing-gear, costs some thirteen hundred pounds. The herring-nets, which, by the way, are generally of Continental make, are twenty-two yards long by eight or nine broad, and cost thirty shillings each. As a boat carries from one hundred and sixty to two hundred nets, it is evident that their total loss—a by no means unfrequent occurrence—is a very serious matter. At Yarmouth, the crew make good any damage to the nets up to a maximum of ten pounds, any loss beyond that falling upon the owner. But at Lowestoft a different custom prevails; there the whole of the loss has to be borne by the men.

A few years ago, the dog-fish, a kind of shark, wrought havoc among the nets, tearing and even eating them in its voracious attack on the herrings fast in the meshes. This pest is now rarely met with. The cod will lay heavy toll on the ensnared herrings, but it does not greatly injure the nets. The loss of nets is now chiefly occasioned by sudden storms, by trawlers, and by excessive catches of fish. If the nets become overlaid with fish, they sink, and are irrecoverable. Barring such untoward accidents, the nets will last for four or five years, and can be gradually replaced. Three or four times during the season they are brought ashore to be retanned, which is done by dipping them into a dark-coloured liquid. When in use they are spliced along one side to a rope, and, being placed end to end, form, from each boat, a snare two miles or more in length. The whole is floated by corks and small barrels. Off Yarmouth the nets are kept near the surface of the water; but in the North Sea they are suspended at a varying depth, determined by the brightness of the moon. Sometimes they are so far down that the lower edge touches the ground.

The nets are 'shot' about three o'clock in the afternoon; at about seven the nearest net is examined. If there are not more than a couple of hundred fish in it, it is let down again, after being emptied, and the work of hauling-in is postponed for two or three hours. Steam is now generally employed to turn the capstan by which the nets are brought on board, thus saving time and relieving the men of a task which cruelly taxed their strength. As it is, they are still severely tried.

As the fish are taken from the nets, they are cast into the hold and salted, layers of fish and layers of salt alternating. A ton of salt is allowed to each 'last' of fish. Last is a numerical term. It nominally means ten thousand; but in practice it signifies thirteen thousand and two hundred, for, according to the peculiar

computation of the fishers, one hundred and thirty-two herrings are counted as one hundred. The ordinary fishing-boats will hold from twenty to twenty-five lasts, and are sometimes filled by one cast of the nets. On such occasions, the men have to work continuously for twenty hours; for, if the hauling-in begins at seven o'clock in the evening, the last net will not be cleared before three or four in the following afternoon; and until that is done, no rest is possible. When the catch is not more than three or four lasts, the boat generally stays at sea for another night.

The fish are taken to the nearest port; but wherever caught or cured, the prestige of Yarmouth is thrown over them; they are all sold as Yarmouth bloaters or red herrings. Even the large, coarse, Norwegian herring is made to share this distinction, much, one would think, to the detriment of the character of the genuine article.

The landing-place for the fish taken to Yarmouth is on the left bank of the Yare, quite away from the sandy beach and the holiday-makers. The wharf is laid with neat granite cubes, and is forty feet wide. For the convenience of the buyers and sellers, there is, adjoining the wharf, a building seven hundred and fifty feet in length and forty feet wide, erected at a cost exceeding twenty thousand pounds. Here may be witnessed, during the herring season, some very exciting and interesting scenes; for, when big catches have been made, as many as two thousand lasts are sometimes landed in twenty-four hours.

The fish are removed from the hold by hand, and a whole day is occupied in clearing a boat that has a full cargo. The combined effect of the pressure to which the lower portion is subjected and of the salt with which the fish are mixed, is to convert the greater portion of the contents of the hold into a solid rock-like mass, which cruelly lacerates the hands of those who, from any cause, do not follow the usual practice of wearing mittens while unloading.

The salted fish are taken from the boats to the premises of the curers, where women at once wash them well in huge tubs. Other women then thread them through the gills on rounded sticks, each holding about twenty-five herrings. By means of these sticks they are suspended in the smoke in which they are dried. The smoke which gives the most delicate flavour is produced by the burning of oak in the form of billets, shavings, and sawdust; but rubbish and chemicals are too frequently employed. The combustion takes place on the bare floor of the curing-house, a lofty building, with its upper portion divided by louvres, arranged parallel to each other at such a distance apart that a man can just straddle across the intervening space, and extending from the roof to about seven feet from the floor. On one pair of the lowest beams stands a man to place on the louvres within his reach the ends of the rods filled with fish as they are handed to him by a woman, or to pass them on to a companion standing above him, over whose head stands a third man to fill the uppermost part. The rods are placed about three inches apart, the space in every direction being just sufficient to prevent the fish from touching each other. Sometimes the workers become almost as smoke-

dried as the fish, for their task is pursued regardless of the condition of the fires.

The herrings are all alike when they go into the curing-house, and are differentiated by the length of time they are in the smoke. Those which are removed after an exposure of an hour or two are of a light colour, and are the 'bloaters' of the fish-shops. They are preferred by Londoners, and are the most profitable to the curers. The longer the fish remain in the smoke the darker they become, and they are finally known as 'red herrings' or 'black herrings,' according to the stage at which the curing ceased. At the other end of the scale are the white herrings. They are the fish just as they are drawn from the sea, and can only be brought in when but a short time will elapse between their capture and their being landed. Well-cured herrings will 'keep' until the following season. The red herrings form the majority of those that are cured. The black herrings are largely exported to Roman Catholic countries.

As the remuneration of the fishermen depends upon the value of the fish they take, it goes without saying that their earnings are uncertain and extremely fluctuating. A catch which fills a boat to its utmost capacity may not be worth so much to the crew as one less than a quarter as great. The quantity of fish that one day would readily fetch twenty pounds, might on another, when the market was glutted, be with difficulty disposed of for a tenth of that sum. The season of 1892 was a good one. Hardly a boat took less than a thousand pounds' worth of fish, while the earnings of many mounted up to thirteen or fourteen hundred pounds. Of the gross sum received, some three or four hundred pounds would be required to meet expenses. The owners of the most successful boats would receive six or seven hundred pounds, and the remainder would be divided among the respective crews.

Not a great sum is it, then, that the hardy herring-fishers earn for themselves by the best part of half a year's toil—toil that, they say, is at times 'harder than any harvest-work'—toil that is ever attended by discomfort and oftentimes by danger. The sea does not allow them to reap their portion of its harvest without exacting such toll as gives fresh occasion for prayers for 'the fatherless and widows.' It is not only the 'caller herrin' that are drawn from the Firth of Forth that may be called the 'lives o' men.'

THE WINNING OF PADDON MANOR.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

I FOUND Bickford seated on a bench in the yard where the prisoners walked, with a mug of ale and a pipe, looking by no means down-cast.

'What cheer, Jack?' I said. 'So you've let them catch you at last.'

'Don't ee be veared vor me, Joe,' he answered, puffing at his pipe. 'Buin't no want of money vor liars' (meaning lawyers).

'Ay, Jack,' I said, 'maybe, for this job; but there's worse, and more of it, to come. Concerning fishing, I mean, not smuggling.'

'How do ee mean, vjshin'?' he said.

'Did ever you catch aught but fish?' I said

—'horses, or the like. Alas, Jack, Botany Bay is your port without a doubt, and your wife and children on the parish.'

The pipe dropped out of his mouth and shivered on the stones, while he stared at me, with his eyes as round and his face near as white as a barn owl's.

'All is out, Jack,' I went on. 'My uncle Westcott has confessed it in my presence. Down it is in black and white, with two magistrates witnessing it, and throwing most of the blame on you. Fourteen years' transportation is the least you can expect; and I almost fear that it may come to hanging. But it is sad to see a respectable man of your age, with a large family, about to be taken from them, to wear chains, and eat rotten biscuit, and be flogged once a week for the rest of his life.'

I almost thought that he would, being a stout man, have fallen down in a fit; but when he found his voice, he used it to some purpose.

'The ould roag!' he shouted, with many words which I omit. 'Why, 'twas his plannin', vast an' last, an' I did no more than haul ropes.'

'Good pay for hauling ropes, Jack,' I said. '—But come this way;' for the others came crowding round us. 'There is one chance, and that I am come to give you, entirely out of friendship, for you would not have known till too late. I will write down now, as you shall tell me, how it happened, and how an honest sailor was led into doing such wickedness, thinking it but a joke. Then you shall sign it; and the head-turnkey, or who you will, shall witness your signature; and I will take it post haste to Squire Rendell, who as yet knows nothing; and with a proper use of your family in court, you may see them again in five years.'

Now, all this would not have gone down even with an ignorant man like Bickford, but that the thing came so suddenly upon him. However, I gave him no time to think, but brought him to the room where the lawyers saw their clients, and wrote as fast as I could, whilst a man, cast for sheep-stealing, sat and groaned very dismally.

What it came to was pretty much what I had guessed. The night before the trial of swimming was to be made, my uncle and Bickford, being bribed by Squire Hilliard, had laid down fifty fathoms of a strong ground-seine, made fast, that the upper edge was a yard under water. A gap was left in it of two fathoms, marked by the corks of crab-pots, to guide Squire Hilliard's course. If the net should be discovered, it would pass for one left by accident by Paignton fishermen; but the devil helping them, all went well, and they took care to remove it from the drowned horse, as my uncle had said in his sleep. I asked if the gentlemen in the boat perceived nothing; but he said that, what with drinking of healths the night before and the rocking of the boat, their heads were of little use to them.

So I buttoned up the paper in my breast-pocket, duly signed and attested, and left him, congratulating him on the ease he must now feel in his mind, of which, however, no signs appeared in his countenance. I promised myself much sport, when I should make known to Uncle Westcott how basely he had betrayed his mate and employer. But as I returned on the coach

next morning, who should pass us but the very man himself, in our spring-cart, with a boy driving him. When I got home, Kate told me that he had come over in a mighty fluster, and begged the loan of the cart to take him to Exeter upon most important business.

About noon the next day my uncle came back in the cart, but in a sad plight, having two fine black eyes, and his face bound up in a handkerchief.

'Uncle,' I said very seriously, as I assisted him down, 'it is quite time for you to leave off these rackety doings. You will be up for manslaughter one day, with this fighting.'

He only grunted at this, and I led him into the parlour and set a glass of grog before him.

'Vightin'! he groaned—'much vightin' I done; 'twas Jack Bickford. Her've gone clane mad, vor I cudn' spake a word avore her got me vast by the nose an' most pulled it off my vace, an' banged me about most cruel, carlin' o' me all the old rogues an' betrayin' devils.'

But here I could contain myself no longer, and, falling into a chair, I laughed till the people in the street stopped to listen.

'Be 'ee mad too, Joe?' snuffled my uncle through the handkerchief.

'Never less,' I said. 'But surely you must have been, to go near him. That ever my mother's brother should be the man to do such a thing! What made you inform on him and yourself?'

'Never a word have I spoke consarnin' his doin's!' he said.

'Nor about the nice little trap you laid for Squire Rendell,' I said—'the swimming match, and the seine-net, and the rest?' And here my uncle slipped off his chair, and lay on the floor in a dead faint.

He was carried up-stairs and put to bed; but the shock was almost too much for him, and, falling into a fever, he became light-headed, and put us to no small trouble. For my part, I felt no pity for him; for though I had lost some scruples in the Indies, this was altogether beyond me.

But now it was time for me to call on Squire Rendell with my budget of news. Accordingly, I hired a good horse, and in my best clothes rode up the street like any dragoon, whilst the boys shouted to each other, 'Zee zailor capten a horseback;' and passing the 'World,' old Hawke had the impudence to tell me 'to keep a grip o' the rigging.' So I came out on the Ashburton road, and a pleasant one it was, between hills, red and green, like a Highlandman's plaid, with pasture and corn-fields, and the July sunshine on the dog-rose and traveller's joy in the hedges, and the gray tors of Dartmoor in the north-west; but most of all with the sense of being on a good errand which was likely to bring profit.

When I saw the church tower of Ashburton between the two hills, I inquired of a labouring man for Darleigh, and turning in at a gate he showed me, I was presently in front of the house. It was not so large or fine as Paddon, having been built in Queen Elizabeth's time by the first Squire Rendell; but it was well enough, with a terrace before it, and stone vases thereon, and a

peacock spreading his tail on one, reminding me of India. As I sighted it, a man with two dogs following came out of the hall door and down the road towards me; and as he approached, I knew Squire Rendell, a fine and hearty young man, looking thoroughly generous and liberal, but graver than a man should look at less than thirty, with a good estate and married for love.

'Joseph Smerdon, sir,' I said, dismounting, 'come over from Newton to speak with your honour.'

'Ah!' said he, 'the new landlord of the "Bull." I have heard of your luck in getting to a safe port after shipwreck.'

'It is too soon yet to boast, sir,' I said. 'That is for time to show. But I think your honour has been even luckier than I, for when I last saw you, the doctor of your regiment had almost given you up.'

'What!' he said; 'were you there? I remember a tall sailor, who brought me water.'

'That was I, sir,' I said. 'You remember that I wore a Dutchman's hat, having lost my own in the ditch.'

'So you did,' he replied. 'Well, I am truly glad to see you, and we have both much to be thankful for. Is there anything in which I can serve you?'

'Not as yet, sir,' I answered; 'but it was not to remind you of that I came. I have something to tell your honour that will take your breath away, like the Dutchman's bullet.'

He looked me in the eyes, and I saw that his breath came short. 'Is it about?'—he said, and nodded in the direction of Paddon.

'It is,' I said; and without saying more, we went on to the house. He called a fellow to take charge of my horse, and showed me to a little room, overlooking the flower-garden. Here he shut the door, and waited for me to begin.

'Sir,' I said, 'please to read this;' and I drew out the paper which was signed by Bickford. Before he had read two lines, he gave a great start, and then went on to the end with a strange working of his mouth. Then he rose hastily, and going to a press, poured out a glass of something and drank it, after which he stood for a long time with his back to me, looking out of the window.

'Mr Smerdon,' he said at last, turning round, 'this is heavy news indeed, and I can scarce believe it. I have never thought well of Mr Hilliard; but I would never have dreamed of this.'

'Sir,' I answered, 'when you are come, like me, to middle age, you will not be so easily astonished. I have known rich men do as bad, or worse, to get a thousand pounds.—But will your honour be able to recover the estate?'

'That only a lawyer can tell,' he said. 'At any rate, we must have the evidence of this other man.'

'That we can have, sir,' I said, 'for I am ashamed to say he is my uncle, now lying sick at my house, and it would be well if you saw him without delay.' Then I told him how it had come to my knowledge, and he was pleased to compliment me.

'It was nothing, sir,' I said, 'but luck, which is at the bottom of most things, with a small gift of my own in putting two and two together.'

'I wish,' he said, 'that some of my friends on the bench of magistrates had as much.—But now you must want some refreshment after your ride.'

He withdrew, taking the paper with him; but before he had been gone many minutes, I heard Madam Rendell's voice, which was so clear and penetrating, that she might as well have been in the room.

'What a horrible villain!' she cried. 'George, you must take out a warrant against him immediately, and have him hanged, and all of them.—But he ought to be,' she went on. 'What is the good of the law, if they hang a man for stealing a sheep, and not for stealing an estate?'—Here a door shut, and it was time, for the maid who brought the tray for me, was standing in the doorway, with her eyes and ears, too, wide open.

I made a good meal, and was wishing that I might venture on a pipe, when in came the Squire and his wife, whose cheeks were the colour of the roses outside, and her eyes full of hot indignation.

I rose to make my bow, but she came forward and held out her hand to me. 'Oh, Mr Smerdon!' she exclaimed, 'my husband has told me of you and your dreadful misfortunes, and how you saved him from the Dutchmen; and now you have managed so cleverly, and taken all this trouble to restore him his father's property. I don't know how we can ever show our gratitude'—

'Nelly, my dear Nelly!' broke in the Squire, laughing in spite of himself. 'Do, please, restrain yourself. You have quite put Mr Smerdon out of countenance. I am deeply obliged for all he has done; but we are not at Paddon yet, by a long way.'

'Madam,' I said, 'you have already rewarded me beyond my deserts.—But there is no need for me to stay longer; and if your honour will come over to-morrow, or the day after at latest, we shall make another step forwards.'

This was on a Wednesday; and on Friday, Squire Rendell and a lawyer from Exeter arrived at the 'Bull,' and were shown up into the room where my uncle was. If he had had his wits more about him, he would have been a difficult man to deal with; but shaken as he was, and in danger of his life, in a darkened room, smelling of physis, the lawyer soon had from him very nearly the same confession that Bickford had made. But it seemed that the matter was by no means so easy a one as I had thought, for the lawyer said that, though he could not remember such a case, he feared that the law would not recognise a gambling debt (except in its own lottery); and there was, moreover, a thing called the 'Statute of Limitations,' to prevent the jails being too full. Squire Hilliard was at this time away in London, where it was reported that he used to lead a life very different from his habits at home. Jack Bickford had broken jail, and not been recaptured, which so terrified my uncle, that he was afraid to live again by himself at Teignmouth, and scarcely dared show himself outside our house.

Some two months passed on, during which the lawyers did nothing that I could hear of. One day, towards the middle of September, two men,

Thomas and William Saunders by name, cattle-dealers of Bristol, came to the 'Bull,' substantial men evidently, and riding good horses. They were on the business of buying cattle, to fatten against Christmas, but finding, as they said, prices too high, they left us, and went westward. The day after their departure I had business which called me to Ashburton; and in order to return early, I started almost at daybreak, and rode on so, in the freshness of the morning, that in an hour's time I had reached the town. But as I came to the first houses, I heard behind me the sound of hoofs, and turning, beheld a lady on horseback galloping, and a groom following, who had much ado to keep up. As she came past, I saw that it was Madam Rendell. She knew me, and pulled up as soon as she could, with a plunge and scattering of gravel.

'Madam,' I said, 'is anything the matter? I trust nothing has happened to the Squire?' for I saw that her looks were agitated, and her dress as if she had slept in it.

'I wish I could think so,' she answered; 'but he went yesterday afternoon across the moor to Bovey, and has not returned, though he promised me faithfully to be back by eight. And, what is worse, I have learned that the man Hilliard went the same way.'

'I shall be glad, madam,' I said, 'if you will allow me to see you over the moor; for it is an unkind place, and your groom is not the fellow to be of much service, if you should meet any of the rough folk, tanners or gipsies.'

I remembered, in saying this, that Kate would be in a like pother about me; but I turned from my way, and we went up North Street as the chimneys were beginning to smoke.

We climbed the grievously steep and stony lane towards Widecombe, with the song of birds and rustling of leaves around us in Buckland Woods, and the distant roar of Dart in the valley below; and so past Buckland Church, till the Beacon lay on our left. Here the west side of the moor was before us, gray and rocky, and tumbled like a hurricane sea, yet gay with heather and the furze, which, as they say, goes not out of bloom but when love is out of fashion. Nothing alive was to be seen except some moor ponies far away, and a fox gliding like a red shadow among the stones.

We turned eastward to Rippon Tor, from the top of which good eyes can see Wales on a clear day; and passing round the base of it, we saw a horse feeding, with the saddle turned under his belly. The fool of a groom had no more sense than to sing out, 'Squire's mare, ma'am, Squire's mare vor zarten;' and Madam Rendell turned white to the lips and swayed in her saddle. I went to her assistance, and persuaded her to take a sip of cherry brandy, for which my wife was famous. For I had seen what was far worse, a dead man, in horseman's clothes, lying on his back in the furze, a hundred yards away.

I rode up to him with my heart in my mouth; but how was I amazed to find him that worthy dealer in bullocks, Mr Thomas Saunders, dead of a shot in the breast!

I told this to Madam Rendell; but she would not be satisfied except with her own eyes; and wondering greatly what all this might mean, I proposed that we should ascend Hey Tor, which

would give us a wide lookout. Now, on the top of this hill are two huge great rocks of moorstone, like castles, which can be seen half over Devonshire; and as we approached them, a man came from behind the nearer and ran down the hill to us. Before I could think, Madam was galloping to meet him, reckless of rocks and holes, and flung herself off into his arms, while I judged it good manners to try to make out the Start Point, and the groom fell a-blubbering.

But all the surprises that had gone before were nothing to what awaited us when Squire Rendell bade us follow him to the back of the rock, which is shaped like a judge's head with a wig. Here we found that upright magistrate, Squire Hilliard, not upright any longer, but laid helpless, in a sheltered place among the rocks, and covered with a horseman's cloak. At the sight of him, Madam Rendell turned away, as though she saw a snake; but the Squire bade me ride as fast as I could to a moor farm over two miles away, and bring help; and the groom he sent to catch his horse. It was lucky that I was there, for the men at the farm knew no more than their pigs what to do; and I had to rig up a kind of hammock out of poles and rickcloth with my own hands. There was no surgeon at Bovey, so we went on to Ashburton, four men carrying him, and we riding behind.

And as we went, Squire Rendell told me how this had come to pass. He was detained very late at Bovey, and making haste to return, just as he entered on the moor, his mare, a young and skittish beast, fell, throwing him over her head, and galloped away. He set out to walk; but it fell so pitch dark that he altogether lost his way, and was fain to pass the night, wrapped in his cloak, under the lee of a rock. In the morning he found himself on the wrong side of Hey Tor, and was crossing it, when he heard the sound of pistol-shots, and a horse came galloping up the hill with his rider clinging to his neck, who rolled off at his very feet, being no other than Squire Hilliard. Now the explanation was—as made with much groaning by the wounded man—that these honest butchers of Bristol were a pair of notorious London rogues and land-pirates, who had made that town too hot to hold them. One of these Squire Hilliard had met in the low company which he used in London, and given him mortal offence. So that, overtaking him by chance as he returned from Utcombe, words arose between them, and this rogue pulled out a pistol and shot him through the back. He returned the shot, and, as it proved, killed the fellow; but his horse being frightened, ran away with him; and the other man—having, as he said, when he came to be hanged, no stomach for the work—went off at speed. All this had happened not more than an hour ago, and what the two men had said to each other in that time I know not; but when we came to Ashburton, Squire Rendell desired me to accompany his wife back, while a carriage was procured to take the wounded man to Darleigh; and I saw that as we went, there was a look of triumph on her face.

I waited in much anxiety to hear what the ending of the business would be; but before long, I and all the county knew that Squire Hilliard, before he died, which he did in great pain, had

made a will restoring to Squire Rendell the Paddon estate which he had won from his father, but saying nothing of the baseness he had used to do so.

As for my uncle, I packed him home to Teignmouth, bidding him settle accounts how he liked with Jack Bickford, if they met. But this they never did, nor did any one ever learn what became of that honest seaman, for a body found in the salmon nets at Sheldon had been too long in the water for certainty. My uncle died about a year after, leaving his property to a far-away cousin.

Squire Rendell behaved in a truly liberal way, saying that he felt as much indebted to me as if I had indeed brought Paddon back to him; and my eldest son I named after him. And now that he is dead and all concerned in it, I write these lines, at the age of seventy-two, being unwilling that all knowledge of such a strange affair should perish when I follow Kate to the churchyard.

AT THE EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.

A LADY VISITING.

LADY.

Oh, dwellers on the deadly reef,
The shunned of every crew,
I've sailed across the summer sea
The breakers dread to view;
I've come to mark your lonely home,
And image to my heart
The scene 'mid which, with calm resolve,
You take so brave a part.

MEN.

Ah, Lady Fair, these sleeping waves
Are giants when they wake,
And from their crests the snowy foam
Like plumes of warriors shake!
But as they leap with frantic force
And thunder-threat of war,
We keep aloft the radiant Light
To be a warning star!

LADY.

Oh, give me each your good right hand;
Oh, give it free, I pray;
I hold each sturdy clasp more worth
Than aught I know to-day.
Oh, let me feel a new-born pride,
Nor chide the fancy down,
That thus my silken life is knit
A moment to your own.

MEN.

Oh, Lady Fair, your kindly words
Our hearts will fondly store,
To cheer us on our lonely rock,
And 'mid the tempest's roar;
While scamen brave shall fearless sail,
And know the reef is far,
For we will guard the radiant Light
That is their warning star!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

MANCHESTER is responsible for a number of bold and successful industrial innovations, and wonderful as the result of some of these has been in the past, the present year (1893) will bring to completion a scheme which certainly surpasses all former efforts of a similar kind in extent, in cost, and in usefulness, and which, from its far-reaching influence, will form an epoch in the history of British trade and manufactures. This new and great undertaking is the Ship Canal which is to convert Manchester into a commodious and well equipped inland seaport, and put it in communication with all parts of the world. The history of the Canal, so far, reveals that during its construction it had more than its share of those difficulties and misfortunes to overcome which usually attend great enterprises when under construction. But these—with the powerful and influential opposition it has had to encounter, and its disheartening financial troubles—will all be forgotten soon, more so now that its completion is an accomplished fact, and they need not be recapitulated or enlarged on here. The questions to be considered now are: (1) What has the Ship Canal Company received in return for its large expenditure? and (2) What are its capabilities and prospects?

The Canal is thirty-five and a half miles in length between its two extremities, and as Manchester stands sixty and a half feet above the sea-level, five sets of locks had to be provided to enable vessels to overcome this difference. It is the widest canal in existence, being nearly twice the width of the Suez Canal, and will allow steamers of the largest size to pass each other. Like the Suez Canal, it has a depth of water of twenty-six feet; while it is three feet deeper than the Amsterdam Canal, and has a capacity fifty per cent. greater. The entrance to the Canal from the Mersey is twelve feet deeper than the lowest dock sill in Liverpool, and will allow vessels of the

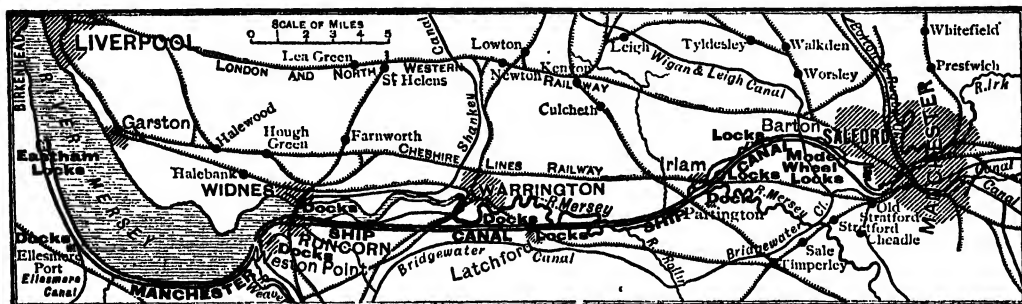
largest tonnage to enter or leave the Canal at any state of the tide. In many of our large seaports this can only be done at full tide; and occasionally ships have to wait some days for spring-tides before there is deep enough water to float them over the dock sill. In consequence, it may frequently occur that of two steamers crossing the bar at the same time, one for Liverpool and the other for Manchester, the latter may be discharging her cargo before the other has got into dock. Steamers can never, except in case of accident, occupy more than half a tide in the passage through the Canal.

While nearly the whole length of the two banks may be considered quay space and the Canal itself as a gigantic dock, there is besides ample provision made to enlarge the quay and dock areas. For a considerable distance back from the Canal there is a broad strip of land on each bank, the value of which in the future it would be indeed difficult to estimate. The large dock area at each port is admirably arranged, and must have cost a considerable amount of forethought in its allotment for the accommodation of the immense quantity and variety of materials to be dealt with. The upper reach of the Canal, which contains the Manchester and Salford docks, is over five miles long, three and a half miles of which is fifty feet wider than the usual breadth, in order to give additional quay space, and more room in the Canal for vessels passing into and out of the docks. These docks cover one hundred and four acres, and the quay accommodation one hundred and fifty-two acres, giving quay and dock areas greater than many of the first-class seaports in the world. There is above the Mode Wheel locks greater dock accommodation than there is in the whole ports of Bristol or of Cardiff. There are smaller docks at Runcorn and at Weston Point; and the construction of a large dock at Warrington is part of the scheme to be carried out later.

The cost of all this has, of course, been enor-

mous, and will amount to nearly fifteen millions of pounds sterling, including the purchase of the Bridgewater Canal and the 4840 acres of land along both banks. (See *Chambers's Journal*, February 9, 1889.) The Canal throughout, in all its details, has been constructed in such a way and of such materials as if it were intended to exist for some generations without repair or alteration, except in the way of being made more convenient or commodious as experience may prove necessary. It has been the fashion to compare it with the Suez Canal. 'Comparisons are odious,' we are told, and this one is especially so. The Suez Canal has only one-half the capacity of the other, and in its construction is a mere ditch, through which steamers are allowed to move at the slowest speed possible, for fear of washing down the sandbanks of which its sides are formed. The speed of steamers along the new waterway

will be from five to six miles an hour; and the passage will be completed—after making allowance of from twenty-five to thirty-five minutes' delay in passing the five series of locks—in about seven hours. The banks of the Canal are carefully protected from injury caused by the wash from passing steamers, the prevention or repairing of which is a frequent cause of expense in canal management. The locks, with their massive gates, are pronounced the strongest and largest in the world. The first is at Eastham, where the Canal begins; and there is tide-water for twenty-one miles to the next locks at Latchford, where there is a rise of sixteen and a half feet; thence to Irlam locks, seven and three-eighths miles—rise sixteen feet; to Barton, two and five-eighths miles, with a rise of fifteen feet; to Mode Wheel, about three miles, with a rise of thirteen feet; and thence to Salford:



MAP OF THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

making a total of thirty-five and a half miles, and a rise of sixty and a half feet.

All the deviation and main lines of railways and roads, with the Bridgewater Canal crossing the great waterway, are carried over by means of swing or high-level bridges with a clear headway above the Canal of seventy-five feet. The Bridgewater Canal has for itself a swing aqueduct of novel and ingenious construction, weighing fourteen hundred tons. The headway of the fixed bridges over the Canal—seventy-five feet—is considered high enough to clear the masts of cargo steamers, while those of larger tonnage will be able to lower their topmasts.

The Canal has been made in order to carry goods to and from the largest and most populous industrial districts on the globe. Belgium and Holland are considered the most densely populated countries in Europe, and the average in these countries in 1884 was equal to four hundred and sixteen persons per square mile; while the average in the United Kingdom is three hundred and ten to the square mile. Now, looking on a map of Lancashire, and forming a triangle by drawing lines from Stockport to Preston and Leeds, the triangle encloses a greater manufacturing population than any area of similar extent in the world, this area being equal to seven hundred and thirteen square miles, and containing a population of five thousand four hundred and fourteen persons to the square mile, or thirteen times greater than the average square-mile population of Belgium.

While the population of Lancashire has increased about twenty-five per cent. within the last ten

years, it is extremely probable that during the next ten years that increase will be more than doubled. Along the banks of the great waterway there is sure to grow, considering the advantages offered, a large number of industrial works. Even now, the demand for sites is increasing rapidly, and a better situation could not be imagined, with the Canal in front and railway communication behind; and before many years are past, the two banks bid fair to be lined with villages, and new as well as old industries. Still further, as showing the advantages and favourable prospects of the great waterway, it is already in connection with thirteen established canals; and many others are making the necessary arrangements for completing such connection as will cause them to act as feeders to the Ship Canal. If we consider, also, the vast amount of raw material of all kinds which the Canal will carry to Manchester and the great manufacturing districts in touch with it, and that this raw material will be sent back down the Canal again in the shape of manufactured goods for all parts of the world, we may form some faint idea of the tremendous amount of work the Canal will have to perform.

This brings us to consider what are the prospects and earning capabilities of the Canal—a matter which will depend very largely on the economy offered in the trans-shipment of goods from Manchester to Liverpool, and in the immunity from injury through being less often trans-shipped and handled. When the Ship Canal was brought before Parliament, the scales of rates to be charged for the use of the Canal and docks were fixed at a sum graduated for the different articles, which

practically reduces the prices to fifty per cent. of the charges made hitherto. But this is not all. The initial cost of bringing a cargo of cotton, for instance, from New Orleans to Manchester will not be much above the cost (if any) of bringing it from the same place to Liverpool. By Canal the total cost will be 7s. per ton from Liverpool. By contrast, the cost from Liverpool to Manchester at present is 13s. 8d. per ton. The saving by the Canal is thus 6s. 8d. per ton, which, on the eight hundred thousands of tons expected to be carried annually over the Canal, will represent a saving to the importers of £260,000. By taking the average cost of the carriage of thirteen leading articles by the old and new tariffs, we get a saving of 7s. 8d. per ton. Some of the proposed economies are very important. The saving on raw cotton, for instance, will be 6s. 8d. per ton; wool, 8s. 8d.; sugar, 11s. 3d.; grain, 5s. 1d. per ton, and so on.

An estimate of the probable traffic over the Canal, prepared by the 'Consultative Committee,' which made an exhaustive inquiry into the prospects of the undertaking before it was begun, gave for the second year after it is opened nearly 4,250,000 tons, yielding a gross revenue of nearly £800,000 sterling. From this estimate the Committee—considering the scheme an untried one—deducted twenty-five per cent., and this deduction reduced the tonnage to 3,321,320 tons, and the revenue to £595,630 sterling. Appended to the reduced estimate was the following opinion: 'Our estimate of traffic and revenue is much larger, and points to the undertaking becoming increasingly remunerative under capable administration.' The opinion is generally held that in the second year's returns the estimate of the 'Consultative Committee' may be accepted without the deduction of twenty-five per cent. so cautiously proposed by the 'Committee.' They state, further, that 'their estimate of traffic and revenue is not based on any of the statements made in the prospectus, that they have arrived at their conclusions on an independent basis,' and 'are of opinion that during the second year after the Canal and dock are open for traffic, there is a reasonable prospect of securing along the whole length of the canal 4,428,532 tons of cargo, yielding a gross revenue of £794,173 sterling.'

The encouragement and support promised to the Canal Company by the greatest importers and exporters, including merchants and ship-owners, show clearly the attitude that is likely to be assumed by the greater number of those whose interests are thereby to be improved and increased through the facilities and advantages offered; and as the time for opening the Canal to traffic approaches, communications are more and more frequently received from many foreign parts, requesting that the necessary arrangements be made for their accommodation. Some of these applicants are from the most unlikely quarters, proving the introduction of new manufactures and trades. One hundred and eighty-three ship-owners, who represent over one thousand steamers, with a tonnage of nearly one and a half millions—being about one quarter of that of the United Kingdom, without including many other steamers from Liverpool—have signed a promise to use the Canal when convenient.

Turning now to exports. Fifty-six leading

exporters have declared that over one million of tons of textile goods have passed outward each year. Machinery to the value of four millions sterling is exported annually; and many other exports, coal, salt, chemicals, &c., could be added. It is claimed that Liverpool and the Humber ports have fully forty per cent. of the exports and imports of Great Britain. Judging from the applications for sites for industrial purposes—some of them new to this district—also for dock accommodation for lines of steamers, with all the expectations indicated above, Manchester may reasonably expect that a large share of existing traffic will be sent through the Canal, as well as new traffic that is likely to be created through the new and increased facilities presented; for even now there is the prospect of a greater number of steamers entering and leaving the Canal than there is in any other port of the kingdom, if we except London and Liverpool; but even if the Canal does not increase or develop trade and manufactures to the extent anticipated, it must at least arrest a decline in a staple industry which is of immeasurable importance to the Lancashire district, and which for some years past has been in danger of losing the powerful hold it had on the markets of foreign countries, particularly in the Far East.

What will be the result of this creation of a new and large port in the heart of the kingdom? 'It means new industries, new trades of all kinds, and new administrative organisations of many kinds, as well as the extension of old ones. It means the erection of thousands of new buildings for habitation or for business purposes, for education, for recreation, and for all kinds of services public or private.' Years ago, the late Sir W. Fairbairn said: 'Any improvement which will enable ocean-going vessels to discharge their cargoes in a commodious wet dock in Manchester would form an epoch of such magnitude in the history of Manchester as would quadruple her population, and would render her the first as well as the most enterprising city in Europe.'

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

And I walked as if apart
From myself, when I could stand,
And I pitied my own heart,
As if I held it in my hand.

MRS BROWNING.

SOME people's troubles are spread over the whole course of their lives, interspersed, thank Heaven! for most of us with intervals of peace and prosperity. Other people, like Job, have them all together, one sorrow crowding on the heels of another so quickly that there is no time for rebound as the blows of fate shower on the devoted head.

So it was with Pomona Lester, who, after a life of almost unclouded sunshine, only obscured a little of late by anxiety for her mother, but brightened by that all too short love-dream, that brief midsummer madness, was suddenly, without a moment's warning, enveloped in this dark cloud of trouble. Everything seemed taken from

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her at a blow. If death had taken Maurice Moore from her, each interview in those sweet summer days, each word, each tone, each look, could have been drawn from the rich storehouse of memory for blessed, healing comfort; now they furnished an armoury of sharp cutting weapons, from which, at any moment, some suggestion, some association of ideas, could draw and plunge into her quivering heart; and her whole proud nature would shrink, and her face crimson with shame at some remembrance of this friend of Mr Ludlow's, this false lover of poor, little Sage's, this man, whose fancy had been caught by Beechfield and the fortune appertaining to its supposed owner.

There was no need for Pomona to try to hide her feelings, to counterfeit the old brightness, and to avoid the scrutinising gaze. There need have been no occasion even to use the word 'mother,' which seemed to choke her at first, but now came constantly unbidden and unresisted to her lips.

Lady Lester slept away the last few hours of her life, only partly conscious of the prayers said by her side, but aware up to the very last if Pomona's hand left its warm hold of hers, or when the girl's voice whispered 'Mother, dearest!'

During the days that followed, Pomona was too prostrate even for thought. She was dimly aware that this could not last for ever; that she could not go on in that darkened room, with Martin waiting on her hand and foot, and nursing her like a child, where her great grief was considered natural and sacred, and no one intruded on it or troubled her with questions, and she might go, as often as she pleased into 'mother's' room and see the waxen face smiling young again among the flowers.

Lady Charteris had come as Lady Lester's oldest friend, that Pomona might not be alone; but she was kind enough and wise enough not to attempt consolation, but to leave the girl to herself, though she strongly deprecated Pomona's fixed determination to go to the funeral; and Pomona almost gave way to her persuasions when she found how weak and shaky she felt as Martin tenderly dressed her in her deep mourning. But she was glad she persisted. The beautiful August sunshine lay on the broad stretches of the park as the solemn procession passed along the beech avenue, where autumn was beginning to make its coming known in a touch of yellow and red on the shining leaves; and the deer raised their dainty heads to listen to the bell tolling deep and slow from the little church. Generations of Lesters had been laid to rest in that little Norman church, just inside the park, which was crowded now from far and near with gentle and simple for Lady Lester's funeral, and Pomona met many a kind, sympathetic look both from rich and poor. There was one face among the throng that caught her notice both in the church and at the grave-side, an honest, kind, middle-aged face, looking at her with straightforward, fatherly eyes, that more than once met hers with a quick glance of sympathy, as the comforting words of the grand and beautiful service sounded tenderly in her sad heart.

She forgot all about that face and the shabby coat attached to it till later in the day, when most

of the funeral guests had left, and she went down to the library, where Mr Freestone was sitting, as she thought alone, looking over the family papers. But when she entered the room, this same stranger was sitting there with the lawyer, and at her entrance got up and prepared to leave the room.

'Dr Merridew,' Mr Freestone said; and Pomona held out her hand.

'You are Sage's father and'—She was going to add, 'my uncle,' but she stopped. 'Don't go,' she said. 'What I want to say to Mr Freestone concerns Sage so much, that I should like you to hear.'

Now Dr Merridew had set himself steadily against Pomona; and all that Sage had told him about her had only added to his prejudice against her; but the first look at her in church had converted him; and when he took her little hand, he was her faithful champion for life. So he drew up a chair for her, and resumed his own seat opposite Mr Freestone at the table.

'I wrote a letter to you some days ago,' Pomona said.

'You did,' answered the old lawyer; 'and I should have replied to it but for the sad event that has intervened.'

He stopped, and she looked expectantly at him, but he said no more.

'Did you know—had you the least suspicion that I was not Sir John and Lady Lester's daughter, but only an adopted daughter?'

Mr Freestone's wrinkled old face was inscrutable; but Dr Merridew turned with interest as she spoke.

'Did you know?' she repeated.

And the lawyer bent forward and laid his withered old hand on hers: 'My dear young lady, I have known it these twenty years.'

'But surely, surely, I have no right to any of the property? It is Sage Merridew who ought to have it.'

'So she would, my dear; and perhaps it was a little hard on her that she didn't; only, you see, Sir John, after the death of the two boys, left it, as he was perfectly able to do, absolutely to you, subject, of course, to the life-interest of Lady Lester.'

'But I never knew I was not her own child.'

'No; it was Lady Lester's wish that you should not; and she took every precaution to prevent it. I always think unnecessary secrets are a mistake, as they generally leak out somehow, and sometimes do a lot of harm. But you would have been obliged to hear it now, in the ordinary course of affairs. May I ask how you heard of it?'

But Pomona had turned to Dr Merridew, thereby avoiding a question she did not care to answer. 'Dr Merridew, I am sorry.'

'Don't be sorry, my dear. I am heartily glad. Fancy my poor little Sage with a big fortune and large estates! It would have crushed us both, with the weight of responsibility. Besides, Lady Lester has left my little girl what is really a large fortune.—Three hundred pounds a year, isn't it, Mr Freestone? It means a lot of solid happiness. You can't buy ready-made happiness with money; but you can buy a good deal that makes up happiness if you know how to manage it.—And I am very grateful to your mother,

Miss Pomona; though, not so long ago, I prided myself that I would rather starve than accept a penny from one of my wife's family. But I'm not so young or so foolish or so proud or so strong or so whatever you like to call it, as I was; and I have a poor, little, sick Kitty, who will want a lot of care this winter; and perhaps that money of Sage's may mean the south of France and life to my little girl. So, my dear, keep Beechfield, and welcome.'

'But'—Pomona hesitated—'I was told she was engaged, and that want of means prevented her marriage.'

'Ah, that is all at an end; and as Sage is not here to look reproachful, I may say, and a good thing too! And at the risk of Mr Freestone thinking me an unpractical and sentimental old goose, I wish to record my opinion that any marriage prevented by want of means is a fortunate escape for both parties concerned.'

'And if a man marries a girl for her money?'

'I don't regard it as a marriage at all; not holy matrimony anyhow. It is merely a civil contract, and a poor concern even at that.'

The old lawyer was deep burrowing in a tin deed-box; and Dr Merriew and Pomona stood in the window, against which a sudden storm of rain was beating; though, beyond, the sun was still shining on the great trees in the park, like smiles through tearful eyes; and Dr Merriew talked softly to the girl of 'her mother,' always using the dear familiar name, and of the tender mother's love that had surrounded her happy young life, and was still a living, present thing, though out of sight.

'Is Sage very unhappy?' she asked presently.

'Yes, very, just now. We all have to go through it sooner or later; but she believes in her hero implicitly still, and though I can't say I agree with her, if it is any consolation to her, let her, say I.'

'Yes,' said Pomona softly, 'let her.'

And as they stood and talked, a great rainbow spanned the heaven in front of them, one end resting on the great beech-trees, and the other on the shining grass, where the deer stood, not knowing of the fairy gold that might have been found beneath their feet. And on the ivy outside the window, each leaf held a drop of rain, and every drop had a glistening little rainbow of its own, as every life has its sorrow; every sorrow, in God's sunshine, hope.

'You are a doctor,' Pomona said, when they parted. 'Don't you think the south of France would do me good this winter too?'

'Just what I was thinking. I will write a prescription.'

'And I am so used to nursing, I can help Sage to take care of Kitty.'

'To be sure you can.'

CHAPTER XXVII.

Comfort? Comfort scorn'd of devils; this is truth, the poet says,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is rememb'ring happier days.
TENNYSON.

Five years have gone by since then, and Owen Ludlow is still living at Scar, a very lonely old man, wandering about the beach and cliffs in an aimless, restless way, growing yearly more odd and morose and unsociable. Mrs Stock looks

after him as she used to after her husband, in a pitying, patronising way, as she would after a troublesome child; but as she expressed it, she 'was terrible put about' when she first heard him spoken of as the mad painter.

'Lot' bless you! he ain't any more mad than half the men is, as is a poor, helpless lot. There ain't no harm in him. He used to be a terrible fine painter, and thought a lot of np in London, folks say; and one of them pictures was in the Royal Academy, and folks did say as how he got a wonderful big price for it; but that ain't true neither, for he've agot it now, and it's hung up in his studio, right over against the door, with a curtain drawn across it. But it got hurted coming down in the train; them porters is that careless; so he've painted out the face in the middle, which he set great store by, as I've heard tell was took from his wife as died when her first baby was born; and he've never painted it in again. He don't do no painting to speak of now, though he gets out his brushes nows and thens, and sets his palette. 'Tis bad when a man's getting on in life and ain't got neither chick nor child to look after him.—He ain't heard nothing of Miss Sage this ever so long. She's been a deal in furrin parts along with poor, little Miss Kitty, as enjoys terrible bad health, poor lamb! And Mr Moore—as we fancied was making up to Miss Sage, and a nice couple they'd amade too—he've gone to New Zealand or somewheres; and Mr Ludlow don't seem to care to hear his name as much as mentioned; so I reckon they've fell out.'

But one day in May a lady came to the farm asking for Mr Ludlow—a tall, handsome-looking lady, whose face Mrs Stock could not put a name to, though it seemed in a curiour way familiar to her.

'Mr Ludlow, mum? He's down to the beach, I reckon. He mostly goes down fine mornings. But if you steps down the street and along the beach-path, and looks a bit along towards the Point, you're bound to see him, for he don't go far.'

The apple blossom was out in the farm orchard, and the tree by the studio window was covered with dainty flowers, and Mrs Stock broke a little bit off to give to the young lady, who admired it so.

A little way along the beach, on the flat stone where Kitty used to watch the doings of the sea-creatures in the pool, and Sage had read Maurice's letter, sat Owen Ludlow, a very solitary-looking figure against the brown seaweed-covered rocks and gray-green sea. He was not painting or pretending to do so, but leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, and his chin on his hands, gazing away towards the Point, against which the foam flew up, and round which the white gulls circled.

He did not hear her step as she came over the rocks towards him. He had taken off his hat, which lay on the rock beside him; and she noticed how white he had grown since she saw him last, and how the wind from the sea stirred his hair, giving a sad suggestion of King Lear in his desolate old age. He was so still, that a momentary chill swept over her that he might be dead; but the next minute he had moved, passing his hand across his eyes with a sort of

patient weariness that was very pathetic. And then he turned, and saw her standing with the apple-blossom in her hand, and the look of tenderness and pity on her face; and he rose with a look of sudden, glad recognition and delight.

'Katharine,' he said, 'I knew you would forgive me at last.'

And then he would have fallen, had not Pomona caught him and drawn the gray head to rest on her shoulder, saying, 'Father!'

THE END.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

IN the late autumn of 1793 there sat one evening by a cheerful fire, in a snug parlour in Dumfriesshire, a little knot of friends, the mother of the household, some of the children, a married daughter and her husband, the minister, who was a near neighbour, and the farmer of Cleughhead. The early tea was over, and they were having a game at whist, listening at intervals to the dashes of rain on the window-panes and the roar of the Nith as it rushed in full torrent to the sea. 'The guidman's late,' said the mistress, a little anxiously; but as she spoke, a horse's hoofs were heard on the gravel, and in another minute the rider, with topcoat hastily thrown off, but still booted and spurred, entered the room. Something strange in his aspect struck them; but before they could speak, he said in an awestricken tone: 'The Queen is dead.'

'Dead!' was the horrified rejoinder.

'Ay, dead—murdered on the 16th of October; carried to the place of execution on a common cart, with her hands tied.'

No need to ask who the 'Queen' was. Marie Antoinette's fate had been canvassed everywhere for weeks past; but it was the universal belief that, bad as the revolutionary party might be, they would never dare to kill her: she would be saved somehow. But the end had come, and what an end for Maria Theresa's daughter!

A little girl of ten who sat quietly by the fire, and who lived to be over a hundred years old, often told in her later years of the vivid impression made upon her young mind that evening. Never could she forget the dismay and horror which filled the little party, and the sudden gloom which came upon them. Every one thought the king's death terrible, she used to say; but when it came to murdering the fair, gracious Queen—that, indeed, could not be forgiven or passed over, and for months nothing else was talked of.

Though a hundred eventful years have passed, Marie Antoinette's fate has still a pathetic charm; and now, on the anniversary of her death, we look back on her with tender interest, as the little group assembled in the Dumfriesshire parlour might have done, as daughter, wife, and mother, leaving parties and state questions aside, trying to get a glimpse of the real woman—'la belle *peuvre* reine,' as a French working-man in blue blouse and flat cap called her, in speaking of her one lovely spring evening on the Versailles car.

Little 'Antoinette,' as she was called, was the

favourite child of Maria Theresa and Emperor Francis I. She was born at Vienna on November 2, 1755, the day of the great earthquake at Lisbon; but her early years were passed chiefly at Schönbrunn, in simple country pleasures, the child's garden there being the precursor of the gardens at Trianon. A considerable part of her time, as she grew a little older, was devoted to study, Metastasio teaching her Italian, and Gluck giving her lessons on the harpsichord. As, from her early days, Maria Theresa destined her to be the bride of the Dauphin, she got a French tutor for her, the Abbé de Vermond, and French actors to teach her elocution.

One evening in April 1770, the French ambassador preferred a formal request for the hand of the Archduchess, all having been arranged before; and after ten days spent in festivities, the bride of fifteen left all who had been dear to her. When she left Vienna, the poor people on the streets crowded round her carriage weeping, as they bade her farewell, and following the cortège to the very gates of the city. In a pavilion on an island in the Rhine near Strasburg, she had to divest herself of all her German clothing and array herself in French clothes brought from Paris. As she passed into the salon where the French party awaited her, an eye-witness says: 'It was impossible to refrain from admiring her airy walk; one smile alone won the heart.' Wonderful festivities welcomed her to Strasburg and other cities. She charmed the students at Soissons by replying to a Latin oration in a sentence or two of the same language.

The Court came out to meet the bride as she drew near Compiègne. Quickly she alighted from her coach and sank on her knee in homage to the king, Louis XV., who raised her at once with a graceful compliment to her mother: 'Vous étiez déjà de la famille, car votre mère a l'âme de Louis le Grand.' Among the family group who awaited her at La Muette was the Princess Elizabeth, the Dauphin's youngest sister, and Princess Lamballe, both of whom were to be so closely associated with her in after-years. The Dauphin came with his grandfather to meet her; but beyond that, we hear very little of him!

The young couple were married in the Chapel at Versailles next day, May 16th, at one o'clock. A canopy of cloth of silver was held over their heads by two bishops, and the ceremony was performed by the Primate of France.

Imagination pictures the beautiful young creature, gay and bright, winning all hearts, and yet by the dignity of her bearing reminding all that she was the daughter of the Empress Queen. When she made her entry into Paris, and dined in state at the Tuileries, the shouts of the people were so vehement that she had to show herself on the balcony facing the garden. 'Grand Dieu! what a concourse!' she said, looking at the sea of faces.

'Madame,' said the old Duc de Brissac, Governor of Paris, 'I may tell you without fear of offending the Dauphin that they are all lovers!'

Did she think of that gallant speech when

once again she looked on a sea of angry faces from the same spot?

The years of her early married life passed on in a gay round of outward pleasure, theatre-going, weekly balls, card-parties, and sledging, which she introduced at Versailles; but with it all she had inward trials and disappointments, cabals in the Court, and jealousies in the family circle.

On the 10th of May 1774, Louis XV. lay dying of smallpox at Versailles. The young couple were awaiting the end in their own apartments. In the words of Carlyle: 'Hark! what sound is that?—sound "terrible and absolutely like thunder." It is the rush, of the whole Court, rushing, as in eager salute the new sovereigns: Hail to your Majesties! The Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen! Overpowered with many emotions, they fall on their knees together, and with streaming tears, exclaim: "O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign."

The carriages drove up, and the whole Court set off for Choisy, at four in the afternoon. Four days later, the young Queen wrote a letter to her mother, full of joyous confidence in the bright future before her. But the Empress, knowing the burden of a crown, feared that her child's happiest days were over. Soon after she became Queen, the King presented her with the Little Trianon, a villa about a mile from the château of Versailles, within the Park. The house remains to this day, a cheerful, unpretentious abode, with lawns, gardens, and winding walks, which were the delight of the poor Queen. On the outskirts of the garden she constructed the *hameau*, which was her special delight—the rustic farmhouse by the little lake; the miller's house; the dairy, where she loved to make butter; the flower-beds, where she worked. She forgot, as she said, when dressed in her muslin gown and straw hat, that she was a Queen; and made coffee for the King, as if they were country folks. Even here, and in these innocent pursuits, detraction followed her! She was called 'the Austrian' in contempt.

In the year 1778 a little daughter was born to her—the Madame Royale of history. In October 1781 a Prince was at last born, and the whole nation rejoiced with the glad father and mother. All the 'trades' of Paris came out to Versailles in procession; while the 'Dames de la Halle' paid a state visit to the Queen.

Little did all these gay congratulating folks, and least of all the happy King and Queen, think of a very different procession which was to come and tear them away from Versailles for ever.

The Dauphin at this time began to show signs of delicacy, so it was with great thankfulness that the King and Queen hailed the birth of another son in 1785. The proud father took him in his arms, calling him the 'little Norman,' and created him Duc de Normandie, saying, the name alone would bring him happiness—dreaming not that few if any kings' sons would have such a miserable fate.

It was about this time that the affair of the Diamond Necklace took place; and though it was proved that the handwriting and even

the appearance of the Queen had been counterfeited, still some remained who were only too willing to believe evil of the Queen; and at the head of this party was the wicked Duc d'Orleans, afterwards known as 'Egalité.'

The Dauphin steadily declined in health; but the Duc de Normandie grew and flourished; and it is amusing to read the account his mother gives of him in a letter to her brother the Emperor: 'He has all his elder brother wants; he is a true peasant's child, tall, stout, and ruddy.' The Princess Elizabeth became from this time the Queen's closest, dearest friend—her sister in heart as well as in name, never to be separated but by death.

In the long procession of events which began with the summons of the States-general to Versailles in 1789, and ended with the Conciergerie and the guillotine in 1793, only a few traits of the Queen as wife and mother can be noted here. On the 4th of May the States-general met; and on the 4th of June, in the midst of stormy scenes, the little Dauphin died. In July came the storming of the Bastille; and on the 17th of July, Louis XVI. drove into Paris with a very slender escort, determined to pacify the people. We are told that Marie Antoinette sat with her children shut up in her own room. She shed no tear, but a sob broke from her now and again with the words, 'They will never let him return.'

He returned only to fresh trials and indignities. In September they were warned that the mob would attack Versailles; but so little did they think it possible, that when the Duc de Chinon—who, disguised as an artisan, left Paris with the mob, but got to Versailles some time before them—reached the palace he found the King was hunting in the Bois de Meudon; while the Queen was working in her garden at Trianon. Messengers were sent in hot haste; and we can picture the Queen hurrying away from her garden, little thinking she would never return.

When the savage mob shouted for her more like wild beasts than human beings, she took her children one in each hand and stepped quietly out on the balcony. 'No children!' was the savage yell which greeted them. Leading them back into the room, she returned alone, and stood with arms crossed and eyes looking heavenward, expecting instant death; but her very fearlessness disarmed the mob. When they were driving into Paris, they were surrounded by this mob, who brandished pikes with the heads of the slain body-guard, and shouted they would have plenty of bread, as they were bringing the baker, the bakeress, and the baker's son with them. Her mother's heart was wrung by the sufferings of the child, who could get nothing to eat all day long.

In their varying fortunes at the Tuileries, how many glimpses of her we get! watching the Dauphin playing in the gardens, feeding ducks in the pond, teaching Madame Royale, walking with the King, or riding with the Princess Elizabeth—though always guarded—in the Bois de Boulogne. For years past her character had been strengthening; she set the example of her mother ever before her, and there was much truth in the saying of Mirabeau, 'The only man about the King is his wife.'

How great her presence of mind was, was shown in many details of their journey to Varennes. Count Fersen drove them through the streets of Paris to the Porte St Martin, where they were transferred to a *berline* which was waiting for them. Every one knows the sad story of a hundred miles without any sign of pursuit; then the uniforms of Bouillé's soldiers appearing at Chalons, and the Queen's fervent exclamation, 'Thank God, we are saved.' Drouet's recognition of the King from a stamp at St Menesbould, and the stoppage of the party at Varennes about eleven at night, when Bouillé's troops were actually waiting at the other end of the town. If the King had not put his head out of the window, which he would do in spite of all warnings—if young Bouillé, who was in command, had sat up all night—if the troops had been at the nearer instead of the farther end of the town, who can say how matters might have turned?

For this once only did the Queen's courage and spirits fail. She wept incessantly, beseeching the grocer's wife in whose house they spent the night to have pity on her children; and when she saw there was no hope, she sat gazing on the two sleeping children with the calmness of despair.

They were carried back to Paris, where they found themselves really prisoners at the Tuileries, sentinels being placed in the galleries and gardens, and even at the door of the Queen's bedroom. No wonder she writes at this time: 'It takes more courage to support my condition than to fight a pitched battle.' Insults and menaces; and when they went to the opera and the royalists shouted, 'Vive le roi! vive la reine!' the greater part of the house rose, shouting, 'No master, no queen.' Yet at other times the fickle people cheered them to the echo. 'It is a queer nation this of ours,' wrote Princess Elizabeth; 'but it has its charming moments.'

As months passed, the Queen, though brave outwardly, often found relief in tears when alone with her children. One day the Dauphin was reading a book in which he came upon the expression 'happy as a queen.' 'That is odd,' he said; 'for my mother is a Queen, and yet she often weeps.'

Tippoo Sahib at this time sent an embassy to the King with gifts of Indian stuffs and jewels, which the Queen gave away all except some pieces of white muslin, of which we shall hear again.

Then came the 20th of June, when a mob surrounded the Tuileries, calling for the heads of 'Veto and his wife,' which was a new name they had given their victims. This storm blew over. But on the 20th of August, after hours of terror and scenes of horror, Louis was persuaded to leave the Tuileries and throw himself on the protection of the Assembly; and the hapless family left the palace, which only Madame Royale would ever enter again. Marie Antoinette, it is said, paused a moment at the foot of the great staircase. 'Fear nothing, Madame,' said a kind-hearted Swiss. 'I do fear nothing,' was her reply as she passed on.

Across the gulf of a century, we see them still, a mournful little party, crossing the terrace on foot, the little Dauphin, child-like, kicking the

dead leaves as he went, and the King remarking, 'How early the leaves fall this year!'

From the Assembly they pass to the Tour du Temple; and we see them no more till they come out one by one to die. From Madame Royale's Journal, we find that she and her aunt shared one dark small room; and in another not much larger, a little bed was placed for the Dauphin beside his mother's. The King's rooms were on a storey above. Insulting phrases were written on the very walls of their rooms; while on the King's were painted weapons and instruments of torture. Without proper clothing and food, and almost without attendants—watched by guards and spies—ignorant of all that was passing beyond the walls of their prison—still they had a mournful happiness in being together. One day after dinner, the King and Queen were going to play backgammon, at which they could sometimes exchange a word without being heard by their guards, when cries were heard outside; one of the guards closed the window, another insisted the Queen should come and look out. It was the head of Madame Lamballe which the ruffians had cut off, and forced a poor hairdresser to dress as if in life. The sight seemed to turn the Queen to stone.

Soon came Louis's sentence of death and their last interview. Through the glass doors the guard watched them: there sat the King, the Dauphin standing beside him, Madame Royale kneeling at his knee, the Queen leaning on his shoulder, Madame Elizabeth behind in silent anguish. He tears himself away, but says he will see them next morning. All night the Queen lies shuddering, and when morning comes, the roll of the drums tells her that he is gone.

A little longer, and then her son was taken from her. One night he lay asleep; a shawl was hung before his eyes, to shield them from the light by which the Queen was mending her clothes; a band of Commissioners burst in and snatched him from her. Happily, she never knew the fate of the beautiful boy she loved so tenderly. A month after, in the dead of night, she herself was carried off to the Conciergerie, where the cell she occupied is still shown. As she passed through the doorway she struck her head. One of the men asked if she had hurt herself. Her answer was: 'Nothing can hurt me now.'

Those who wished to see her could pass through her cell, where she sat as in a stupor, on an old chair, in a dress which had once been white.

On the 13th of October came the trial of the 'Widow Capet.' Clad in white muslin, with a muslin fichu, part of Tippoo Sahib's present, her gray hair drawn simply back and knotted loosely behind her head—never had she looked more queenly. The trial lasted night and day till the early morning of the 16th of October, when sentence of death was pronounced. She was led from the court to the condemned cell at five in the morning, and her only request was for writing materials. She then wrote the touching letter to Madame Elizabeth which may still be seen in the Archives Nationales in Paris. When this last duty was done, she threw herself on the pallet-bed and slept till the executioner called her

at seven. She was taken on a common cart, with hands bound, seated on a plank beside the executioner, to the Place de la Révolution. She heeded not the jeers and execrations which followed her on her long slow progress through streets filled with people whose idol she had been. One sad glance she cast at the Tuileries, and then mounted the scaffold. As she did so, she trod on the executioner's foot. 'Pardon me, sir,' she said, and then, 'Make haste;' and in a moment all was over.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

A FORTNIGHT later, Joseph Wakelin was standing at the vicarage door, as he had stood every morning for a week past. His hand was upon the bell, which he pulled with evident care. The man's face seemed to have altered of late, losing something of its coarse self-assurance; and there was an obvious expression of anxiety in the eyes which he raised to Ena's face as she appeared in response to the summons. It was Jane's work, but Jane was otherwise occupied; for sickness is apt to disorganise a household, and sickness—the result of his last day's visiting—was upon the vicar now.

'How is he?' asked the manufacturer softly.

'As bad as he can be;' fresh tears rising to her eyes, which already showed traces of weeping. 'Jane is out, Mr Wakelin; so I came to tell you that, if you are not nervous about the infection, father would be very glad to speak to you for a moment.'

The strong man's face blanched, but not with fear. 'Infection? Me nervous? Not quite,' he said brusquely as he entered. 'What can I do for him?'

'This way, please. No; the doctor says there's really no danger to other people now. His throat is all right, but the diphtheria has left him so awfully weak.' Then, almost in a whisper: 'Try to be tender to him, Mr Wakelin.'

Perhaps he heard, perhaps he did not. At any rate he made no reply; but, after tapping gently at the door she indicated, went gently in and closed it behind him.

The sight of the pale, wasted features upon the pillow thrilled him to the heart; for he had a heart, though one hard to be reached, encased as it was within a very thick and rough exterior shell; and none understood better than he how greatly his own actions had contributed to bring the clergyman thus low.

'If his spirits were not so depressed, he might yet rouse himself and pull through; but with all this load upon his mind, whether he deserves to have it there or not, I doubt if he'll rally,' the doctor had remarked to Wakelin only yesterday.

'He doesn't deserve it,' that worthy managed to bring out gruffly, as he turned off, carrying a shaft in his soul that rankled sorely there, and leaving Dr Mitchell to nod sagaciously as he muttered to himself: 'Then, my friend, you merit more than ever you'll get in the way of punishment.'

From the side of the bed, Mildred, wan with

long nursing and watching, advanced, with the ghost of a smile, to offer her hand. And, hearing a footstep, Mr Russell opened his eyes. 'It is you!' he murmured in a weak whisper.—'My dearest, leave us for five minutes.' And the wife obeyed.

'I can't talk much,' the vicar said, still in that same husky tone; 'yet there's one thing I want to tell you, Wakelin. I am a dying man'—

'Don't lose heart, sir. Indeed, Mr Russell'— But the other did not heed the interruption.

'The word of dying men is generally credited. So I desire to assure you—once more—that I never appropriated—that money,' the last words coming out in a series of gasps painful to hear.

'Oh sir, I'm sure on't,' cried the manufacturer. 'I've been certain this long while! But the chance to pay back old scores wor too good.'

A brighter gleam came into the dull eyes. 'You did not actually doubt me?'

'Only nows and thens at first. Niver sence that day in the study. No guilty chap could 'a spoke as you did then.'

'And yet you spread the story?'

'Yes, I spread the story,' in dogged confession.

'Why?' as the languid eyes closed again, and the head turned restlessly upon the pillow.

'To bring you down,' blurted out the Yorkshireman. 'I'm as good as you any day, and you'd never own to it. And so'—

Mr Russell started feebly and again looked up. 'Never own to it? Have I seemed as proud as that? Then—I deserve—it all!' more faintly than ever.

'Oh sir, never give in! I'll save your death on my conscience, if anything happens. And I'll do all as in me lyes! I'll tell the parish that I've been a fool! I'll'—

The vicar smiled, such a pathetic, dreary smile. 'A tale is more easily put about than contradicted,' he answered. 'Do what you can. But remember—if your friends—still think—the worst—it is—your—punishment! We've both—been wrong. Forgive me, Wakelin!' his thin fingers wandering in search of the other's hand.

The man sank on his knees upon the floor, and burying his face in the bedclothes, burst into tears. 'If on'y you'd a spoke so afore!' he wailed, 'if on'y you'd a spoke so afore!'

It was thus that at length they came to a better appreciation of each other. And though when, in another minute, Mildred summarily ended the interview, she found her husband too weary to move or speak, his talk with Wakelin proved the turning-point in his illness. From that hour, very slowly yet surely too, strength began to return to him, and the cloud hanging over the household seemed to lift. The desire for life had come back, and with it the power to recover.

'I dared not die with that charge of pride upon me,' he said once to his wife, as they talked the incident over together weeks later. 'For it was true, and I have been guilty. Mildred, I must make what reparation I can.'

'It seems to me that your fault was a very small one compared with his,' remarked the lady, 'even supposing yours was a fault at all. But really, Charles, not to show that you consider

yourself better born and better bred than these people'—

He laid his hand on hers with a silencing glance of reproof. 'Mildred, you have been nearly as bad as I. Let us try to help each other to amend,' was his only answer.

'And what of the injury that Wakelin has done you, and done purposely, too?' she retorted. 'I suppose you'll not prosecute now?'

'No. Many things become plain to one in illness. I have been proud and offensive to my people, or they would never have treated me as they have done. It is just chastisement that I should be lowered in their eyes. And I must bear it.'

Of course she loved and honoured him the more for the resolve; yet, knowing as she did more than was possible for him, still shut up in his sick-room, to know of the utter futility of Wakelin's repentant efforts to stop the ball which he had himself set rolling, her woman's heart sank as she listened to that decision.

'Eh mon, they've got ower thee! On coorse t'passon took fever from Tom Atkin, poor lad. But that don't giv' un noo roight t'tak' mooney what belongs t' parish,' was the sort of response with which Joseph's best arguments were met. 'Tell us wheer t'coin went if not t'Clarke, and then'— Till at last Wakelin was almost in despair.

'Mr Russell, sir, wain't the Bishop move you? This air ain't the kind for delicate folks; and it'll be some while afore you're as strong as you wor,' he remarked one morning to the vicar, with all good intentions, but singularly little tact. For through that transparent device the clergyman saw only too clearly what were the genuine motives.

'So you've not succeeded?' he returned. 'Well, I never supposed you would. Yorkshiremen are stubborn when once they take up an idea, Wakelin. I've remarked that before to-day, with a little laugh. And Wakelin changed the subject hastily.

'At any rate, you'll let me bring the carriage at three and give you a drive? Mitchell tells me as you ought to get a breath o' air.'

'Thanks; though I infinitely prefer my own room at present. How lazy this weakness makes one!'

It was whilst this interview was in progress up-stairs, that another and perhaps more important conversation was being carried on between two young people in the drawing-room, where Ena had been practising, and whither Dick, a strong, set purpose in his mind, had followed her.

'Have you realised that you'll be reduced to the sad necessity of missing me in another fortnight?' he remarked, with a smile, though his fingers were trembling as he abstracted from the music-rest a waltz of Chopin's that she had just finished, substituting the well-known and most beautiful of all Schubert's sonatas. 'Trinity Sunday is not far off. How shall I manage in my lonely rooms, Ena, after this taste of home-life?'

She shook her head, instead of speaking; it was easier at the moment.

'My sister Ena had always promised to come with me,' the young man continued persistently. 'But now'—

The pause was more eloquent than words. Nearly enough, Dick's ideas of love-making had improved of late.

Deep silence, broken only by the chords which Ena was drawing from the instrument in front of her. Dick watched her drooping face with a very eager, hopeful look in his bright eyes.

'Ena, I scarcely dare ask it. There is so much money between us, that people are sure to say hard things.'

'My money has never been anything but a bother yet,' exclaimed the young lady, with petulance. 'I used to think I should like to come into a fortune. But since I've had one, I've done nothing but hate it!'

'Oh! I wouldn't do that,' he declared. 'There are uses in money, as you'll find out by-and-by.' Then, with a sudden seizing of his chance, 'Let me teach you, Ena! Come and help me in my work amongst those who need some of it. Darling, if indeed you don't think that gold and silver need divide us, will you love me? Will you be my wife?'

But her head only sank the lower, and an expression almost of terror crept into Dick's yearning countenance.

'Oh Ena, and I want you so! You are all the world to me! Will you send me away when my whole heart belongs to you?'

She laughed very quietly then. 'Why didn't you say that first of all?' she answered.

Of course the news spread quickly through the vicarage; and Mildred wept a few tears of joy as she understood that the girl whom she had so long ago taken to her motherly heart was now to become her daughter indeed. Nor was there any effort made to confine the intelligence within four walls.

'Our wedding is not going to be put off for a dozen years or so; we shall be married very soon indeed,' asserted Dick, upon being questioned by Bijou. 'Oh yes, it's quite true, Ena, my dear. Else I shall be poisoned first and ruined afterwards by extravagant landladies. And then, what will you do?'

'Take Sir Marmaduke,' shrieked Bijou, with a backward nod at her brother, as she made a speedy exit before he could catch and punish her. 'Here's Mr Wakelin and the brougham for dad,' she added, returning after a moment to give the intelligence. 'Dick, he'll want your arm down-stairs; he always does.'

But the vicar was already descending, leaning upon the shoulder that he loved best in the world. When he reached the hall he looked down at his wife with a smile. 'How strong I'm getting, to be able to put up with your assistance, am I not, old lady? Now for my coat, Bijou; the thick one, please.'

She darted away to the coat-rack, where, however, the garment was not to be discovered, a fact which her shrill voice speedily proclaimed.

'It's in my wardrobe, then,' from her father. 'I was not wearing it for some time before I was ill. The last time that I had it on—when was it?'

Ena and Mr Wakelin exchanged glances, as the same remembrance recurred to the mind of each.

'Never since the morning that the money was lost,' the girl exclaimed, half aloud and half to the manufacturer. 'Here it is, though, now.'

'And jolly heavy too,' from its bearer. 'Mr Wakelin, as Dick is staring at Eua instead of helping me, you'd better take it.'

'It is heavy,' holding up the thick garment in his two hands to try the weight. 'Why, the pocket is full of something hard. May I empty it?' Then, suddenly, 'Mr Russell!'

At that startled exclamation all eyes turned upon him, whilst he withdrew his fist from the pocket into which he had thrust it. From between the fingers one or two gold coins escaped, and falling, rang loudly upon the tiled floor.

'The pupil teachers' salaries at last,' gasped Mildred, turning white. 'Oh, my dear Charlie!' And flinging herself upon his breast, she burst into tears. None but the wife herself could have told what to her had been the suffering of the past few weeks.

'And with the money that memorandum I brought of the amount. I'd forgotten it until this instant,' from Wakelin, as he flattened out a scrap of note-paper, bearing half-a-dozen figures. 'You must 'a' slipped it in here for safety, as you was called out to Brown's. On'y it's a wonder the clinking didn't remind you! Come, the folks may chatter now as much as they choose, any way. And if they ain't ashamed—why, they ought to be. I am, I know.'

But the vicar had sunk upon a chair and covered his face with his hands. 'You are right! That's exactly what I did. It all comes back to me now,' he murmured.

For a moment no other word was uttered. Then he lifted his face, and, looking around him, spoke the feeling of his heart. 'Thank God!' he said reverently. And Wakelin added, 'Amen!'

THE HIGHLAND BAGPIPE.

A SHORT time ago, a newspaper, in describing a march past of a Highland Volunteer brigade, stated that seventy-nine pipers formed the band, and played the men past. With the exception of Prince Charlie's hundred pipers an' a', an' a', this is probably the greatest number of men ever forming a band of pipers. It may be that the seventy-nine pipers was a printer's mistake on the part of the newspaper in question for 'Seventy-ninth' pipers—that is, the pipers from the Seventy-ninth Regiment.

Although Byron and Scott in stirring lines have told of the power of the mountain music, a very considerable number of the admirers of these two poets, while alive to the beauty of the language describing the 'Camerons' Gathering,' would scarcely care to concede any merit to the pipes save that of producing the most ear-piercing discord. It seems somehow the fate of men and things which call forth from many the most enthusiastic admiration, to be the butt of depreciation equally vigorous. The aversion which Englishmen have to the bagpipe is due chiefly to that prejudice, half affected, half real, which causes John Bull to deny the existence of any good thing north of the Tweed. In passing judg-

ment on the pipes, a very high standard is in vogue. The national instrument is supposed to possess a capability to accompany the drawing-room singer when the piano is out of tune, a task which it must be admitted is somewhat too onerous for an instrument especially adapted for military uses. Had the bugle or the drum been of Scotch origin, doubtless, they, too, would have been consigned to the category of things deserving a qualified opinion. It is not assuming too much to suppose that the English are sufficiently a music-loving race to have spared the violin such treatment if it had come from over the Border.

Though now associated with Scotland, the bagpipe is an instrument of great antiquity, and was known long ago to some Indian races, also to the Italians and Bretons. It appears to have reached its most popular development, from the musical and utilitarian view, in the case of the Highland bagpipe. The groundwork of the instrument is, as the name implies, a bag of skins sewn together, and of course perfectly air-tight. This condition is aided by the use of treacle, which is poured into the bag and allowed to soak well into it. Into the bag are fitted five wooden stocks, generally of crocus or ebony. These stocks in their turn hold the three drones, the chanter, and the mouth-piece—the chanter being perforated by the note-holes, while the mouth-piece is used for filling the bag. Each of the drone-pipes, and the chanter, is fitted with reeds made of Spanish cane, contrary to the general impression, which imagines the chanter to be a kind of flute, and the drones hollow sticks.

Bagpipe music has a fixed scale, and the treble or G clef is the only one used. The great difficulty of playing, however, is to obtain the doubling of the notes at once quickly and clearly. This profusion of doubled or grace notes, as they are called, makes the manuscript of bagpipe music look something like a document filched from the British Museum. Most players carry the drones on their left shoulder, but the right is sometimes used. In this case the player has to take the drones out and fix them so that the bass drone will rest on the right shoulder. If not, he must place his head between the drones, and support them by the connecting cord resting on the back of his neck, the small drones not being long enough to find support on the shoulder. To the Sassenach, such words as Taorluath, Taorlath Mach, Crunluath, Crunluath Breabach, look very ominous; but being interpreted, they are simply methods of doubling and trebling the notes. It can hardly be denied that the above terms, although they might be called jaw-breakers, look much more imposing than the Italian expressions which figure so largely in pianoforte practices.

It is not assuming too much to claim for Highland music that it has produced tunes more eminently fitted for marching than the music of any other nation. Most of us at some time or other have come across a Highland regiment on the march. Who does not know the roll of the distant drums, and mingling with it that prolonged drone, which gradually resolves itself into some old familiar tune, composed long ago to celebrate some bloody clan raid, such, for instance, as the Fìrèach of Donuil Dhu? To the

Scotsman, there is never any mistaking that sound; and though we may be nineteenth-century individuals with tall hats and black coats, we can't help going just a little way, and keeping step also. The pulse beats just a little quicker, and, despite all cheap sneers, the memory of a thousand years is a little more real than might have been expected. If an impartial observer should take such an occasion as this, he will notice that there is a swing and a go about a Highland regiment, quite peculiar to itself, and due in great measure to the music of the pipes. The swing of the sporrans and the waving of the kilts may add to the effect, and indeed such a sight would be difficult to beat; but watch the same body of men in tartan trews and white shell jackets, and you will see the same swing. It is not the easy gait of the jack-tar when under arms, nor the quick, sharp, precise step of an ordinary line regiment. It is a something born of the music, hard to account for, but nevertheless very apparent.

Another reason why the pipes get such scant sympathy is, that very often acquaintance with pipe-playing is brought about by that parody of the Celt, the Whitechapel Highlander. This gentleman perambulates the streets of many of our great towns in a guise which betrays evidence of having been procured at a cast-off clothing establishment. It is indeed a revelation to see one of these fellows in an old 93d Highlander's kilt with a Royal Stuart plaid and a tremendous belt, possessing a buckle about the size of a large dinner-plate. The sporran, too, is, to say the least, terrific; while, to complete this motley rag-shop, the worthy carries an old cavalry sword in place of a Highland claymore. The sword dance with which he favours his street audiences would do equally well for a hornpipe or an Irish jig. These good fellows hunt in couples, one to dance, and one to play. Occasionally they favour a crowd with a grand military march; but this by the way. The whole array is more than likely to be the property of some enterprising person, who rigs up a number of these men, after giving them a few lessons on the chanter, and sends them out to annoy decent people by their efforts to squeeze out—it can be called by no other name—the 'Barren Rocks of Aden' or the 'March of the Athole Men.' Their performances are always wound up by the Reel of Tulloch.

To hear men like M'Kay, the Prince of Wales's piper, or old John M'Kenzie, instructor to the London Scottish Volunteers, or some of the excellent performers who grace with their playing many of the summer Highland gatherings, is a discovery—nay, more, a startling eye-opener—for many who class pipe-playing with such elementary music as horn-blowing or comb-playing.

The pipes may not be the highest form of music; but many a time have they sounded very sweetly in the ears of the beleaguered and hard pressed. The fact of their being played at the relief of Lucknow has become a matter of historical controversy; but at the present time the relief of Ekowe is not sufficiently ancient for the presence of the pipes to be called into question. No doubt, many of us will live long enough to see the columns of the daily papers filled with letters to prove that no pipers ever marched into

Ekowe's fort playing 'The Campbells are coming.' The extension of the Volunteer movement has caused the bagpipes to play no inauspicious part in mimic war. What more popular, after a heavy field-day, in which our Volunteer forces have been engaged at Aldershot, or in the Easter manœuvres in the south of England, than the 'Elcho tartan' and swinging stride of the London Scottish; while their dozen or sixteen pipers, stationed opposite the saluting base, play them by to the tune of 'Hieland Laddie.' The Scottish have a reputation for marching second to none, and are the envy of many regiments not blest with pipers. It is, however, in the 'last scene of all,' when the son of the Gael is borne to his last resting-place, that the depth of feeling and sympathy with surroundings of the Highland music is most evident. Nothing seems to intensify and emphasise the desolation and the separation of death more than the sad wailing notes of 'Lord Lovat's Lament,' or 'Lochaber no more.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ARCTIC exploration is once more attracting so much attention, that any fresh information concerning the north polar regions is apt to excite interest. A vessel recently returned to San Francisco, after carrying supplies to the whalers north of Alaska, has reported that one of the fleet found open water at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and that its master was daring enough to follow it until a more northerly point was reached than that attained by the Greely expedition. Such open water is not unknown in this neighbourhood, but it occurs only once in about ten years. Whalers regard it as a most dangerous thing to take advantage of this open water, for there is always a fear that the ice may close in behind them and prevent their return. One whaling master some years ago took the risk, and proceeded northward for about three hundred miles, but no whales rewarded his intrepidity. He saw land-birds, and met with a considerable amount of driftwood, which led him to believe that land was not far distant.

An extraordinary accident, the first of its kind, occurred recently at Bradford. A boy was carrying a steel cylinder of compressed oxygen, when it suddenly burst with tremendous violence and killed the unfortunate lad. This terrible occurrence is a matter of very great importance to a large number of workers, for compressed gases of different kinds are now used in a number of industries, and thousands of these steel cylinders are in daily use. The cause of the accident is attributed by experts to be due to faulty material in the construction of this particular cylinder. As a rule, the most rigid tests are employed in ascertaining the stability of these gas receptacles before they are issued to the public; and some years ago experiments at Glasgow showed that it was impossible to rupture one by the most violent treatment. In one experiment, a fully charged

cylinder was dropped repeatedly upon an iron block from a height of twenty feet, and in another it was submitted to blows from a steam-hammer without any adverse effect but a few dents on its surface. In view of the accident at Bradford it will become necessary that every gas cylinder shall have some kind of official mark, showing that it has been tested to a great deal more than the pressure it is called upon to withstand.

All lovers of nature will feel glad that an attempt is being made to prevent rural districts being spoilt by obtrusive advertisements. A Bill is now before Parliament the preamble of which states that 'it is expedient to prohibit the raising of unsightly erections which destroy the rural scenery of Great Britain and Ireland.' This Bill provides that no person shall affix to any fence, gate, post, hoarding, &c., any printed or written matter, or any picture, so as to be in view from any highway, railway, &c. The Act will not interfere with what may be called legitimate advertising—that is to say, a board may be erected on land showing that it is to let or for sale; or any person carrying on a business may advertise that business on the land occupied by him. It is aimed solely at that system of advertising which has sprung up quite recently by which pleasant meadows are rendered unsightly by the presence in their midst of huge hoardings advertising food-stuffs, soaps, and patent medicines. It is not only the general public which requires protection against such advertising, but the advertisers themselves, for the advertisements are not always in the best taste.

An ingenious form of boat to be driven by hydraulic propulsion has been designed and patented by Mr J. C. Walker of Washington. Many such boats have been devised, and at the present time certain floating fire-engines are propelled in the Thames by this method. But Mr Walker's design differs very much from those which have preceded it. There are two main pipes extending from bow to stern open to the water, and within them are screw propellers, each having a rim fixed to the outer edges of its blades, so as to fit closely into its containing pipe. These main pipes gradually taper towards the stern, and from them proceed smaller pipes furnished with nozzles, which find their exits at the sides of the vessel. The action of the propellers is to force the water with great velocity through this system of piping, and steering and turning are rapidly effected by turning the nozzles in any direction required. In case of stranding, all the nozzles would be directed downwards, so that the boat would be lifted while the bottom was scoured at the same time. The design seems to us to be hopeful, and we should be glad to learn the results of actual trial of the system.

Mr John Briggs of Clitheroe, Lancashire, has forwarded to us a plan and description of his patent Lime-kiln, by which, he asserts, a saving of from thirty-five to forty per cent. in fuel is secured when compared with the older system of burning lime. Existing kilns can be altered to the new pattern without much expense or difficulty, securing not only saving in fuel, but superior quality of the lime produced, a greater output per kiln, and less refuse. The principal

feature of the patent kiln is a drying chamber above the calcining chamber, in which the waste heat thoroughly dries and partially burns the limestone. The high price of fuel during recent years suggested experiments which led to the invention of this kiln.

Another instance of necessity stimulating invention is seen in the wonderful improvements which have been introduced in the manner of using gas for both heating and cooking. The recent coal-strike has had one good effect in teaching the value of gas for both these purposes, and many persons who have adopted it will not readily go back to the mess and trouble of coal-fires. Gas is economical when compared with coal, provided that it is only burned when actually needed: it must not be left to the tender mercies of careless and irresponsible servants. Gas heating and cooking will become general when the gas companies, or some other companies, provide us with a cheap non-illuminating gas for these purposes. Such a gas, it is said, could be retailed for about a shilling per thousand feet.

While there is a constant cry for more open spaces in our crowded metropolis, and while certain societies and individuals are doing their best to provide these 'lungs' for pent-up London, the builder, on the other hand, is seizing upon every rood of open land which he can find to cover it with loosely combined bricks and mortar. Within the past thirty-five years, Vauxhall, Cremorne, and the Surrey Gardens have disappeared, and although in some respects this need not be deplored, it seems a sad thing that they could not be preserved as parks. A garden of another kind is now threatened with extinction, a garden whose chronicles embrace the history of botany in this country—the old Physic Garden at Chelsea. This garden was bestowed upon the Apothecaries' Company by Sir Hans Sloane in 1721, on the express condition that 'it should at all times be continued as a Physic Garden for the manifestation of the power and wisdom and goodness of God in creation, and that the apprentices might learn to distinguish good and useful plants from beautiful ones.' The temptation of the Apothecaries' Company to set this condition at naught is found in the circumstance that the cost of maintaining the garden is seven hundred pounds per annum, and the value of the freehold for building is thirty thousand pounds. We trust that this link with the past will not be severed without some effort being made to save it.

The twelfth course of Health Lectures was recently inaugurated in Edinburgh by Professor M'Fadyean, of the Royal Veterinary College in London, who took for his subject one with which he was peculiarly qualified to deal—namely, 'Diseases of Animals transmissible to Man.' He cautioned his hearers against dogs and cats with mangy or unhealthy-looking skins. Ring-worm, in one form or other, was found in the cat, in young cattle, and in the horse, and was readily transmissible to man. Glanders was one of the most important diseases common to men and animals, and its breeding-place for Scotland was Glasgow, just as London acted in the same capacity for England. He thought that if a little more energy were displayed by the local authorities in Lanarkshire in dealing with the

disease it would soon be stamped out. Finally, the lecturer spoke of hydrophobia, which by reason of its deadly nature and distressingly painful course was the most terrible malady of all that man could contract from one of the lower animals. But thanks to the magnificent researches of Pasteur, the fatal cases when treated by the inoculation method had sunk to less than one per cent.

It has been pointed out by Mr John Wallace, a well-known fish-shipper at Kalama, Washington, that fish when frozen solid for shipment will remain in that condition for several days, provided that they are packed in a particular manner—without ice. A large trade is now done in frozen salmon, and the fish are packed tightly in boxes and loaded into refrigerator cars. The cars are first of all reduced in temperature as low as possible, and the floors are then covered with chilled sawdust. The boxes of fish are then placed therein, any spaces between them being filled with the cold sawdust. The car is then closed and sealed, and in reasonably warm weather its contents may be relied upon to arrive at their destination in the most perfect condition after a passage of eighteen days or thereabouts. The saving effected is great, first on the original cost of the ice; secondly, on its freight; and thirdly, in the greater amount of fish which it is possible to carry in its stead.

An interesting experiment has been performed by Mons. H. Le Chatelier, which, although at present of no commercial importance, shows how it is possible to imitate one of nature's processes—namely, the conversion of lime into marble. Carbonate of lime is commonly rendered crystalline and changed into what we call marble by pressure in nature's laboratory and by the aid of volcanic heat. Mons. Chatelier imitates this process by submitting powdered lime to great pressure in a steel cylinder, and conveying heat to it by means of a platinum spiral carrying an electric current. It is found that the powder in the neighbourhood of the hot wire is rendered crystalline and translucent. It might be possible by the employment of heavy machinery to do on a large scale what has been accomplished successfully in an experimental manner, but the cost of the plant would be great, and the expense would hardly be justified when the outcome is so uncertain.

It is said that a circular saw has been invented in France, by the aid of which blocks of stone can be very rapidly cut. The edge of the saw is set with black diamonds, of the kind which are now so successfully employed for drilling through hard rock. But the idea is not new, for a similar saw was patented some years back in America. Indeed, it will be seen that such a saw is the natural outcome of the diamond drill to which we have referred, and the diamond drill is now many years old.

The *Engineer* exposes a cruel fraud to which, in the interest of our numerous readers of an inventive turn of mind, we give publication. Some swindlers are in the habit of looking over the Patent Office publications and learning therefrom that certain persons have taken out letters-patent. They then write to these patentees somewhat to this effect: 'We see that you have patented a good thing. We are acquainted with

a firm which will place it on the market for you, and find capital for its successful introduction, advertising, &c. Please send a cheque for — pounds to cover cost of negotiations.' We need hardly point out to the wary that this letter is written solely in order to secure this cheque. Inventors are frequently needy men, and it is well that they should be warned of these doings.

The 'Safe-boiling' Stove Mat is a device which has just been introduced by Messrs Benham & Froud of the Chandos Metal Works, London. It consists of a round mat of asbestos enclosed in a metal frame, which being placed under a boiling saucepan on a stove prevents its contents burning. Oatmeal, rice, milk, custards, &c. placed above this mat will need no stirring, neither will they burn. When the mat becomes soiled it is merely necessary to turn its blackened surface next the fire, when it will burn itself clean.

Photogravure has killed steel-engraving, and the photo-mechanical process block has done much to kill wood-engraving. But Mr Walter Crane, who knows what he is writing about, believes that there are signs that wood-engraving will once more revive 'after holding its own as the great popular interpreter of art since the invention of printing; and, with the revival of printing as an art, the craft of the wood-engraver, contributing as it has done, in association with vigorous design, to the beauty of books, cannot permanently suffer neglect.' Unfortunately for Mr Crane's contention, there are few really good wood-engravers now, and fresh workers are not likely to be attracted to what seems to be a declining industry. Artists are now learning how to obtain the best effects from process-work, and most would prefer to have their ideas interpreted by the rigidly correct camera than by an indifferent wood-engraver.

A new system of heating railway carriages has recently been put into practice on the Midland Railway, pipes conveying steam from the engine running right round each carriage, and thus dispensing with the unsatisfactory and clumsy foot-warmer. The system will, when adopted entirely, it is said, effect a very great saving. The only matter for surprise is that such an obviously convenient method of warming railway carriages—which has been suggested in these columns and elsewhere on more than one occasion—has not been adopted before.

Some improvements have lately been introduced in the incandescent gaslight system which are worthy of remark. The refractory mantle, which, by becoming white-hot in an atmospheric flame, gives out so much more light per cubic foot of gas burnt than any other form of burner known, is now supported on a central stem, which itself becomes white-hot, and thus adds to the general illuminating power. Formerly, the mantle was hung to a side-support of metal, and this gave rise to breakage of both mantle and glass chimney. The chimney is now made of mica, and is therefore quite unbreakable under any conditions whatever. The efficiency of the light is in other ways improved.

A curious freak of nature is reported to our contemporary *Nature* by Colonel A. T. Fraser, with regard to two Hindu dwarfs which he

photographed in the Karnoul district of the Madras Presidency. One of these dwarfs states that he belongs to a family all the male members of which have been dwarfs for many generations. They marry ordinary native girls, and their female children are of normal size; but the boys, when about six years of age, cease to grow, and become stunted specimens of humanity, who are almost helpless and can only walk a few yards.

The tremendous power of the sword-fish has often been evidenced by a ship's side being pierced with the terrible weapon which gives the creature its name. Four or five inches of solid timber have been thus penetrated, the sword being broken off and left in the wood. These fish are plentiful off the island of Martha's Vineyard, on the coast of Massachusetts, and its flesh being much valued, it is harpooned in great numbers; and many are the stories told of narrow escapes encountered by its captors through its pugnacity. One of them deals with an experience met with last summer, when a man in a small boat proceeded from a fishing smack to secure a wounded fish which was motionless and apparently exhausted. But no sooner was the harpoon line moved, than the fish made a struggle for life, and after diving once, with the object of spearing the boat, and missing his aim, the fish dived a second time, and succeeded in driving his sword completely through the boat from side to side. By constant baling, the boat was kept afloat until assistance arrived, when it was found that the intruder weighed three hundred and thirty-eight pounds. The incident is described and illustrated in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*.

A CURIOUS TRADE.

IN a small village in the south of England, 'Jimmy Greg' carries on his business of naturalist and taxidermist. The old man is a well-known personage for miles around, and may often be seen, with his sugaring can and collecting implements, making his way to the adjacent woods in search of specimens. One afternoon the writer called at his little shop to interview him. After inspecting numerous cases of butterflies, moths, and birds' eggs, we adjourned to his cosy sitting-room, where Jimmy gave me a full account of his work.

I always had a liking for natural history (said the old man), and when quite a boy, had the finest collection of birds' eggs in the district. For over twenty years I have been in my present line, and have increased my trade until now I clear about one hundred and twenty pounds a year—quite a large income in this part of the country. Collecting insects pays me best. I have regular customers and send cases of specimens to all parts of England.

Most of the nocturnal moths are caught by sugaring. About dusk I turn out with a tin containing a mixture of brown sugar and rum; with a brush I daub the trunks of trees in the clearings of the woods. I visit the trees several times during the night and collect a great number of moths; the rum stupefies them, and they are easily captured. Most of the moths taken

at sugar are of the commoner kinds, but there is always a sprinkling of better insects. Good or bad, I have no difficulty in disposing of them.

You would be surprised at the number of amateurs who buy direct from me. One old gentleman who has done business with me over fifteen years must have a splendid collection of birds' skins; I have sent him ten pounds' worth at once several times.

The different hawk-moths sell from threepence to two shillings each, the latter price being for the peculiar Death's-head moth. Any damaged females I capture are boxed off, and in the course of a few days they will generally lay a few hundred eggs; these I advertise in the entomological papers, and send to purchasers by post packed in quills.

Caterpillars I have very little sale for; but the scarcer kinds I feed up until they turn to pupæ, for which there is always a great demand, as they need very little attention, and when the moth emerges, it is in faultless condition. I have a greenhouse in my back garden, in which I grow nettles, grasses, and weeds of all kinds; any uncommon caterpillar I meet with is put in there, and generally finds some kind of plant to feed on. The ground is occasionally watered; beyond that, everything is left to nature. On reaching maturity, the larva buries itself in the soil for its change into the pupa state; and after its long winter's sleep, emerges from its case as a winged insect. Sometimes on a bright spring morning I may find eighty or ninety moths have made their appearance since the previous evening; this will be repeated any after day for some weeks. I generally kill the moths by dropping benzine on them from a medicine dropper. There are several other ways; but this is as convenient as any. The specimens are then pinned on a cork setting-board, grooved down the centre to admit the body of the moth; the wings are put in position and fastened down by strips of thin cardboard, which are removed after the insect has dried and set.

An amusing incident occurred some years ago. I was rearing some larvæ of a scarce moth, and attended to them daily. One morning an eruption broke out on my neck; the irritation became so painful that I had to consult a doctor. He said I was suffering from a very uncommon skin disease, and called in his assistant to look at it. After lecturing on it and calling it by a Latin name, he gave me a lotion that burned like hot cinders. The inflammation grew worse, until one day a customer of mine, a well-known entomologist, called to see me. When I told him what the doctor had said, he laughed until I thought he would have had a fit. 'Why,' he remarked, 'it's only urtication. I have known plenty of similar cases. The hairs on some caterpillars come off very often, and if they get on the face or neck, cause great irritation. Throw the lotion into the fire; take a few doses of citrate of magnesia, and you'll be all right in a few days.'

There is one strange method of catching moths that I have not yet mentioned. If you rear a female Kentish-glory or Emperor moth, and take her into the fields in a gauze cage, she will attract any males of the same species that may be in the neighbourhood. They will crawl round the prison of their charmer with fluttering wings,

and may be easily captured. Light, also, has a great fascination for moths. Many naturalists on the outskirts of towns visit the street lamps regularly to net the insects that settle on the glasses.

We sat smoking and talking more than an hour; and when I left the old man my knowledge of insect-collecting was greatly increased.

F A R A W A Y.

Do they think of me to-day,
By the Christmas fire's warm glow,
In the old home far away,
Where they loved me long ago?
When they note my vacant chair,
Do they pause amidst their glee
To breathe a tender prayer,
Or a kindly wish for me?

Through the glistening winter rime,
From the church across the stream,
Do they listen to the chime
That I hear but in a dream?

While the beads like rubies show
On the frosted holly spray,
And the paths are white with snow
Round the old home far away!

In this sunny foreign land,
Where no Christmas berries shine,
How I wish that each dear hand
Could be fondly clasped in mine!
Ah, the mellow firelight falls,
And the restless shadows play,
On the holly brightened walls
Of the old home far away!

But they think of me, I know;
They still hold my memory dear;
By the Yule log's cheery glow
They will sometimes wish me near;
And my tears unbidden fall
As in broken tones I pray
That God may bless them all
In the old home far away!

E. MATHESON.

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